



AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE DREADFUL STATE OF TRANSGENDERS - A study with special reference to Erode city

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ABSTRACT

A host of socio-cultural groups of transgender people live in India. They face a variety of problems. The transsexual people live below the poverty line in all respects. They are subjected to several social disadvantages, health hazards, human rights violations and economic constraints. The state governments introduced various welfare schemes for their socio-economic upliftment. However, still their status did not improve. This study summarizes the issues faced by the transgender people, the changes expected by the transgender people and the various government initiatives taken up by the different states for raising the standard of living of the transgender community in India.

KEYWORDS

Transgender, SRS, BPL card.

1. INTRODUCTION

Transgender people are individuals of any age or sex whose appearance, personal characteristics, or behaviors differ from stereotypes about how men and women are "supposed" to be. Transgender people have existed in every culture, race, and class since the story of human life has been recorded. In India there are a host of socio – cultural groups of transgender people like hijras/kinnars, and other transgender identities like – shiv-shaktis, jogtas, jogappas, Aradhis, Sakhi, etc. However, these socio-cultural groups are not the only transgender people, but there may be those who do not belong to any of the groups but are transgender persons individually. Though an accurate and reliable estimate of transgender people is not available, it cannot be denied that their number is miniscule compared with the total population of the country. Transgender is a relatively rare condition, but is increasingly encountered in our modern society. In the world, the transgenders are estimated to be six hundred crores. There are roughly one million Hijra in India, representing approximately one in every four hundred post pubertal persons born male. The transgender population in Tamil Nadu would be roughly about sixty thousands. Transgender people are likely to experience some form of victimization as a result of his/her identity or gender expression. They face a unique set of emotional health issues. Both social exclusion and discrimination have a negative impact on the health of these individuals (1).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sathasivam (2) delivered a talk on the rights of transgender people and explored the possibility of sensitizing officers to provide access to justice. The jurist pointed out that the Constitution of India provided for the fundamental right to equality, and tolerates no discrimination on the grounds of sex, castes, creed or religion. The jurist called upon the state to recognize the third gender and safeguard the interest of transgender community. Vidya (3), a transgender, strongly desires that if the government takes one step – society will follow suit. Once the transgenders gain social approval, their families will also accept them. Politicians take out flag marches for a million causes. They can surely take some interest in this issue. Anitha Chettiar (4) An exploratory cum descriptive research design with a non-random purposive sampling including the snowball technique was adopted, to collect data from sixty-three hijras across the districts of Mumbai and Thane from the state of Maharashtra, India. A great majority of the hijras (87.5per cent) stated that they have experienced problems caused by the police whether policemen from respective police stations (50.87per cent), railway police (26.31per cent), or traffic policemen (8.77per cent). Many expressed heart rending experiences which were recorded under open ended questions.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The plight of the transgender people had not changed significantly

besides the Central Government declaring them as third gender. Various facilities have been extended to them by both the Central and State Government. However these have not helped the transgender people to raise their socio-economic status and they face many problems to have a decent livelihood. The researcher has therefore made an attempt to identify the major problems faced by the sample respondents in the study area.

4. OBJECTIVES

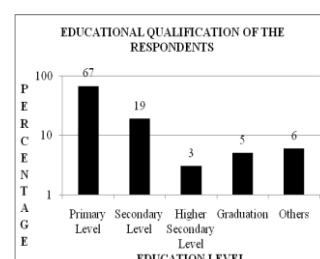
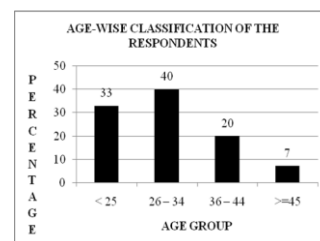
- To study the demographic profile of the transgender people in Erode district.
- To identify the major problems faced by the sample respondents.
- To know about the changes expected by the sample respondents.

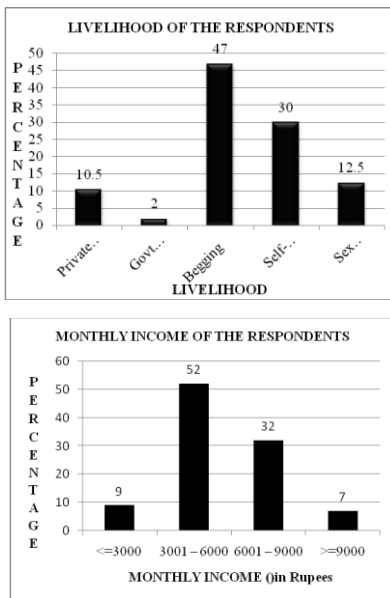
5. METHODOLOGY

The validity of any research is based on the systematic method of data collection and analysis. The present study uses both primary as well as secondary data. The primary data was collected from the transgender community living in five taluks of Erode District only. Well structured questionnaire was prepared and circulated among 200 respondents. Convenience Sampling Technique was adopted for the selection of sample respondents. Publications and Web resources provided the secondary data. Percentage analysis and Weighted Average Ranking method was used to analyse the collected data.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Demographic Profile of the Sample Respondents





6.2 Problems faced by the Sample Transgenders

For the purpose of the study, the respondents were asked to rank the problems faced by them. The problems considered for the study are Difficulty in changing name / gender, Lack of access to public toilets, No provision of ID cards, Lack of Basic Medical Facilities, Inaccessibility of proper housing, Unavailability of Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS), Unemployment, Non-acceptance by family members.

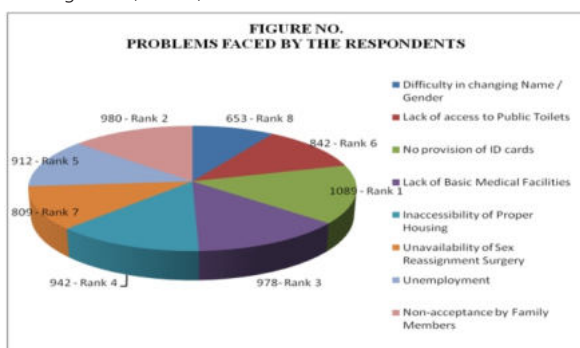
Table No. 1 Problems faced by the Respondents

S.No.	Problems faced	Total Score	Ranks
1	Difficulty in changing Name / Gender	653	8
2	Lack of access to Public Toilets	842	6
3	No provision of ID cards	1089	1
4	Lack of Basic Medical Facilities	978	3
5	Inaccessibility of Proper Housing	942	4
6	Unavailability of Sex Reassignment Surgery	809	7
7	Unemployment	912	5
8	Non-acceptance by Family Members	980	2

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

From Table No. 1 it is identified that the major problem of transgender is that 'there is no provision of ID cards' which is ranked first followed by other problems such as Non-acceptance by family members (Rank 2), Lack of Basic Medical Facilities (Rank 3), Inaccessibility of proper housing (Rank 4), Unemployment (Rank 5), Lack of access to public toilets (Rank 6), Unavailability of Sex Reassignment Surgery (Rank 7) and Difficulty in changing name/gender (Rank 8).



6.3 Changes expected by the Sample Transgender

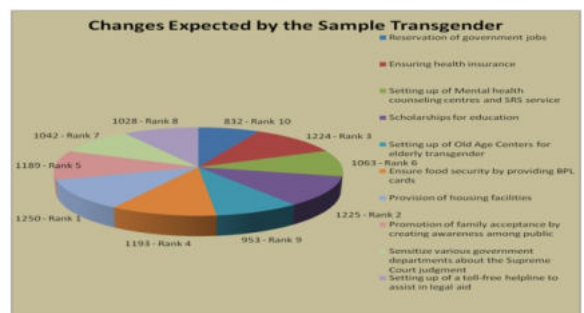
For the purpose of the study, the respondents were asked for any changes that they expect from the Government and / or general public. They were asked to rank the following changes such as Reservation of government jobs, Ensuring health insurance, Setting up of Mental health counseling centres and SRS service, Scholarships for education, Setting up of Old Age Centers for elderly transgender, Ensure food security by providing BPL (Below Poverty Line) cards, Provision of housing facilities, Promotion of family acceptance by creating awareness among public, Sensitize various government departments about the Supreme Court judgment and Setting up of a toll-free helpline to assist in legal aid. The results of the Weighted Average Ranking Method is shown in Table No.2

Table no. 2 Changes expected by the respondents

S.No.	Changes expected	Total Score	Ranks
1	Reservation of government jobs	832	10
2	Ensuring health insurance	1224	3
3	Setting up of Mental health counseling centres and SRS service	1063	6
4	Scholarships for education	1225	2
5	Setting up of Old Age Centers for elderly transgender	953	9
6	Ensure food security by providing BPL cards	1193	4
7	Provision of housing facilities	1250	1
8	Promotion of family acceptance by creating awareness among public	1189	5
9	Sensitize various government departments about the Supreme Court judgment	1042	7
10	Setting up of a toll-free helpline to assist in legal aid	1028	8

Interpretation

From Table No. 2 it is clear that the sample transgender expect the Government to provide with 'housing facilities' and this expected change ranks first followed by other expectations such as 'Scholarships for education' with second rank, 'Ensuring health insurance' with third rank, 'Ensure food security by providing BPL cards' with fourth rank, 'Promotion of family acceptance by creating awareness among public' with fifth rank, 'Setting up of Mental health counseling centres and SRS service' with sixth rank, 'Sensitize various government departments about the Supreme Court judgment' with seventh rank, 'Setting up of a toll-free helpline to assist in legal aid' with eighth rank, 'Setting up of Old Age Centers for elderly transgender' with ninth rank and 'Reservation of government jobs' with tenth rank.



7. FINDINGS

- Majority (40%) of the respondents belong to the age group of 26-34 years.
- Majority of the respondents (67%) have primary level of education.
- Majority of the respondents (47%) earn their livelihood

through begging.

- Majority (52%) of the respondents earn an income of rupees 3001 to 6000.
- The problem of 'there is no provision of ID cards' ranks first.
- Provision of housing facilities by the Government is the significant change expected by the sample respondents and ranks first.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Awareness to be created among the public that transgender is a third gender. Every Government is expected to set up a Committee to study and analyse the issues and challenges of the third gender in their jurisdiction. Loan, subsidy, entrepreneurship development, personality development and other opportunities should be provided for the transsexuals. Scholarships for education, health insurance, counseling centre and so on becomes the need of the hour.

9. CONCLUSION

The transsexual people are subjected to multi faceted inconveniences, injustices, deprivations and discriminatory tendencies in modern society. Ministry of Law and Ministry of Social Justice and State Governments need to recognize the deprivation suffered by transgender people and work on much needed reform. The Government should take steps for bringing the transsexual community into the mainstream by providing adequate healthcare, education, employment and security.

10. REFERENCES

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