



## **SOCIO-EMOTIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF TRANSGENDER PERSONS IN ODISHA**

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### **Abstract**

*The Present investigation aims at studying the socio-emotional and educational problems of Transgender persons in Odisha. A sample of twenty Transgender persons were selected from four districts of Odisha through the method of purposive sampling for the study. The study revealed that 30 per cent of Transgender had Graduation and more than 20 per cent had elementary and secondary pass qualification. About 60 per cent of Transgender persons were earning between 3 to 5 thousand rupees per month. Majority of Transgender persons depended on begging. About 35 per cent of Transgender persons reported that parental pressure and humiliation were the main reasons for the Transgender Persons to leave home. Community pressure was also an important reason for 55 per cent of Transgender Persons to leave home. Discrimination, anxiety and depression were the major emotional issues of Transgender persons. It was observed that discrimination by teachers and physical violence by teachers and friends in the educational institutions were the major challenges for the Transgender Students.*

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**Key Words-** *socio-emotional problems, educational problems, Transgender persons*

### **Introduction**

The Constitution of India guarantees basic human rights to each and every citizen of the country. Protection of Fundamental Rights is essential for the development of the nation as a whole. It includes the right to life, liberty, equality, dignity, freedom of thought and expression. The right to choose one's gender identity is an essential part to lead a life with

dignity. According to Article-21 of the Indian Constitution ‘No person shall be deprived of his/her life or personal liberty except according to procedures established by law’.

The Transgender Community is one of the marginalized and vulnerable communities in India. A Transgender person is someone whose gender identity or gender expression or both do not confirm to that, typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Some of the terms which are associated with transgender persons are third gender, cross-dresser, cross-gender etc.

The word transgenderism was coined by Virginia Prince, an American Transgender activist which means a blanket term for both trans- sexualism and transvestism, it was mentioned in her books like “Understanding cross dressing and Seventy years in the trenches of the Gender wars”(Wikipedia).

According to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019 “A Transgender Person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth. It includes trans-men and trans-women, person with intersex variations, gender-queers and persons with socio-cultural identities such as Kinnars, Hijras, Aravani, Kothis, Jogtas/Jogappan, Shiva-Shaktis etc. They are seriously lagging behind on human development indices including education (Rajesh and Naved, 2013). Majority of the Transgender Community members are uneducated or under-educated and debarred from participating in social, cultural, political, economic and other activities. The life of Transgender Person is struggle as there is non-acceptance anywhere from family or society. They face high level of stigma in almost every sphere of their life such as health facilities, schools/colleges, employment place, social schemes etc. Extreme social exclusion diminishes self-esteem and sense of social responsibility. The community needs to be included in the main stream development programme of the country and to be protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Sivakami et al. (2011) studied on the Socio-economic and nutritional status of Transgender Persons in Coimbatore. The study revealed that Transgender Persons suffered from mental stress due to non-acceptance and humiliation from society and these stress affected their daily food taking habits. The common disease known among transgender persons were blood pressure, high blood sugar and HIV/AIDS.

Sudha (2015) in her study found that 35% of transgender participants had felt harrash in transgender identity stigma whereas 49% of participants had felt reasonable stigma. Only

44% of participants reported that they had good quality of life, while 35% reported very poor quality of life. The quality of life of transgender persons depended on their acceptance or non-acceptance by their family members. Chettiar (2015) studied the socio-economic status of transgender persons and their health and the harassment faced by the police. Among the hijras about half of them belonged to the middle class and 40% belonged to the upper-lower class.

The investigation by Ganju and Saggurti (2017) was on stigma, violence and HIV vulnerability among transgender persons in sex work in Maharashtra. They found that high practices of sex with men, transgender persons were infected by HIV and faced discrimination, stigma in public and private space. Majority of transgender persons had high risk of mental health concerns, physical violence, abuse, social-isolation and economic marginalization for their HIV infection due to the lack of awareness, proper education and guidelines about HIV prevention. Sawant (2017) stated that Indian Government has taken various welfare measures for the transgender community which includes census, certification, providing citizenship ID Cards, Passports, housing facility, legal measures, policy reforms, legal and constitutional safeguards to prevent infringement of human rights of the third gender persons and institutional mechanisms to address unambiguous concerns of transgender people.

Sameeta et al. (2018) conducted a study on the connection between socio-demographic factors and subjective well-being among fifty transgender persons aged 18 years and above in Manipur. It was found that there was no significant connection between subjective well-being and socio-demographic parameters like age, educational qualification, profession, dwelling and outlook of family.

Gnana, Mithra and Vijayalakshmi (2019) highlighted the changing trends in socio-economic conditions of Transgender in Chennai City, India. The investigation revealed that 98.2% of respondents opined that they did not have any self-help group and the government did not provide any fund to start small scale business. 83.6% of Transgender Persons responded that lack of family support becomes the major factor to fall into deviant activities like begging, prostitution etc. Thachappilly (2022) in her study observed that the policy was inadequate to provide the facilities in educational institutions which worked against transgender persons. She observed that there are lots of administrative difficulties which hinder the transgender persons to equip them with educational institutions for smoothly pursuing their education in a fully protected environment.

Champati and Dash (2023) conducted a study on educational status and awareness level of Transgender persons in Khordha district of Odisha. It was found that most of the transgender persons were unable get access in higher education and they were unaware about the provisions and facilities access to education.

The studies cited above revealed that transgender persons in the Indian society faced a lot of issues including physical, mental and verbal abuse. After reviewing the related literature, it was found that though a number of studies have been conducted in India, hardly any comprehensive study has been conducted on Socio-emotional and educational problems of Transgender Persons in Odisha. Keeping in view the non-existent of significant studies on problems of transgender persons in Odisha, the present study was undertaken.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are the objectives of the present study-

1. To study the demographic parameter of transgender persons.
2. To study the social problems of transgender persons.
3. To study the emotional problems of transgender persons.
4. To study the educational problems of transgender persons.

### **Method**

“Descriptive Survey” method was adopted in the execution of the present study.

### **Sample**

The present study covered 20 transgender persons from Khordha, Nayagarh, Cuttack and Puri districts of Odisha. The sample was selected through the method of purposive sampling.

### **Tool Used**

To collect information regarding the socio-emotional and educational Problems of Transgender Persons, an interview schedule was developed by the investigators. The interview schedule consists of two sections. Section-A tried to collect data regarding their general information like name, age, present address, permanent address, educational qualification, occupation and monthly income. Section-B was meant for the collection of data related to their socio-emotional and educational problems.

### **Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

The analysis and interpretation of data are presented from Table 1 to Table 5.

**TABLE 1**  
**Demographic Parameters of Transgender Persons**

S. No.	Areas of Study	Groups	No. of Sample	%
1.	Age (in years)	41-50	4	20
		31-40	7	35
		21-30	9	45
2.	Educational Qualification	Illiterate	1	5
		Elementary Education	5	25
		Secondary Education	4	20
		Graduation	7	35
		Post-Graduation	2	10
		MBA	1	5
3.	Monthly Income(in Thousand Rupees)	9- 11	4	20
		6-8	4	20
		3-5	12	60
4.	Occupation	Modeling & Begging	5	25
		Dancing & Begging	6	30
		Only Begging	9	45

From Table 1, it was observed that 45% of transgender persons were between the age group of 21-30 years, 35% were in the age group of 31-40 years and 20% were in the age group of 41-50 years. About 35% of the participants had Graduation and 10% had Post-Graduation qualifications. Only 5% TGP were continuing MBA Degree in distance mode. The monthly income of 60% Transgender persons revealed that they were earning only 3-5 thousand rupees and they opined that, with this scanty income and it was very difficult to meet the basic needs. Furthermore 20% of participants were earning 6-8 thousand rupees and 20% were earning 9-11 thousand rupees. Majority of them (45%) had only begging as their occupation, 30% of them were dancing in different occasions and 25% of them chosen modeling as their source of income along with begging. The study was supported by Swain (2023).

The social problems of Transgender Person are presented in Table 2.

**TABLE 2**  
**Social Problems of Transgender Persons**

S.No.	Social Problems	Number	%
1.	Left their home by parental pressure and humiliation	7	35
2.	Left their home by community pressure	11	55
3.	Non-acceptance by family members	15	75
4.	No proper behavior by doctor and police	13	65
5.	Not interested in marriage	20	100
6.	No relation with family members	15	75
7.	Staying with other TGPs	14	70
8.	Staying in rented house	6	30
9.	Aware of the Government Welfare Schemes for TGPs	11	55
10.	Not getting benefits from the Government Welfare Schemes	20	100
11.	To remain unmarried because of social problems	20	100

Table 2 shows that about 35% transgender persons opined that parental pressure and humiliation were the main reasons for them to leave home. Majority of them (55%) agreed that community pressure was the reason for separation of TGPs from home. Further 75% transgender persons opined that non-acceptance by family members is a major problem in the TGPs life. About 60% transgender persons reported that doctor and police did not behave them properly. Maximum percentage (70%) of transgender persons opined that they had no relation with the family members. Some of them visit their home during festivals, to attend marriage ceremonies, to get money from parents, to give money to parents etc.

Majority of TGPs (70%) opined that they were staying with other transgender persons in rented house and 30% of them were staying at their own rented house. All the transgender persons (100%) gave the consent that they were taking meals in their rented rooms. The findings are supported by Champati and Dash (2023).

It was found that about 55% TGPs were not aware about the Government Welfare Schemes and 100% participants reported that they were not getting any benefit from the Government Welfare Schemes.

The emotional problems of Transgender persons are presented in Table 3.

**TABLE 3**  
**Emotional Problems of Transgender Persons**

S. No.	Emotional Problems	Number	%
1.	Discrimination	15	75
2.	Anxiety	15	75
3.	Depression	15	75
4.	Chronic Disease	14	70
5.	Emotional and Verbal abuse	20	100

Data presented in Table 3 shows that discrimination, anxiety and depression were the major emotional issue of the transgender persons. Majority of sample (70%) opined that they were suffering from different chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, skin disease etc. Treatment in medical and consultation with doctor was also a major challenge for them. About 90% transgender persons opined that, the emotional and verbal abuse by society was very painful for them. Ganju and Saggurti (2017) supports the findings of the study.

The educational problems of Transgender persons are presented in Table 4.

**TABLE 4**  
**Educational Problems of Transgender Persons**

S.L. No.	Educational Problems	Number	%
1.	Discrimination by teacher/friends	18	90
2.	Physical violence by friends	16	80
3.	Lack of separate toilet facilities for transgender students in schools	19	95
4.	No proper respect	18	90
5.	Lack of separate common room/ rest room	19	95
6.	Stereotype uniforms in schools	13	65

Data presented in Table 4 shows that discrimination by teachers and physical violence by teacher and friends in the educational institutions is the major challenge for the transgender students. Transgender persons also gave their opinion that, lack of separate toilet (95%), no proper respect (90%), lack of separate common room/ rest room in schools (95%)

and stereotype uniform in schools (65%) were the major threats for them to completion of education successfully. Champati and Dash (2023) support the findings of the present study.

**TABLE 5**  
**Suggestions Given by Transgender Persons**

S. No.	Suggestions	Number	%
1	Separate school for transgender children	20	100
2	Special provisions and facilities by Govt. for Transgender children in schools	15	75
3	Positive attitude towards the Transgender children	18	90
4	Education for parents of transgender children	14	70
5	Awareness programmes for the parents of Transgender Children	15	75

More than 69% of transgender persons opined that there should be separate school for transgender children, special provisions and facilities by Govt. for Transgender children and positive attitude towards the Transgender children in school. Further 75% of Transgender persons suggested for organizing awareness programme among the parents of transgender children because transgender children faced different kinds of problems in educational institutions and also in their home like physical violence, emotional and verbal abuse, discrimination by teachers and friends.

### **Educational Implications**

The following suggestions may be taken into consideration for welfare of transgender persons in Odisha.

- The school system has been a traditional model recognizing only two genders- male and female and never made any provisions for accommodations of a third gender. There must be unisex system in clothing, seating arrangement, play areas, washrooms and toilets etc in schools.
- There is need to set-up an anti-harassment cell and an anti-discrimination cell for the transgender students in school as well as in Government offices.
- There is need of arrangement of mental health resources access to transgender students.
- There should be provision for the teacher training, workshops/models to make the teachers more sensitive towards transgender students.

- Transgender Community should be covered under pension scheme so that they can get financial benefit in regular mode.
- Any discrimination, abuse (physical/mental) towards the TGPs' within the family or in the public must be highlighted by the media and immediate action must be undertaken by the Government or by Law.
- A chapter on TGPs may be included in the Secondary Education curriculum to sensitize the larger society on TGPs. This can be an effective step to address stigma and discrimination at school level.
- Sensitization programme for public and parents need to be organized by NGO and Government.
- Transgender Persons have unique culture of dancing, singing folk songs, modeling etc. and it should be integrated with livelihood activities to ensure greater community involvement, so that it will create an employment opportunity to them.
- The school or educational institution must create an inclusive environment like welcoming attitude to the diversity and celebrating diversity.

### **Conclusion**

Transgender Persons experience extremely social exclusion that leads into the poor mental health conditions, increased vulnerability to different diseases, limited access to education and employment and lowest opportunities for economic and social advancement. Steps need to be taken to remedy the deplorable situation and advance social inclusion for the members of the transgender community through strong legal as well as social angels.

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