



LABOURFORCE OF PARTICIPATION AND WAGE DIFFERENTIAL OF TRANSGENDERS IN KERALA

Dr. Maya C. Pillai

PG Dept. of Economics

NSS College Ottappalam

Abstract

The apparent invisibility of trans genders in mainstream employment leads to the hypothesis of exclusiveness of the third gender in the labour market. Identification and quantification is an important criteria for ensuring constitutional guarantees of gender equality and protection from violation of human rights. Binary outcomes has served as a stereotyped norm for gender classification and has led the perpetuation of inaccessibility of economic opportunities and social discrimination. Census of India 2011 ,attempted to bridge the data gap by estimating that nearly 4.8 million people of India are non binary. But there has not been a significant change in the pattern of official data collection ever since which limits policies of social and financial inclusion of trans genders.

Keywords -Lesbian Bisexual Transgender ,Queer (LBTQ), Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS)

Introduction

Transgender” is a term used in the 1990s to refer to individuals who do not entirely identify with the sex and/or gender they were assigned at birth, and “cisgender” is a term used to describe individuals whose gender identity matches their assigned sex and/or gender at birth. Gender can be viewed as a spectrum on which common gender identities include men, women and non-binary (Ozturk and Tatli, 2016).

Transmen” is a term used to describe individuals who were assigned female at birth but who identify as men, and “transwomen” refers to individuals who were assigned male at birth but identify as to not identify with the binary labels of men or a women may refer to themselves as non-binary (Davidson, 2016)

Legends and mythology of every culture in the universe have revealed the existence of a third gender. In India one popular term for referring transgender is Shivshakthi or the Ardhanarishwara form of merged gender assumed by the the half body merger of Lord Shiva and Parvathi as a symbol of ultimate power of the world

We find many references in myths and folk tales mentioning their work participation in different arenas. Indian mythological character sikhandi is a female warrior who has taken a male identity to kill Bhishma whose death ultimately led to the defeat of kauravas. Puranas have reference to dancers and musicians belonging to third nature or thrithiya prakriti called “Kinnars” as they are commonly known in Delhi 1

Transgenders were also part of Mughal Indian society. Under the Mughal rule, third gender was known as Kwaja Sira which was later shortened as “Hijra”. Hijras were the most trusted assistants of the King. They were appointed as Army generals, Administrators and advisors in Mughal courts. They served respected

positions as Religious teachers and Teachers to the royal family. They had another occupational role as security guards and cooks for queens in Mughal palaces

In the Maha Bharata, Arjuna was temporarily doomed to be a person of neuter gender for one year by Urvashi, the Apsara in devas court. This helped Arjuna to fulfil the condition of anonymous exile. Arjuna served as Dance teacher in King Virata's court as Brihahannala.

Historical sources point to the fact that definition of occupational roles of transgenders was not a difficult task in ancient times. In the Indian context, question of exclusion may be taken as legacy of colonial rule. British rulers who viewed transgenders with suspicion and introduced The Criminal Tribes Act which required registration and control of transgenders source?²

LGBTQ is an acronym used as a collective term to refer to lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender queer people who are in quest for their gender identity.

According to International Labour Organisation (ILO) Transgender face harassment for openly expressing their sexual identity and have to deal with discrimination at various stages of employment: "access to employment, refusal of employment, dismissals, or denial of training opportunities and promotions (ILO, 2016:42-

Research Gap

Inclusive growth strategy as envisaged in Twelfth plan stresses on encompassing all weaker sections and minorities.

All the existing methods of data collection are binary. Human development indicators regarding life expectancy, literacy and health indices have classification as either male or female. For the first time in India's data collection history, Census of India (2011) has made an estimate of transgenders in India and their geographical distribution over the states. But there is no data available regarding labour force participation of Transgenders and their work participation. In census terminology the word person is used to mean all human beings.

Kerala government has organised a survey of transgenders almost seven years back and has reported that there is a high rate of drop out of transgenders. They are unable to continue education either due to fear and social stigma at school or due to expulsion and social ostracization by family members. Being a transgender in orthodox society reduces acceptability and chances of employability. In order to appease hunger, transgenders who are thrown out of their homes have to resort to sex work.

Enrolment data of transgenders in various educational levels can lead to inclusion of this minority in educational field. LGBTQ related NGOs are not conducting surveys regarding employment status of transgenders. Many of the available literature is related to the assessment of their emotional attitudes aimed at providing a foundation for improving mental health of transgenders so as to equip them to face social challenges posed by society. But financial inclusion is necessary and in fact a more important factor for social inclusion. Lacunae in data is reflected in lack of policy specificity although the recent legislations and government policies are more proactive in case of transgenders.

Indian penal code also uses the term "person" to identify all human beings including Transgenders. But the contradiction here is that transgenders do not enjoy equal civil rights in the case of reservation for minorities but in case of punishment they are equalised (Chakrapani..).

Identification is the base for any policy making. Identifying and gathering data regarding transgender will definitely provide a base for economic empowerment and economic welfare policies.

HYPOTHESIS

Social stigma increases dropout rates of LGBTQ and reduces their qualifiability for employment

Open expression of trans gender identity reduces employability and leads to wage differentials

Objectives.

1. To understand the ontology of trans genders so as to gain an understanding of their existence at basic level and their interrelationship with social reality
2. To make an attempt to quantify the labour force assess the labour force participation of trans genders
3. To identify wage gaps in Kerala and impact of covid 19 on employment of trans genders

Data base and Methodology

The study utilises both secondary and primary data relies on secondary data from census of India , Kerala government , various reports from the internet and reports of news papers

Primary data is collected through snowball sampling method.Variables for questionnaire was identifies through online unstructured interview method with selected LGBTQs. Based on the feed back received questionnaire was reformulated Google forms were sent to respondents . Respondents were given an opportunity to chose a pseudo identity for public reference and they were given options like prefer not to answer so as to ensure confidentiality and to ensure better responses from participants

About 55 respondents participated via snowball sampling method

Review of Literature

Ideas related to ontological dependence are used as a basis for comparative existence analysis by metaphysicians.Ontological dependence is used a tool to describe the relationships of identity -dependence which are the direct outcomes of identity -criteria governing various instances (Lowe 2006)

Fairlie (2005) has used a decomposition method to study differential labour outcomes of transgender and nontransgenders.The study decomposes and examines employment and wage differentials.The findings suggest that trans gender people have less chance of being employed than nontransgender and existence of wage diffrentials and points towards the need for policies for reducing discrimination

(Grant et al., 2011) stated that the stigma surrounding transgender people is still pervasive which leads to structural discrimination in society .Labour market outcomes of transgender persons consistently show that transgender people face harassment, abuse and discrimination in the labour market (Davidson, 2016; Grant et al., 2011; Ozturk and Tatli, 2016).

Kollen (2016) stated that despite social discriminations and identical crisis, therehas been an increase in the level of public awareness and acceptance of transgender people in the last decade

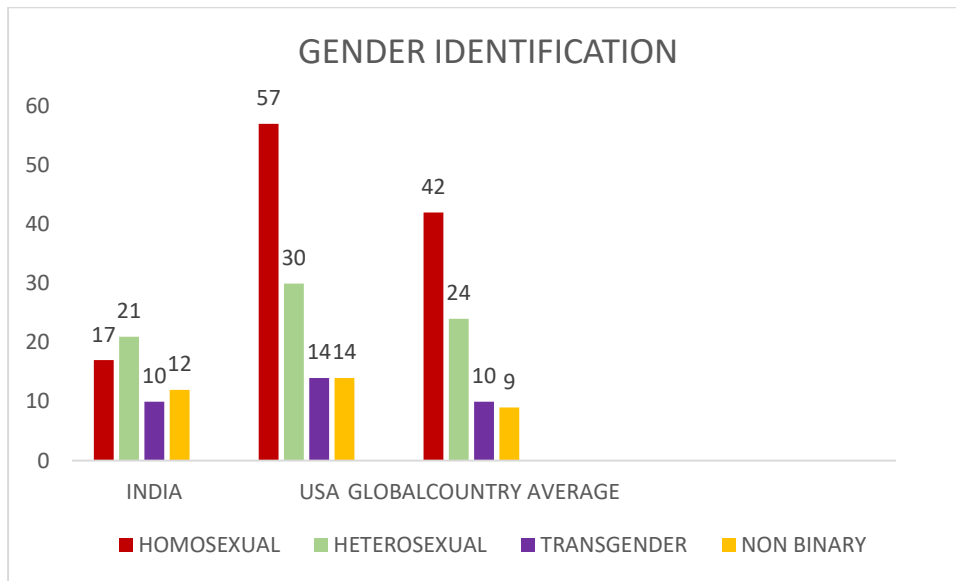
Davidson, 2016; Grant et al., 2011; Hughto et al., 2015) gave importance to structural discrimination in explaining employment and wage differentials. Major findings of the study are negative labour market outcomes in comparison to nontransgender persons.The unexplained employment and wage differential may hide the actual discrimination experienced by transgender people in labour market.

As structural stigma is a major contributor to the lower labour market outcomes of transgender people it can be mitigated by passing laws that provide transgender people with equal protection in employment, housing, and education (**Hughto et al., 2015**)

Section I

Ontological existence and Interrelationship of transgenders

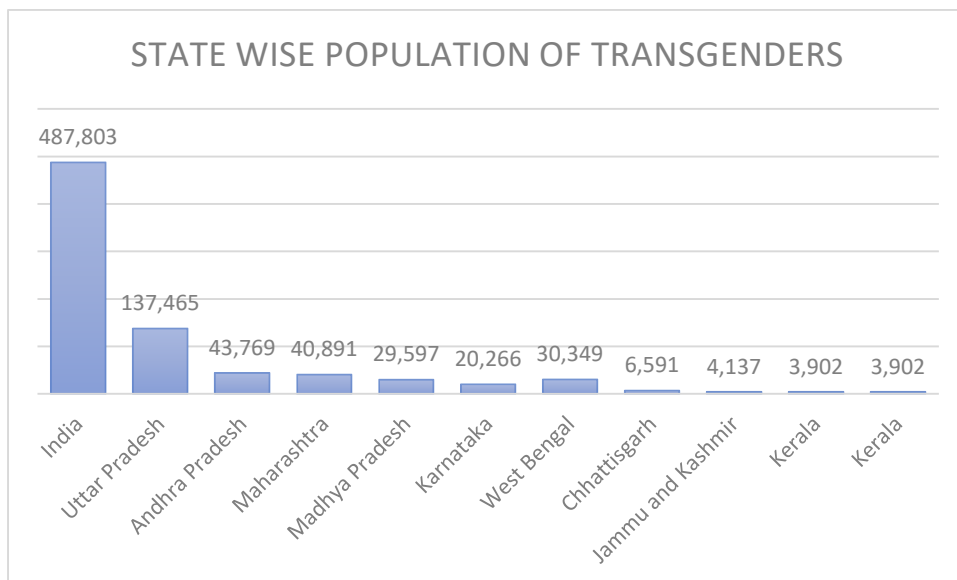
Global country averages shows that 42% of the global population identify themselves as homosexual. Only 24% of global population are heterosexual which has far reaching policy implications



compiled from © Ipsos | LGBT+ Pride 2021 Global Survey

The Report on LGBT+Pride Global Survey is based on the survey conducted by a Multinational research firm Ipsos between April May 2021 .

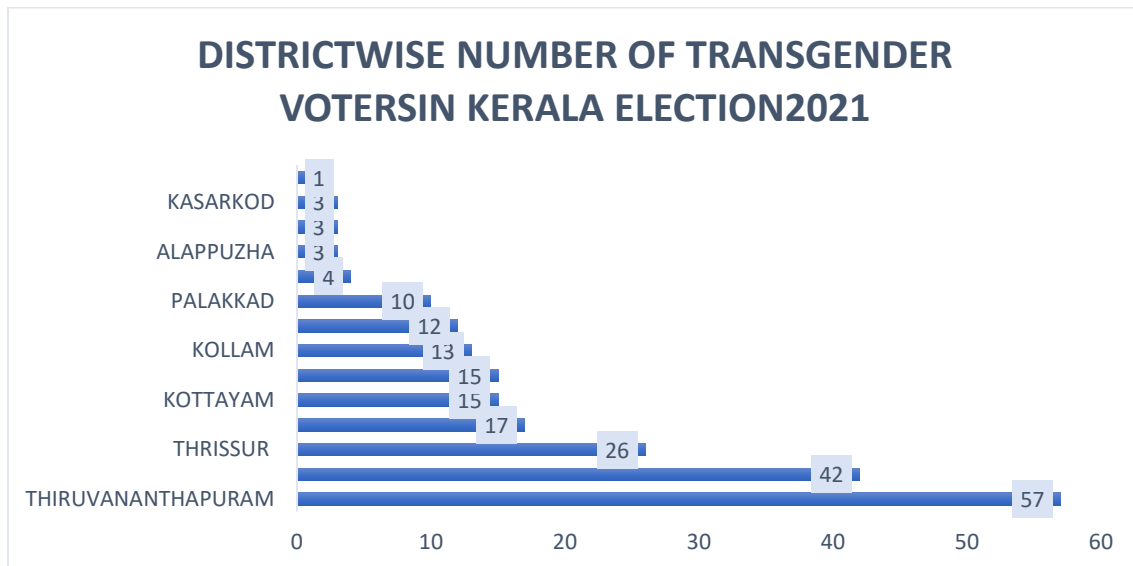
On the basis of this survey about 57 % of Americans are homosexual whereas in India the percentage is only 17%. Indias figure is lower by 25% comparative to world average .



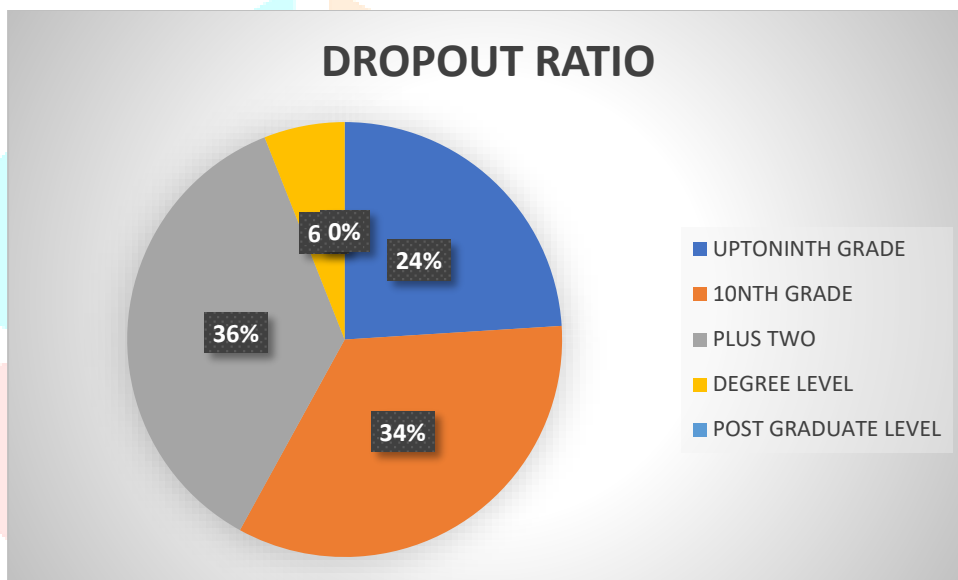
Compiled from Census of India 2011

State wise distribution of Transgenders show that 28,2% of transgenders are distributed in the state of Utar Pradesh,9% in Andhrapadesh 8.3% in Maharashtra.Kerala accommodates only 0.8% of transgender population www.eoc.kerala.gov.in

Kerala Legislative assembly elections in 2021 saw an increase in the registration of transgender voters to 221 numbers.Thiruvanantha puram showed the highest registration of 55 transgender voters



Compiled from www.eoc.kerala.gov.in



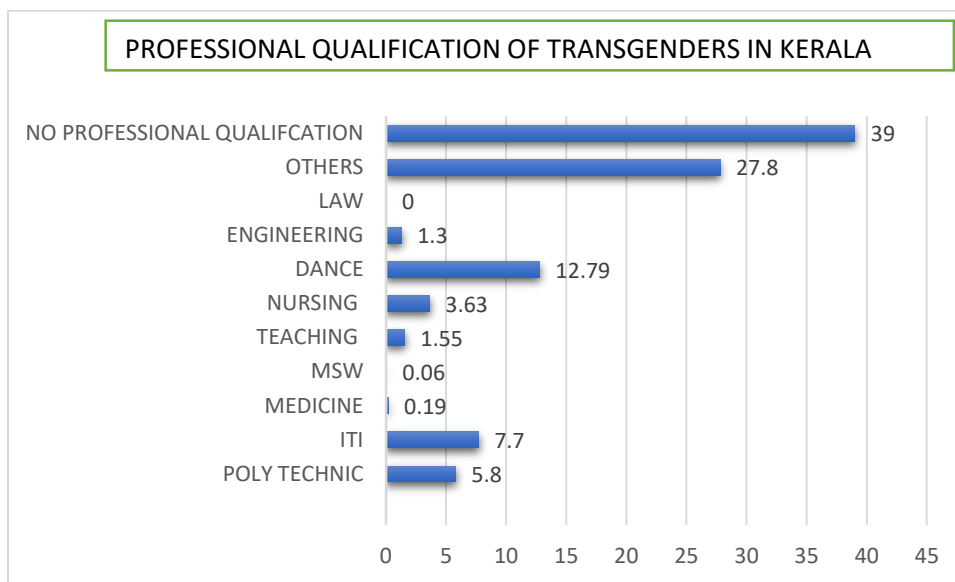
Compiled from The transgender Survey Kerala 2014

Based on The transgender Survey Kerala 2014, 36% of transgenders drop out from school at the plus two level. That 70% of transgenders do not study beyond graduation level is a significant factor determining their employability.

A major cause for dropping out is teasing from class mates and lack of support from family which forces them to stop studies and create an independent existence.

Special schemes are introduced by Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority (KSLMA) like enrolment of transgenders in equivalency programmes for 4th, 7th, 10th and 12th standards. The efforts KSLMA showed an outcome of passing of 79 Transgenders in 10th and 12th equivalency.

Education is translated to economic opportunity only when there are employment opportunities. Only 11.6% of transgenders are reported to have regular jobs and 50% of the people earn only less than Rs 5000 as their monthly income. 59% of the respondents had ration cards under BPL category. (The transgender Survey Kerala 2014)



Compiled from The transgender Survey Kerala 2014

Nearly 40% of people lack any professional qualification. 12.79% were engaged in dance. Nearly 13% are employed polytechnic and ITI taken together. This reveals a picture of lack of economic self sufficiency which forces them farther away from social mainstream giving further base for the argument that only economic inclusion can bring about social inclusion

Section II

Institutional measures for Destigmatisation of Trans genders

In 1994, trans genders were recognised as the third gender who have voting eligibilities. a great leap towards inclusion came in the form of inclusion of transgenders in the AADHAR card of 2013, In 2014 supreme Court acknowledged that transgenders are also legal citizens of India and ruled that they must be provided minority equivalent reservation in education and employment. (BBC.com 15 april 2014)

As per Indian Penal Code 1881, section 377 homosexual intercourse was a criminal offence. The Supreme court legalised Homosexuality on September 6, 2018.

In July 19, 2019, Transgender (protection of rights) Act 2019 was introduced which bans unfair discrimination against transgender people in educational establishment and services, employment, healthcare services, access to the "use of any goods, accommodation, service, facility, benefit, privilege or opportunity dedicated to the use of the general public or customarily available to the public", the right to movement, the right to "reside, purchase, rent or otherwise occupy any property", the opportunity to stand for or hold public or private office, and in government or private establishments (social justice nic.in)

In 2008, Tamil Nadu government set up a Trans gender Welfare Board with representatives from trans community to give official attention to the problems faced by transgenders.

In 2016, Kerala announced a welfare policy for Transgenders and introduced free Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) through government hospitals. The state also provided an amount for post operative care. A gender park was introduced [Kozhikode](#) as an institution dedicated to policies concerning [gender equality](#) and LGBT issues. (Wikipedia)

The first government agency which gave employment to transgender was Kochi Metro Rail In 2017, Many transgenders were employed in various capacities in Kochi Metro Rail. In December 29 2018, Kerala Higher Education Department

Conclusion

Gender identity of transgenders reduces their employment opportunities and causes wage inequalities. Exclusion from family and social ostracization leads to high drop out rates, An average employment gap of 38% was found between transgenders and non transgenders

Discrimination faced in every day lives leads to loss of employment potential of a category of valuable human capital which calls for the need for a conducive social environment with special focus on skill based training to reduce their economic incapacitation. Gender based sensitisation programmes can contribute towards a long term development of social consciousness. As a short term measure, they may be integrated into existing welfare schemes to ensure inclusiveness

References

Blau, F.D. & Kahn, L.M. (2017). The gender wage gap: Extent, trends, and explanations. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 55(3): 789-865.

Chakrapani, V., Babu, P., Ebenezer, T. (2004). Hijras in sex work face discrimination in the Indian health-care system. *Research for Sex Work*. p12-14. <http://www.nswp.org/resource/researchsex-work-7>

Fairlie, R.W. (2005). Transgender experiences of occupation and the environment: A scoping review. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 1-15

Davidson, 2016; Grant et al., 2011; Ozturk and Tatli, 2016). Transgender labour market outcomes: Evidence from the United States

Grant JM, Mottet LA, Tanis J, et al. . Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; 2011, pp. 1–220. Available at http://endtransdiscrimination.org/PDFs/NTDS_Report.pdf Accessed December 20, 2013 [[Google Scholar](#)]

HIJRAS-History of a marginalised community 16/10/2018 by Mahwish Gul
<https://www.dandc.eu/en/archive/201811>