

An Empirical Study on Identification Factors of Social Exclusion and its Impact among Transgender Community

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Abstract

The third gender known better as transgender have existed in every culture, race, class and religion since the inception of human life has been recorded. They often face discrimination in public places such as schools and colleges, where they may experience sexual harassment and unequal pay for their work. Additionally, they have been subjected to harassment and violence in both work and educational settings in recent years. This paper explores an empirical study on the factors contributing to social exclusion and its impact on the transgender community. The study employed the snowball sampling technique to collect data from a sample of 35 transgender individuals from Vannarpettai, Chennai, who are between the ages of 18 and 39 years. The research aims to identify the social impact, social exclusion, and access to education, employment, public services, rights, and conditions of transgender people within the specified age group. Transgender individuals, in particular, are more likely to encounter these issues in workplaces and public spaces. Therefore, social work interventions, including individual counselling, public advocacy, and community education, are essential to ensure equal rights and improve the quality of life for transgender people in our society.

Keywords: Transgender, Social exclusion, Victimization

1. Introduction

A transgender person (often shortened to trans person) is someone whose gender identity differs from that typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Some transgender people who desire medical assistance to transition from one sex to another identify as transsexual. Transgender is also an umbrella term; in addition to including people whose gender identity is the opposite of their assigned sex (trans men and trans women), it may also include people who are non-binary or genderqueer. The term may also include cross-dressers, drag kings, and drag queens in some contexts. The term transgender does not have a universally accepted definition, including among researchers.

The third gender, known better as transgender, has existed in every culture, race, class, and religion since the inception of human life and has been recorded and analyzed. The transgender are individuals of any age or sex whose personality, appearance, attitude, behavior, or personal characteristics differ from stereotypes. It means they differ in identity in terms of how men and women are supposed to be. They are also part and parcel of the social order and have equal rights in everything and in every resource that

is available to people all over the world. The third gender, i.e., "transgender," signifies those individuals who are different in their biological constructions. They are different for the stereotype of gender roles. Their gender makes them different and makes them compelled to face discrimination in society. Despite all the constitutional rights, they are denied their basic rights like the right to personal liberty, freedom of expression, the right to education, empowerment, and the right against discrimination, exploitation, and violence, etc. The present paper deals with the transgender community, their problems, including social exclusion, and how the exclusion is changing into inclusion due to law and order.

1.1. Defining transgender

Denoting or relating to a person whose gender identity does not correspond with the sex registered for them at birth. **For example**, a transgender person who was assigned female at birth may identify as male, a combination of male and female, or neither.

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Grossman and D. Angelli (2006) described transgender people as "individuals who exhibit gender-non-conforming identities and behaviors, or, in other words, those who transcend typical gender r paradigms." So transgender is someone who is anatomically born in a certain sex but is more comfortable with the gender or sexual identity of a different gender and chooses to go in for sex reassignment surgery or hormonal treatment. In the world, the number of transgender people is estimated to be six hundred crore. Transgender people are human beings whose lives encompass a complexity that goes beyond the normative correlation between biological sex on the one hand and gender identity and sexual orientation on the other. A person who is biologically male is expected to be 'mas culine' and be attracted to women. However, a transgender person could be biologically male and often take on the gender identity of the other gender. In some cases, the transgender person might also want to alter the fact of biological maleness or femaleness through sex reassignment surgery (SRS). However, the above description does not exhaust the full range of transgender behavior and identity. Transgender and homosexual communities have existed in almost all parts of the world, with their own local identities, customs, and rituals.

1.2. Social exclusion

Social exclusion is a contested but widely used term in development discourse (Peace, 2001). Different authors have understood the term from different perspectives, and therefore, it has produced a wealth of literature (Sen., 2001; Silver, Levite's, 2005; Estivill, 2003; and Kabeer, 2000). Social exclusion refers to the process of being excluded from economic, social, and political life (Walsh, 2006). However, the meaning of social exclusion depends on the nature of the society in which it occurs, and it varies in meaning according to the local and moral context (Silver, 1994). Walker and Walker (1997) have understood social exclusion as a comprehensive and dynamic process of being shut out, fully or partially, from any of the social, economic, political, or cultural systems that determine the social integration of a person in society.

Social exclusion is not a unitary phenomenon; rather, it is a multi-dimensional process in which various

forms of exclusion are combined, including exclusion from participation in decision-making and political processes, access to employment and material resources, and integration into common cultural practices (Madanipour et al., 1998). Exclusion represents a key term in contemporary social policy debates (Scharf et al., 2000). Noble laureate Amartya Sen has widely used the term for understanding and explaining poverty and deprivation in South Asian countries. He argues that social exclusion provides an academic insight and intellectual space in which to understand the social, political, and cultural deprivation of individuals in addition to economic deprivation (Sen, 2000). Sen. has understood poverty as capability deprivation and explained that social exclusion leads people into capability deprivation. According to Smith, deprivation is involved in not being able to appear in public without shame. The inability to interact with others is also considered deprivation (Sen, 2000). The very pertinent question to this point is how people are being unable to interact and to take part in social functioning.

Estivill (2003) refers to social exclusion as an unequal power relationship. He defines social exclusion as: Drawing on the views of different theoretical perspectives on social exclusion, this paper perceives social exclusion as a social, economic, political, and cultural process that restricts transgender people from taking part in the normal functioning of social life, which, in turn, makes them vulnerable in all spheres of human life. Using the concept of social exclusion, this paper explores: how social exclusion of transgender people is created and directed; how social exclusion restricts transgender access to social and community services; and how to break down social exclusion and reintegrate transgender people into their own communities.

Social exclusion of transgender individuals is a multifaceted issue that stems from various factors, including societal attitudes, systemic barriers, and personal experiences. Here are some of the key factors contributing to the social exclusion of transgender people:

1. Discrimination and Stigma

Societal Attitudes: Negative perceptions and prejudices against transgender individuals can lead to widespread discrimination. This can manifest in derogatory comments, harassment, and violence.

Legal Discrimination: In some regions, laws and policies do not protect transgender individuals from discrimination in areas such as employment, housing, and healthcare.

2. Economic Inequality

Unemployment and Underemployment: Transgender individuals often face higher rates of unemployment and underemployment due to discrimination in hiring practices.

Poverty: Economic marginalization can result from limited access to well-paying jobs, leading to higher rates of poverty among transgender people.

3. Education Barriers

Bullying and Harassment in Schools: Transgender students frequently encounter bullying, which can lead to lower academic performance, higher dropout rates, and reduced access to higher education.

Lack of Supportive Policies: Schools may lack inclusive policies and practices, such as access to gender-appropriate facilities and the use of chosen names and pronouns.

4. Healthcare Access

Lack of Knowledge Among Providers: Many healthcare providers lack the training and knowledge to adequately address the needs of transgender patients, resulting in substandard care.

Discrimination in Healthcare Settings: Transgender individuals often face discrimination and disrespect in healthcare settings, discouraging them from seeking necessary medical care.

5. Barriers to Gender-Affirming Care: Access to gender-affirming treatments and surgeries can be limited due to high costs, insurance exclusions, and a lack of providers.

6. Legal and Bureaucratic Challenges

Identification Documents: Obtaining identification documents that reflect one's gender identity can be a complex and costly process, which can lead to difficulties in accessing services, employment, and travel.

Inconsistent Legal Protections: Legal protections for transgender individuals vary widely by jurisdiction, creating uncertainty and vulnerability.

7. Social and Community Exclusion

Family Rejection: Many transgender individuals experience rejection from their families, leading to isolation and homelessness.

Lack of Social Support: Social networks and community support systems for transgender individuals can be limited, leading to feelings of isolation and marginalization.

8. Mental Health Challenges

High Rates of Mental Health Issues: Due to the stress of social exclusion, discrimination, and violence, transgender individuals experience higher rates of mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation.

Limited Access to Mental Health Services: There is often a lack of accessible, affirming mental health services for transgender people.

9. Violence and Safety Concerns

Hate Crimes: Transgender individuals are disproportionately targeted for hate crimes, including physical and sexual violence.

Police Harassment and Misconduct: Interactions with law enforcement can be fraught with discrimination and abuse, further alienating transgender individuals from seeking help or reporting crimes.

10. Cultural and Religious Factors

Religious Discrimination: Some religious doctrines and communities explicitly condemn transgender identities, leading to exclusion and discrimination.

Cultural Norms: Cultural norms and expectations about gender can vary widely, and in many cases, they do not accommodate or respect transgender identities.

11. Intersectionality

Multiple Marginalization's: Transgender individuals who also belong to other marginalized groups (e.g., people of color, disabled individuals) face compounded challenges and forms of exclusion.

Addressing these factors requires comprehensive strategies that involve legal reforms, public education, supportive policies in various institutions, and the provision of inclusive and affirming services. Efforts to combat social exclusion must be intersectional, recognizing and addressing the diverse experiences and needs of transgender individuals.

1.3. Transgender community in India

Generally, fewer than 1% of the worldwide population are transgender, with figures ranging from <0.1% to 0.6%. As per the Census of 2011, the total population of Transgender in India is 4.88 lakh. There are various types of transgender communities in India. The outcomes reveal that around 4.87 lakh people reported themselves as transgender. The distribution of the transgender population is high in one of the primary states of India

In India, until very recently, transgender people were not recognized as human beings. This is a huge violation of human rights. The lack of recognition has segregated them from society, and above all, in the matter of civil rights, they have been destitute of many rights and privileges that the common Indian people enjoy. Transgender people are not part of social and cultural participation in public and are neglected by their own families and society. In India, the total population of transgender people is in the order of 4.88 lakh, as per the 2011 survey. Source: Indian 2011 Census Report Estimation of 2015 onwards in Tamil Nadu: 16,380 transgender people identified themselves as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender). Transgender people in Tamil Nadu identify as “Aravani.” Several Aravani activists wish for the public and media to use the name ‘Thirunangi’ to pass on to Aravanis.

1.4. Problems faced by transgender community

The Transgender fall under the category of LGBT group (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender). They belong to the marginalized group of the society which faces legal, social,

1.5. Cultural and economic difficulties

The problems faced by the Transgender community in India includes -

- **Discrimination:** Discrimination is the major problem of Transgender. They are discriminated in terms of education, employment, entertainment, justice etc.
- **Disrespect:** They are disrespected in each and every aspect of life except in few cases like after the birth of a child for their blessings or to bless the newly wedded couple.
- **Downtrodden:** These people are treated badly or oppressed by people in power. They are prone to struggle for social justice because of their identity as Transgender.
- **Child Nabbing:** This community always searches for those babies/ infants/ children who are born with this feature of Transgender. Once they come to know, they try to nab the child from their parents.
- **Prostitution:** They are forced to enter the profession of prostitutions by their community, friends or relatives. Even, in some cases, it is seen that their parents are involved in it.
- **Forced to leave parental home:** Once their identity is identified, they are forced and pressurize to leave the parental home by the society as they can't be a part and parcel of normal community and class.
- **Unwanted attention:** People give unwanted attention to the Transgender in public. They try to create the scene by insulting, punishing, abusing or cursing them.
- **Rejection of entry:** They are rejected to get enter in religious places, public places like hotels, restaurants, theaters, parks etc.
- **Rape and verbal and physical abuse:** This is the most common people Transgender people face. They are prone to face rape followed by physical and verbal abuse.
- **Lack of educational facilities:** Like normal people, they are not entitled to take education in schools and colleges. Even in terms of education, they are treated differently.
- **STI and HIVAIDS problems:** The term „MSM“ stands for Men who have sex with Men. Because of this, Transgender are likely to have problems like STI and HIV AIDS. Most of the Transgender belongs to lower socioeconomic status and have low literacy level. It seeks to have improper health care.
- **Human trafficking:** Transgender belongs to the most neglected group. That's why; they are prone to face the problem of human trafficking also.

- **Social Exclusion:** The major problem in the whole process is that they are socially excluded from the society. They are excluded from participating in social, cultural and economic life.

In brief, they are excluded from

- Economy, employment and livelihood opportunities
- Excluded from society and family
- Lack of protection from violence
- Restricted access to education, health care and personal care
- Limited access to public spaces
- Limited access to collectivization
- Rights of Citizenship
- Excluded from decision-making
- Lack of social security

2. Significance of the study

Every human has the right to get an education in our country. Transgender students have largely discontinued their education. Very few of them only encounter harassment in higher education, but the high level of harassment happened to transgender students. In the educational setting, transgender people not only face the threat of homophobic bullying and harassment, but they also encounter structural levels of discrimination related to the lack of representation of homosexuality, bisexuality, and gender identity in the education curriculum. When transgender people run away or are evicted from their homes, they do not expect support from their biological family in the long run. Subsequently, they face a lot of challenges, especially getting jobs for a livelihood due to a lack of employment opportunities because, of those who are not skilled, most of them do not enter higher education. Lack of livelihood options is a key reason for a significant proportion of transgender people to choose or continue to be in begging and sex work, with its associated HIV and health-related risks. Lack of specific social welfare schemes and barriers to using existing schemes. Some of the important issues are social and economic security challenges for them. Their main cause is that most of them do not enter higher education, and they cannot choose any particular profession or skilled job at their young age. The research aims to identify the social impact, social exclusion, and access to education, employment, public services, rights, and conditions of transgender people.

2.1. Statement of the problem

To Identify the Factors of Social Exclusion and Its Impact Among the Transgender Community

2.2. Objective of the study

The Objective of The Present Study Are As Follows:

1. To identify the factors of social exclusion among the respondents
2. To examine the impact of social exclusion on socially inclusive
3. The recommended measures for the transgender community

2.3. Research Questions:

In the Indian context, research of this kind has not been extensively done. Specifically, very limited research has been conducted on the relationship or association between the variables that have been chosen for the present research. Therefore, there was uncertainty about formulating the hypothesis. In view of the above, the researcher had to approach the problem with the following broad research questions:

1. Socio-demographic factors
2. Factors of social exclusion
3. Reporting behaviour
4. Legal factors

2.4. Research methodology

A research design is a procedural plan adopted by the researcher to answer questions validly, objectively and accurately. A brief description of how the present study was designed is given below. This research was an exploratory form of research to foster an understanding about what lies behind a phenomenon that has not been examined much at the time of research.

The Universe of This Study Transgenders in The Vannarapettai North Chennai City. The research tool used for this study is a structured interview schedule comprising of 50 questions. In tune with the research questions and the objectives, snowball sampling method was adopted in order to choose the sample for this study. The sample size of the study is Thirty-five. Data for the study was collected from primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from transgender people from Vannarapettai Northern areas of Chennai city.

A pilot study with 10 samples was done prior to the main study. The reliability value of the study was found at 0.7 at SPSS tested. The interview schedule was tested by conducting a pilot study among five individuals of the sample group. Based on the responses collected, the reliability and validity of the schedule was tested. Through test and retest reliability the research instrument was found to be highly reliable. The validity of the instrument was tested by face validity, which also made a positive outcome. Once the interview schedule was tested for reliability and validity, the schedule was used to collect data from the sample group. The informed consent form was read out to participants and participants were asked to provide information on education, employment, social distancing, details of transgender people and how the administration of the test took up to 10 minutes. After the administration of the exam, the interview schedule was administered informally to the participants. The data was processed and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The output of the analysis was used to generate pie charts for the present research. By and large, simple frequencies and percentages were used to present the results of the study. The responses collected through open ended items were processed manually. All the responses and each of the open-ended items were read and the key points were listed. Further, all such key points have been presented in a descriptive format so as to give a complete picture.

3. Major Findings

3.1. Socio-Demographic Factors

- **Age of Respondents**

Most respondents in this study were between 18 and 23 years old. As shown in Figure 1, 54.84% (17 respondents) were in this age group. Additionally, 32.26% (10 respondents) were aged 24-27 years, and 12.50% (4 respondents) were aged 26-35 years.

- **Gender Identity of Respondents**

FTM of MTF (OR) Respondents in MTF (74.19%) of the respondents (23). FTM (25.81%) out of respondents (8) out of which MTF is more than.

3.2. Reporting Behaviour 74.19% (27 respondents) identified as MTF (male-to-female), while 25.81% (8 respondents) identified as FTM (female-to-male).

3.3 Social Exclusion of Respondents

12 respondents denied experiencing sexual harassment at work, while 22 respondents reported that they had faced such harassment.

- **Police Complaint Investigation**

23 respondents (60%) reported either purchasing a police complaint or that the police thoroughly investigated their complaints. A quarter (16%) affirmed this response.

- **Adequate Investigation of Grievances**

26 respondents (73%) indicated that their grievances were not adequately investigated, while 9 respondents (27%) stated that they were.

3.4 Legal Factors

The legal component involves the existence of laws and government awareness. Respondents were asked about their awareness of legal provisions and participation in national counselling

- **Participation in National Counselling**

32 respondents (95.55%) did not participate in national counselling, while 3 respondents (4.55%) said they did.

4. Discussion

Social exclusion refers to the dynamic process of being completely or partially shut out of the social, economic, political, and cultural systems that determine a person's social integration into society. Respondents often had anecdotal accounts in which they told of events in their lives. The majority of respondents who discussed social distancing expressed fear of others because they believed that people were making fun of them and that there was no one who could stand by them or assist them-

‘People in the place where we live and relatives are leaving our house due to misbehaviour and seeing. Most of us don't get jobs, but other workers don't get paid the same. Misinterpreting physically abusive remarks in the workplace in society, people bring us very few things.

- **Social Exclusion and Fear:** Many respondents feel isolated and fear ridicule, which results in a lack of support from both their community and relatives. This exclusion impacts their ability to find stable employment, pushing some into begging or prostitution.
- **Workplace Abuse:** Respondents report experiencing physical and verbal abuse at work and receiving lower pay compared to other workers. This environment fosters distrust and disappointment, further isolating them from society.
- **Issues with Reporting and Investigation:** Many respondents indicate that their complaints about discrimination and harassment are not properly or promptly investigated. Due to the fear of being mocked or judged, many do not file complaints. Additionally, a lack of awareness about legal protections like the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act exacerbates this issue.
- **Economic Hardships:** Economic difficulties are widespread, with respondents struggling to receive full government benefits. Mismanagement and a lack of awareness among legal authorities and government agencies contribute to this problem.
- **Government Aid and Awareness:** While there are government provisions for financial aid and shelter, many respondents are not fully benefiting from them due to administrative issues and a lack of awareness.

Some of them shared that they had faced a very difficult situation with the economy and sexual harassment and were disappointed in their ability to trust others. Most transgender people have very little employment, and they are forced to resort to begging and prostitution. They are very withdrawn from society because they listen in public places, tease, and prostitute. At their place of work, they get tired of teasing those who are studying, thus resorting to adultery and begging, like drugs.

After receiving the complaint, they did not investigate properly and did not conduct the investigation promptly. Transgenders, according to a majority of them, do not file a complaint as they are made fun of at the place where they go to file a conduct report. When they go to file a complaint, some people there look at them from the wrong perspective. If you go to file a complaint, you are surprised to see that you are filing my complaint. If we go to file a complaint, our complaints should be properly investigated, and this situation should change.

Legal factors in the regulatory environment, such as macroeconomic changes, contribute to the lack of awareness of government incentives. Most respondents, including 93.55% of respondents, are unaware of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act. Students receive monthly benefits of 1000 rupees, but not the full amount. Additionally, those with government certificates receive shelter facilities but are not admitted. Legal authorities are also unaware of these issues. In their words-

‘In this society, we are not treated as equal as others; there are no facilities in schools, colleges, etc., and we are teased; we do not get full benefits; we do not get employment; we do not get equal pay. Because of the lack of money in life, we beg and do prostitution. Through this study, they said that in this society, we are also like others, but we are looked down upon as transgender; there are no facilities in schools, colleges, etc.; even if we want to study, others tease us and use derogatory words against us; even if the government gives incentives, we do not get those benefits; we do not get employment; we are not uneducated. Only a few of us get equal pay, whether we get it or not. If you ask them why, they will tell you the reasons why transgender people are insulting us by saying that this is the highest salary for you. Without knowing what to do because of a lack of money in life, we go begging on trains, buses, and shops. And we were born with a change in body size at birth, and it is not our fault, but the problems in us and in this society are that if we go to public places, they look at us from the wrong perspective, and there is no one to help us. But they don't come to help us; when we get in the car, they pass by looking at us as if we are transgender, and if we walk in public, they try to beat us; there is harassment, etc. Because of this, we avoid going out in public. At night, we go to our workplaces to take our rest, but they mislead us by saying that they will come to rape us. We are very hurt by such things happening. Our relatives and friends misunderstand us by looking at our appearance. We have such problems in society as third-gender people (or transgender people) say that we are separated from society’.

5. Recommendations

By implementing the following recommendations, future research can be more effective and contribute to meaningful improvements in the lives of transgender individuals.

- Develop strategies to avoid situations where respondents demand bribes or provide misleading information. This could include working with trusted community leaders or organizations.
- Collaborate with NGOs: Partner with non-governmental organizations and welfare institutions that work closely with the transgender community to facilitate trust and cooperation. Ensure Anonymity and Safety: Guarantee the anonymity and safety of respondents to encourage honest and open participation.

- Develop Educational Programs: Create awareness programs to educate society about the issues faced by transgender individuals, promoting acceptance and reducing stigma. Policy Advocacy: Advocate for policies that protect transgender individuals from harassment and discrimination, ensuring they have equal opportunities for employment and social acceptance.
- Create supportive environments in schools and colleges to encourage education without fear of bullying.
- Enforce policies at workplaces, schools, and public spaces to prevent harassment and ensure equal treatment.

6. Conclusion

Social exclusion of transgender individuals is a multifaceted issue that stems from various factors, including societal attitudes, systemic barriers, and personal experiences. The study highlights the severe challenges faced by third-gender individuals. Despite their educational qualifications and government-approved certificates, they are often excluded from job opportunities and do not receive full government benefits. This discrimination forces many into begging and prostitution for survival, revealing a serious societal issue that needs urgent attention. Addressing these factors requires comprehensive strategies that involve legal reforms, public education, supportive policies in various institutions, and the provision of inclusive and affirming services. Efforts to combat social exclusion must be intersectional, recognizing and addressing the diverse experiences and needs of transgender individuals. By addressing the problems, society can achieve greater inclusion and equality, ensuring that third-gender individuals are no longer marginalized and can live with dignity and respect.

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