



A Study on the Socio-Economic Conditions of Transgender with special Reference to Tumkur City

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Abstract:

In spite of national and international protections, transgender people have been a neglected community in the universe. Except in few countries, there is no recognition of their rights and sometimes they are forced to lead animal-like life, humiliation, torture and cruelty. Transgender people tolerate the brunt of social and economic marginalization due to discrimination based on their gender identity or expression. Sexual minorities were most neglected and vulnerable communities in Indian society. The present paper strives to depict the socio-economic conditions of the transgender community. The main aim of the study is to understand the socio-economic conditions of transgender in Tumkur city. Descriptive research design was adopted by using purposive and snowball sampling with the sampling size of 120. For assessing the socio-economic conditions of transgender people, structured interview schedule was employed to collect primary data from the sample respondents. The schedule included personal aspects, socio-economic, educational and employment status and difficulties faced, based on the objectives. The schedule was administered through personal interviews. The data was analyzed by using simple statistical percentage analyses. It was found that their socio-economic condition is very low. This paper may help professionals to understand the problems of the Hijaras and plan different intervention methods. It may motivate professionals to adopt humanitarian approach while dealing with Hijaras people.

Key Words: Transgender, Socio-Economic, Hijaras, Tumku.

Introduction

In the Indian culture, the most prevalent transgender are Hijras. Hijras are physiologically male but they adopt feminine gender identity and roles. Hijras or hermaphrodites are people with ambiguous genitalia. Also called intersexed, hermaphrodites is primarily a medical condition which results from multifarious biological factors.¹ The term 'intersexes' is reserved to refer to a somatic condition in which the hermaphroditic person is supposed to possess both masculine and feminine traits. In spite of

¹ Adnan Hossain (2004), They swing between both sexes: hijras as "asexual others" A working paper, Transgender Asia Research Centre, University of Hong Kong.

national and international protections, transgender have been a neglected community in the universe. Sparing few countries, there is no recognition for their rights and are sometimes forced to lead animal life like, humiliation, torture and cruelty. Transgender people tolerate the brunt of social and economic marginalization due to discrimination based on their gender identity or expression. Sexual minorities were most neglected and vulnerable communities in our Indian society.²

It was highlighted in the 2011 census; India's total population of transgender is around 4.88 Lakh as per 2011 census. In Karnataka 20,266 transgender were identified. Transgender activists in the country estimate this number to be six to seven times higher but were excited, especially, with the results in the 0-6 year old population. Census results say that 55,000 came from parents identifying their children as transgender, legally recognized by the Supreme Court in India as the third gender, traditionally called "hijra." During in the process of registering as voters, only 28,341 people registered as belong to the third gender, but the census clearly indicates a huge inflation in numbers. Interestingly unlike many other least advantaged groups Hijras are not found to have diversified their livelihood strategies.³ The unwillingness of the larger mainstream society to accept them as normal human also debarred the Hijras from seeking new sources of income. Therefore their social and economic condition is not at all better. Their standard of living and quality of life is low.

Rational of the Study:

The Transgender community is one among the most marginalized and vulnerable communities in India. The community needs to be included in the mainstream development program of the country and be protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation. The transgender community is highly deprived of several rights including their right of participating in economic activities including employment. In Tumkur there are four projects running by non-governmental organization to uphold their rights and safeguard them from various exploitation. This paper is a tiny effort done by the researcher to understand the socio-economic condition of the transgender in the Tumkur city. So far no attempt has been made to explore their living conditions. This Paper may help professionals to understand the problems of the hijaras and plan different intervention methods. It may motivate the helping professionals to adopt humanitarian approach while dealing with hijaras people in practice and at the policy level also.

Objectives of the Study

- To understand the socio-demographic profile of the respondents.
- To study the interrelation of transgender with their families.

² <http://www.legalservicesindia.com/article/1813/Discrimination-and-Dilemma-of-Transgender-People.html>

³ Andy Kang (2014), India's census counts transgender population for first time, glad organisation blog, indias-census-counts-transgender-population-first-time

- To understand the treatment and difficulties experienced by the transgender in the society
- To understand the social stigma and discrimination faced by the transgender in the society

Methodology:

The present study was carried out in Tumkur city. Descriptive research design was adopted by using purposive and snowball sampling with the sampling size of 120. For assessing the socio-economic conditions of transgender structured interview schedule was employed to collect primary data from the sample respondents. The schedule included personal aspects, socio-economic, educational and employment status and difficulties faced by society, based on the objectives. The schedule was administered through personal interviews. The data was analyzed by using simple statistical percentage analyses.

Results & Discussion:

Sl.No	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	18-23	27	22.5
2	24-29	57	47.5
3	30-35	18	15
4	35 and above	6	5
	Total	120	100
Sl.No	Religion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Hindu	111	92.5
2	Muslim	6	5
3	Christian	3	2.5
4	Other	0	0
	Total	120	100
Sl.No	Education status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Upto7th std	66	55
2	Up to SSLC	18	15
3	PUC	30	25
4	Degree	6	5
5	Any other	0	0
	Total	120	100
Sl.No	Occupation of respondents	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sex work	69	57.5
2	Begging	27	22.5
3	Other	24	20
	Total	120	100
Sl.No	Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Married	9	7.5
2	Divorcee	0	0

3	Separated	42	35
4	Living together	69	57.5
	Total	120	100

The above table analyzes the socio-economic profile of the respondents. Majority (48%) of the respondents come under the age group of 24 to 29 years, because all of them are mature and they are able to understand their own feeling. They are also aware about their self, community and rights. As for as the education status of the respondents is concerned, 55% of the respondents have studied up to 7thstd have studied up to secondary school leaving certificate [SSLC] and 25% of respondent have studied up to pre- university college and remaining 5% of respondents have studied up to graduation, In this study majority of respondents education level is up to primary education and it was found that their education level is low. Majority 57.5% of respondents were in living together relationship and 35% of respondents were not married and living away from the family 7.5% of the respondents said they were married. It was found that, majority of respondents were living in “Living together” relationship. The majority 57.5% of respondents depended on sex work for their livelihood. 22.5% of respondents opted for begging as their occupation and remaining 20% of respondents were involving in different type of occupation like running provision shops, beauticians, and working in NGOS as outreach worker for peer group etc. The majority 65% of respondents were not living within the family and remaining 35% of the respondents were living within family hiding their identity.

Table-2 Interactions among the Family members

Regular contact with their family			
SL.No	Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	84	70
2	No	36	30
	Total	120	100
Regular interaction among the family members of respondents			
Sl.No	Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	75	62.5
2	No	45	37.5
	Total	120	100
Percentage of money spent on their family			
SL.No	Money % on their family	Frequency	Percentage
1	Below 25%	105	87.5
2	Above 50%	15	12.5
	Total	120	100

The above table shows the interaction of the respondents among their family members. Majority 70% of the respondents are have regular contact with their families, and remaining 30% of the respondents are living individually with their friends and partners (sexual partners) without having regular contact with the family. The respondents also shared that, providing financial stability for their family is the only motive to have the regular contact with them. However, they are being neglected by the family members and as well as the society. Majority of the respondents are living with their families for giving economic support, they did not interact comfortably with their parents, and they are neglected by their family members. The majority 85% of respondents spend below 25% of monthly earned money for their family, remaining 15% of respondents spend above 50% money for their family in a month

Table No-3 Societal treatment and Threats

Depressed by the societal treatment			
SL. No	Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	102	85
2	No	18	15
		120	100
Attitude of the family members towards respondents			
1	Positive	33	27.5
2	Negative	87	72.5
3	Neutral	0	0
		120	100
Source of confidence			
1	Self	24	20
2	Family support	39	32.5
3	Own community	51	42.5
4	Through media	6	5
	Total	120	100
Attitude of the respondents towards public function.			
1	Happy	45	37.5
2	Embarrassed	12	10
3	Bad	63	52.5
	Total	120	100
Threats faced by the respondents			
	Problems from gonads, police		
1	Police	57	47.5
2	Goondas	51	42.5
3	Others	12	10
		120	100

The above table shows opinion of transgender towards the societal treatment and threat. The majority 85% of respondents felt depressed by societal treatment after becoming transgender. Remaining 15% of the respondents were not depressed after becoming transgender. Most of the respondents say that they are depressed by societal treatment after becoming transgender. The majority [72.5%] of respondent's family's member have negative attitude toward the transgender. And remaining 27.5% of respondents family member have positive attitude toward the transgender especially on respondents because respondents are income source for their family. Majority 42.5% of respondents get confidence from their own community. And 20% of the respondents get confidence to face the life challenges from themselves. Remaining 5% of the respondents get confidence through mass media. 37.5% of the respondents feel happy while society involves them in public functions, 10% of the respondents told that, they face embarrassing situations, 52.5% of the respondents felt that society treats them well in public functions. Most respondents shared that, society treats them very badly when they attend public function. The Majority of the respondents (47.5%) are threatened by the police and 42.5% of the respondent's receive threats from the goondas. Remaining 10% of the respondents get threats from the others. The table clearly shows that transgender are exploited by both the police and the goondas. The police thought that most of the transgender are thieves and hapha collector.

Majority 60% of the respondents do not showed interest in self-employment because they are beautiful and glamorous and around or below 30 years of age. They have good returns from sex work. The remaining 40% of respondents who have crossed 30 years have health problems. They show interest in self-employments like making candles, becoming beauticians, cooks and tailors.

It was drawn from the study result, overall socio-economic life of the transgender is not good, though there are finger counting success stories among the transgender community. The extent of the development is very meager. Intervention of government, non-government organisations through the social work values and principles is imperative. Hence few suggestions are mentioned as follows:

Suggestions

- Comprehensive civil rights legislation should be offered to Hijaras and Kothie for the protection and rights now guaranteed to others on the basis of sex, caste, creed and color. The constitution should be amended to include sexual orientation/gender identity as a ground of non-discrimination.
- There should be a special legal protection against this form of discrimination inflicted by both state and civil society akin to the offence of practicing untouchability.

- Same-sex marriages should be recognized as legal and valid. All legal benefits, including property rights that accrue to heterosexual married people, should be made available to same-sex unions.
- Civil rights under law such as the right to get a passport, ration card, make a will, inherit property and property and adopt children must be available to all regardless of change in gender/sex identities.
- Reservation in educational institutions such as schools and colleges as well as in government employment should be mandatory.

Social Work practice with Transgender:

- Social worker should endorse favorable conditions that persuade respect for cultural and social miscellany. Social work should promote policies and practices that to safeguard the rights and confirm equity and social justice for all people.
- Social work should be partnered with the transgender community to modify laws, medical protocols, research and policies in such a ways that preserve and protect the quality of life for transgender and transsexual citizens. In the domain of gender diversity, prejudice and oppression should be replaced with compassion, support, empathy and celebration of divergence.
- Social work contributes to promote public policy development and to strengthen societal and familial attitudes and behaviors that affirms the dignity and rights of all individuals regardless of gender identity or gender expression.
- Social worker should Create awareness amongst the other people about the rights of transgender to live with dignity as human beings and citizens.

Conclusions:

Till date government has not done anything to heave the ‘Transgender community’ out of the abject condition into which they are trapped. Transgender are mostly illiterate, jobless and homeless. They have no stable flow of income. They can hardly manage food for survival or see a good doctor for checkup. All these constraints have turned them into be excluded from the society. Social work intervenes through public awareness and advocacy. Social work intervenes to promote public policy development and to strengthen societal and familial attitudes and behaviors that affirms the dignity and rights of all individuals regardless of gender identity or gender expression.
