



THE STATUS OF OTHERS IN BHUBANESWAR

Social Science

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ABSTRACT

These people are generally known by the term 'Hijra' though some other names are also prevalent in south India and other parts of the country. These community remain isolated from the society and have their own customs and practices, they live in groups comprising of guru and chelas. The present day Transgender are most marginalized group. Many transgender live their life with a lie about their gender identity, some reveal it at early whereas some spend their whole life to reveal about their gender identity. Present study aimed to observe the socio- economic condition of Transgender Community in Bhubaneswar. The study combined the two arms of research, qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis. The study consisted of transgender (n=52), and that had been selected for the study by using Purposive sampling technique. Data was collected by visiting the houses of the Transgender from three major Transgender populated places of Bhubaneswar such as Behera Sahi of Satyanagar, Vanivihar and pallashpali. Out of the 52 Transgender 14 number of people are found to be in age group 25-34. According to Guru of different groups of Bhubaneswar generally at the age of 17-20 maximum transgender come to join Community. Social exclusion is the main factor for leaving home. Only 3 transgender are having Graduation and above education level, whereas 12 have primary and 17 have secondary education. So many reasons are found to be affecting their level of education, among those social exclusion and day to day life discriminations are found to be principal cause. Many of them are engaged in begging, commercial sex work and ceremonial collection by dancing and singing on auspicious occasions like marriage or childbirth. Though few tried to participate in main stream of society but they were lost in the middle of the way. Maximum number of people are earning between 1,000- 4,999 per month. They have to compromise their basic expenses like health, food and Clothes due to low income.

KEYWORDS

Transgender, Socio-Economic, Educational Level

I. INTRODUCTION

Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity (sense of themselves as male or female) or gender expression differs from that usually associated with their birth sex. In Odisha, these people are generally known as "Hinjada" and many a times also people use offensive word like "Maichia" and "Chhaka" also to call them. These names are prevalent throughout the state. Odisha is the first region in the country to give transgender people social welfare benefits - such as a pension, housing and food grains - usually allocated for only the most impoverished. Odisha's transgender population was unofficially estimated at 40,000, but as per census 2011 there are 20,332 number of people in Odisha.

In Bhubaneswar according to the community, they believe there are around 486 transgender person living in Bhubaneswar. In the absence of a proper estimation, however, it is impossible to be certain of the true number. Transgender of Bhubaneswar have a great impact on Society and government. They were actively working together to gain their Identity as well as to live a life of dignity.

On June 20, 2016 Odisha government claiming to become the first state to give social welfare benefits to Transgender community such as Pension, Housing and Food grains. On another hand minister of social justice and empowerment T.C. Gehlot tabled the Transgender (Protection of Rights) Bill 2016 in the Lok Sabha to provide for protection of rights of transgender persons and their welfare and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto. Very dearth number of research have been done on this marginalized and suppressed group, though some research have been done but those were not worthy enough to address the status of Transgender in the smart city Bhubaneswar. So, this study will be beneficial to access the Odisha government Scheme for Transgender as well as will give a broad picture or status of transgender and their humiliation journey.

II. METHODOLOGY

Data collection

The study combined the two arms of research, qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis. The study consisted of transgender (n=52), and that had been selected for the study by using Purposive sampling technique since the population was challenging to collect data. On the other arm, an in-depth interview guide was prepared, and carried out in order to understand the practical difficulties faced by transgender community. Data was collected by visiting the houses of the Transgender from three major Transgender populated places of Bhubaneswar such as **Behera Sahi of Satyanagar, Vanivihar and pallashpali.**

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Socio- Economic Condition of Transgender Community:

Demographic characteristics of the sample, 14 number of people are found to be in age group 25-34. Whereas on the basis of Religion more number of transgender are from Hindu religion e.g. 43. Generally at the age of adolescent transgender came to realize that they are different from other. According to Guru of different groups of Bhubaneswar generally at the age of 17-20 maximum transgender come to join Community. Social exclusion is the main factor for leaving home.

"When I was abandoned in my family, this elder sister (showing hands to an elderly Transgender) gave me the hope, shelter and food. I live now just because of her"

-A transgender 22, pallashpali

Education is essential for the development of human potential and realization of other human rights. However, many Trans children and young people are unable to realize these rights due to stigma and discrimination. Trans and gender variant children and young people are particularly vulnerable at school, where teachers and students attitudes typically define whether the school will be a safe and inclusive environment.

Among studied population 10 found to be illiterate while 12 have primary and 17 have secondary education. Only 3 transgender are found to be have Graduation and above education level. There are so many reasons are found to be affecting their level of education starting from social exclusion to discrimination in day to day life. One illiterate transgender who can't read and write properly describe the reason behind her school dropout -

I wanted to study more but my school teachers and friends abuse me harassed me for my opposite gender behavior, That's why I stop studying.

-A transgender 19, vanivihar

Similarly another respondent reveal a cruel story of her life which forced her to stop studying:

My headmaster used to call me to his office and try to touch me here and there and forced me to sit on his lap, Then threat me not to share with anybody otherwise he will failed me in exam.

-A transgender 26, pallashpali

These are the reason behind their illiteracy, however some transgender tried hard to overcome all these Interruption and achieved highest level

of education such as MBA and MSW etc. They have shared how they have gone through various type of abuse and Harassment.

One of the respondent who have done MBA from an established university of Odisha shared that:

I have been raped so many times by my roommate during my staying in Hostel, But I was not able to share with anybody in fear of Insult.

-A transgender 31, pallashpali

She also explained that with rise in educational level harassment, discrimination and abuse have been reduced, because now she has ability to protest and protect herself. Now she is actively working in a NGO called SAKHA for the wellbeing of Transgender in Odisha.

Employment

Transgender were engaged mostly in occupation like begging, commercial sex work and ceremonial collection by dancing and singing on auspicious occasions like marriage or childbirth. One of guru revealed that these are 'traditional' occupations of the Transgender Community. Majority of the TGs engage in both begging and Commercial Sex Work due to the irregular nature of income from these occupations. Older transgender mainly attend ceremonies. Educated TGs initially worked in regular job sector. However, the stigma faced at work place forced them to quit their workplace and shift to traditional occupations of TG members. Some of educated TGs work in the NGOs which is run by TG members. It offers a substitute occupation for some TGs who work there as community level workers. Participating in welfare programme on health and empowerment for the TGs through local non- governmental organization. The NGO also acts as support and advocacy group working with local law authorities for protection of TGs. Many TGs also tried to change their occupation but society didn't help them to live a life like other. One of transgender expressed that how he pushed to work as Sex worker though she was never dreamed of it.

"I and one of my other friend wanted to live a life with dignity, So we brought an Auto Rickshaw and tried to earn by driving auto, But no one was ready to travel by our auto rickshaw, rather than other auto driver used to misbehave with us."

-A transgender 26, Behera Sahi

Though they were not able to pay their Monthly installment to the bank, after some days Bank took back that Auto Rickshaw. This is how they lost their source of income and also lost their dream of living a dignity life. Likewise another respondent who also expressed a harsh story of her life at work place,

"At the age of 14 when I left my home and came Bhubaneswar in search of job, I got a job at Construction Company, There contractor raped me, when I ask him my salary."

-A transgender 34, pallashpali

Then she just left that job and started begging at tollgate. This how they are forced to shift to traditional occupation. Which is resulting as their miserable economic condition as well as resulting in low socio-economic status.

Income

It is a major factor which decide someone economic as well as wellbeing condition. Study shows that maximum number of people are earning between 1,000- 4,999 per Month whereas it also shows that very less number of people are earning between 10,000- 14,999. All respondent have made a statement that what they are earning are not sufficient to live a good life because they are staying in a smart city where cost of living is very high. Many a times they have to compromise with basic need like food and medication. One of respondent share that,

"I am working in a factory and earning 2500 monthly Of what I have to pay my house rent only 1700 With rest money I have to manage my whole month for which often I have to compromise with my meal."

-Transgender 28, Behera sahi

Some other responded also share that,

"I am begging at tollgate I earned near about 3000 per month, After paying my house rent I am only left with 1500 Living with

1500 in Bhubaneswar is too difficult, Sometime I have to compromise with my medicine"

-Transgender 32, Pallashpali

She is having High BP and doctor prescribed her medicine which she is not able to buy due to her poor economic condition.

Some respondent also expressed about wage differential among transgender and other gender. Men are paid high wage then female and at last transgender get a very minimum wage for the same work. Though there is a very limited opportunity for them to get a job, they get agreed to work with low wage.

"I am working in a beauty parlor where my colleagues are getting 4,000 per month, There I am getting only 2,500 per month for the same work, Though I don't have any alternative I am bound to work there."

-Transgender 22, Vanivihar

Similarly, Transgender who are having high education also not earning much as compare to other gender in the society. Many a times they were fired from the job due to their gender activity. Though there are very limited number of opportunity for transgender in the job market, they were forced to work under a very vulnerable working environment. One respondent share that,

"I have done MBA and I got fired from my job due to my Gender activity, Now I am working in a NGO for 7000/month only."

Transgender 27, Pallashpali

This is how many has to compromise with their expected wage, which is ultimately resulting in their lower level of income.

IV CONCLUSION

The continuing struggle of transgender persons to find their place in society can largely be attributed to the failure of both the Central Government and the State Government of Odisha in implementing the Social Welfare Scheme. The study found that, despite the Welfare Scheme implemented by the Odisha government, the lives of transgender persons living in Odisha remain subject to discrimination and hardship. Transgender persons still struggle to access basic services and support that other persons rely upon or even take for granted. Ingrained stigma has maintained their struggle in accessing housing, land, education and employment. This study findings have demonstrated that transgender persons are afforded no support from the government in accessing employment, causing them to be unwillingly trapped in occupations such as begging and sex work. They also receive no assistance with accessing proper housing and are not included in any other welfare schemes. No separate, transgender-specific services have been provided since the social welfare scheme announced. As such, the Government of Odisha has failed on all accounts to implement the social welfare scheme. Though transgender-specific services or support schemes have been introduced by the government of Odisha but it is in pen and paper only.

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