

Economic Aspects of Male to Female Transsexuals: An Empirical Study

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Introduction

The transsexuals live below the poverty line economically and otherwise. They are deprived of several economic benefits like identity documents, infrastructural facilities, civic amenities, professional training, and developmental opportunities and so on. The transsexuals are deprived of civic amenities, sustainable livelihood opportunities, ownership of assets, financial resources and other economic opportunities in modern society. The present empirical study was carried out in Karnataka state with a view to understand the economic status, problems and prospects of male to female transsexuals.

Transsexuals are indeed economically most disadvantaged section of the Indian society. The review of literature indicates that adequate scientific investigations are not carried on the economic status of transsexuals. The notable studies concerning the economic issues of transsexuals include- Christine Burns, (1999), Currah and Minter (2000), Letellier and Lewis (2000), Weiss (2004), Pepper and Lorah (2008), Transgender Law Center (2009), Garcia (2011), Hansen (2011), Law et.al. (2011), Houston (2011), Law et.al. (2011) and Saxena (2011).

Key Words: *Transsexuals, Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities, Disadvantaged Section*

Significance of the Study

A substantial amount of research has been done and a considerable body of knowledge has accumulated concerning the multi-faceted problems of transsexuals in modern society. The extent to which one ought to be concerned about the welfare and development of transsexuals is duly emphasized in the findings and recommendations of the studies conducted by various researchers all over the world. The policy makers, administrators, law enforcement authorities, development personnel, social activists and others need to know more about what factors influence the personality of transsexuals, what preventive measures are effective in preventing the unhealthy living patterns of transsexuals and what kind of progressive measures are required to improve the status of transsexuals in future.

Few researchers in India have assessed the living conditions, social disadvantages, economic constraints, political limitations and other aspects of transsexuals. The major deficiency observed in their works is the lack of emphasis on the rehabilitation and empowerment of the transsexuals in Indian society as a whole. Couple of investigations is conducted in Karnataka State and other parts of India on quite a few aspects of the personality of transsexuals. The review of literature reveals that adequate scientific investigations are not carried out in this region on the economic aspects of male to female transsexuals. Hence, the present study assumes academic significance.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the economic status of the male to female transsexuals in Karnataka state.
2. To analyze the economic problems of male to female transsexuals in Karnataka state; and
3. To suggest appropriate measures for the economic progress of male to female transsexuals in Karnataka state.

Methodology

The present study was carried in Bangalore and Mysore cities of Karnataka State. The study is based on a sample of 300 (Bangalore: 253; Mysore: 47) male to female transsexuals. The study was planned and conducted in three stages. In the first stage, a pilot study was conducted in order to examine the feasibility and appropriateness of the tools and procedures of the study. In the second stage, interview schedules were developed and perfected in order to collect authentic primary data from the male to female transsexuals of Mysore and Bangalore cities, Karnataka State in accordance with the objectives and research questions of the study. In the third stage, appropriate scientific statistical analysis procedures were followed to ensure systematic data analysis and interpretation. Overall, the present study approached the problem through a systematic survey method.

Results and Discussion

Basic Needs of Transsexuals

A majority of the respondents (91.00%) have stated that they suffered from the denunciation of basic needs by the state. The basic needs are necessary for long-term physical well-being of people. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory in psychology proposed by Abraham Maslow who subsequently extended the idea to include his observations of humans' innate curiosity. His theories parallel many other theories of human developmental psychology. The basic needs approach to development was endorsed by

governments and workers' and employers' organizations from all over the world. It influenced the programmes and policies of major multilateral and bilateral development agencies, and was the precursor to the human development approach. In the development discourse, the basic needs model focuses on the measurement of what is believed to be an eradicable level of poverty. Physiological needs like air, water, and food are metabolic requirements for survival in all animals, including humans. Clothing and shelter provide necessary protection from the elements. Safety and security needs such as personal security, financial security, health and well-being and safety net against disasters are required for the well-being of the mankind including the disadvantaged transsexuals in modern society.

Ration Card for Transsexuals

A greater part of the respondents (92.67%) have stated that they suffered from the rejection of ration card by the state. Ration cards are issued to the citizens in order to ensure fair distribution of food and civil supplies in modern society. These cards are issued by the government officials in Indian society. The details of family members are mentioned in the ration cards in order to decide the quantum of distribution of food grains by the government agencies. The citizens are required to submit certain valid documents such as voter identity card, property tax in case of own house, electricity bill, telephone bill, front page of bank pass book, allotment orders of site/ house and so on to obtain the ration card which is an important document. If the applicant is a Government servant, he should get the application certified by the Head of the office. If the person is not a Government servant, he should get his application attested by a Municipal Commissioner or a Gazetted Officer in the town or any other class of persons specially or generally authorized by the Government. The poor people who are below the poverty line are eligible to get the BPL/Antyodaya ration cards for subsidized distribution of food and civil supplies. The transsexuals who are economically marginalized section of society are also entitled to receive the ration card to live a good life in modern society.

Passport for the Transsexuals

A preponderance of the respondents (98.67%) has stated that they suffered from the denial of passport by the state. A passport is issued under the Passports Act, 1967. It is an offence punishable with imprisonment or fine or both, to furnish false information or suppress information, which attracts penal and other action under relevant provisions of Section 12 of the Passports Act, 1967. Passport is a very valuable document. Hence, all holders are required to take due care that it does not get damaged, mutilated or lost. Passports should not be sent out to any country by post/ courier. Loss of passport should be immediately reported to the nearest Police Station and to the Passport Office or Indian Mission, if

abroad. Passport holder shall be responsible for misuse of passport, due to non-intimation of loss, to the concerned Passport Office/Indian Mission. Passport is a government property and should be surrendered when demanded in writing by any Passport Issuing Authority. There are specific guidelines for filling up passport application form. The applicants are required to submit certain valid documents in support of their claims. The passport enables the civilians to enjoy the benefit of social mobility and earn the benefit of livelihood outside the country by using their skill and competence. The transsexuals should also be enabled to obtain passport without any complexities and lead a good life through better employment opportunities.

Driving License for the Transsexuals

An almost all of the respondents (99.33%) have stated that they suffered from the denial of driving license by the state. The driving license is a document issued by the government authorities. The license holders are given official permission by the state to drive on public roadways. It is a misdemeanor to drive on public roadways without a valid driver license. The persons who violate the rules and regulations are punished by the authorities. The officials issue an authentic, confidential and authenticate driving license to the eligible candidates after verification of documents and conduction of tests. The license holders are required to keep the driver license and handbook as a reference on traffic safety and update it as needed. The citizens are required to follow the norms and guidelines to obtain the driving license which enables them to earn their livelihood and perform their day to day activities in modern civil society. The transsexuals are also entitled to driving license which provides them gainful employment opportunities in modern society.

PAN Card for Transsexuals

A largest part of the respondents (89.33%) have stated that they suffered from the rebuff of PAN card by the state. The Indian citizens are eligible for allotment of Permanent Account Number by the state. The companies are also eligible to obtain this document for smooth conduction of their affairs legally. The details can be obtained from the Income Tax Office or PAN Centre or websites of PAN Service Providers. The applicants should furnish certain information and enclose authentic documents to obtain the PAN from the officials. In case of Company, the name should be provided without any abbreviations. In case of sole proprietorship concern, the proprietor should apply for PAN in his/her own name. It is mandatory for the applicants to mention either their telephone number or valid e-mail id so that they can be contacted in case of any discrepancy in the application and/or for receiving PAN through e-mail. It is mandatory to indicate at least one of the sources of incomes, as mentioned in the form. Documents should

be in the name of applicant. List of documents which will serve as proof of identity, address and date of birth for each status of applicant are given in the application. The prominent documents such as Aadhaar card, elector's photo identity card, driving license, passport, ration card, arm's license, photo identity card, post office passbook, address proof, latest property tax assessment, domicile certificate, property registration document etc should be submitted to the competent authority. The transsexuals should also be enabled to obtain the Permanent Account Number by the state without any difficulties.

House Site for Transsexuals

A majority of the respondents (99.00%) have stated that they suffered from the denial of house site by the state. Shelters contribute more than a safe place to stay. They provide vital services and resources that enable the civilians to live a normal life. The people are also entitled to house sites and own houses to build self esteem and gain a self-determined and independent life. The civilians should not be displaced by either domestic violence or armed violence and insecurity. Displacement is indeed a curse, disadvantage and deprivation. It is also a clear violation of human rights. The civilians should not be subjected to displacement under forcible circumstances. The people have a right to shelter in a democratic and civil society. In other countries, the housing, land and property rights of the people are honored by the state. It is the duty of the state to provide shelter to the citizens by providing house sites or houses either free of cost or at subsidized rates. In particular, the disadvantaged sections of society should be empowered by the state through proper shelter and security. The transsexuals are subjected to domestic violence and exclusion by the civil society. They deserve the benefit of shelter on humanitarian grounds in a welfare state like India.

Land for Transsexuals

A greater part of the respondents (89.33%) have stated that they suffered from the denial of allotment of land for cultivation by the state. Most land-based livelihoods rely on having secure access to land. It is also a precondition for sustainable agriculture, economic growth and poverty reduction. There are strong links between inequality of asset distribution and poor macroeconomic performance. This fact suggests that reform of the property system is one of the most important issues we face in our attempts to reduce global poverty. Distribution of land to the poor and needy is essential in modern society to alleviate poverty. Land and immovable property are often the most important elements in an individual family's asset portfolio. Land reform entails redistribution of land, remodeling of land rights and improvement of land administration in a manner that 'fits' the requirements of the political system promoting the reform. The political stimulus for land redistribution affects the extent to which agricultural systems are

transformed, the degree of productivity increase and the extent of economic growth that will benefit the poor. The governments should be encouraged to underwrite security of land tenure – a widely recognized public good – by providing the legal and institutional capacity needed for just, equitable and efficient land administration and distribution. The landless farmers, artisans and laborers should be empowered by the state through proper implementation of land reforms program. The transsexuals are indeed landless, resource less and powerless citizens of modern society. Distribution of land to the transsexuals would enable them to earn their livelihood through agriculture and allied activities.

Self Employment Opportunities for Transsexuals

A majority of the respondents (88.67%) have stated that they suffered from the denial of loan and subsidy for self employment by the state. In a civil society, people have a right to employment which is the surest means of sustainable livelihood. All citizens cannot get government employment due to several constraints and limitations. Most of the people rely upon agriculture and allied activities for their development. In modern times, vocational education and training provide self-employment opportunities to the people in all walks of human life. Self-employment is a form of labour market status which may encompass a wide range of different activity. A substantial body of research investigates the self-employed as entrepreneurs, using self-employment as an observable category which, albeit imperfectly, identifies the stock of entrepreneurial talent in the economy. The skilled, competent and resourceful individuals normally choose self-employment if gainful employment opportunities are not assured under normal circumstances. The transsexuals are denied of adequate employment opportunities due to several constraints in modern society. Scholars have observed that public policy which supports transitions into self-employment may therefore have wider economic and societal benefits. The transsexuals should be encouraged by the government and civil society to gain adequate self-employment opportunities and lead a self-reliant life.

Employment Opportunities for Transsexuals

A preponderance of the respondents (99.33%) has stated that they suffered from the denial of employment opportunities by the state. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has worked for decades to promote equal training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through international labour standards, knowledge development, advocacy and technical advisory services to its constituents. New initiatives are designed to support improved capacity of governments in collaboration with social partners and civil society agencies to design, implement and evaluate legislation that effectively supports equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Scholars have provided certain norms,

guidelines and strategies to equip policy makers, legislators, and social partners, individuals with disabilities, their families and advocates, and other key individuals to achieve a positive legislative impact. Studies have revealed that affecting positive changes in the area of equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities can occur on several different levels through: modification and enhancement of current law; development of new legislation; and/or development or modification of regulations, policies, or procedures to implement specific laws. The transsexuals are also disadvantaged section of modern society.

Livelihood for Transsexuals through Entertainment

A greater part of the respondents (97.67%) have stated that they suffered from the condemnation of procuring livelihood through entertainment by the state. All human beings are entitled to enjoyment of human rights without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Everyone is entitled to equality before the law and equal protection of the law without any such discrimination. Transgender are also part of society and have equal rights which are available to other persons. The discrimination based on their class and gender makes the transgender community one of the most disempowered and deprived groups in Indian society. Transsexuals are subjected to series of disadvantages including unemployment. They are excluded from effectively participating in social and cultural life; economy; and politics and decision-making processes. They usually earn their livelihood through begging, sex trade, entertainment and other means. They are denied of civic amenities and fundamental rights. The state and civil society are responsible for providing employment and livelihood opportunities and various human rights.

Livelihood for Transsexuals through Begging

A larger part of the respondents (91.33%) have stated that they suffered from the incongruity of procuring livelihood through begging by the state. The transsexuals face discrimination, unemployment, lack of educational facilities and other civic amenities. A majority of them remain unemployed and under-employed. They are forced to earn their livelihood through begging, dancing, match making, domestic labour, manual labour and other activities. They are also excluded from social participation and basic livelihood and employment opportunities. They have no access to bathrooms/toilets and public spaces. The lack of access to bathrooms and public spaces access is illustrative of discrimination faced by transgender in availing each facilities and amenities. They face similar problems in prisons, hospitals and schools. Transgender have very limited employment opportunities as most jobs are confined to male and female sexes. Transgender, being a third sex, cannot even apply for most of the jobs.

Welfare Schemes for Transsexuals

A majority of the respondents (89.67%) have stated that they suffered from the denial of procuring livelihood through government welfare schemes. The concept of Transgender should cover all categories of people such as female to male, male to female, etc. The transsexuals' community is facing discrimination and stigma in every sphere of life. The discrimination starts from the family and continues for the entire life. Corrective actions are essential to create an enabling environment and ensure respectable identity for the transsexuals in society. They should be enabled to get identity documents for the purpose of obtaining civic amenities and developmental opportunities through government agencies. The actual population of transsexuals should be identified and accordingly welfare measures should be planned. The Government should take steps to sensitize the general community so as to create a supportive and enabling environment for the TG community.

Shelter for Transsexuals

A preponderance of the respondents (83.00%) has stated that they living in slum/non fair area. The transsexuals experience extreme difficulties in obtaining adequate and safe shelter. Well-meaning shelter administrators are often unsure of how to provide safe shelter for transgender people. Many shelters across the globe have successfully implemented policies to make shelters safe for transgender people. It is critical that this issue be fully explored and addressed with suitable networks, manpower and operations to create safe, judicious and hospitable environment for the transsexuals in need of shelter. Transgender people should be allowed to choose the housing option that they believe is the safest for them. Generally, if shelters are sex-segregated, people who identify as men should be housed with men and people who identify as women should be housed with women. This is true regardless of whether people have ID showing this name/gender, regardless of whether they look masculine or feminine, and regardless of whether they've had sex reassignment surgery.

Implications of the Study

The present investigation reveals that it is imperative to formulate a national policy on transgender people who are the most backward and marginalized sections of modern society. The government should also create a special database of transgenders that would help deal with their problems and demands. A national commission should also be constituted for the transsexuals to prepare grounds for their protection and empowerment. The state is also responsible for providing basic education,

vocational education, employment opportunities, healthcare facilities, inheritance of property, adoption of child, access to public space, access to legal rights and allied facilities for the inclusive growth and development of transsexuals. They should be treated equally, respectfully and without any discrimination. The state should also provide subsidy to all those transgenders in the field of education, healthcare, business, cooperative management and other fields of development. The state should also take affirmative action to achieve the goal of equality by providing adequate opportunities for transgenders in all walks of life. The state should also implement welfare and protective measures in order to achieve gender justice and equity.

The state government should formulate such programs which will ensure the social, economic and political rehabilitation of transgender. There should be a Transgender Welfare Board in all states and union territories. In particular, the state government of Karnataka should provide adequate funds and facilities for the inclusive and integrated development of transgenders in urban and rural areas. Formal and non-formal educational programs should be introduced at policy level. The educational institutions have a great social responsibility of changing the mindset of the people and motivating them to become the champion of human rights and gender justice. Any kind of refusal to treat a person on the basis of gender identity should be considered as a serious professional misconduct. Suitable action plans should be drawn for the rehabilitation of transsexuals through health awareness programmes and providing health education opportunities.

The corporate social responsibility of media demands that mass media organizations should sensitize the various stakeholders of the empowerment of transsexual people. The media are required to sensitize the transsexuals about their identity in modern society. The media institutions should take all possible steps for bringing the transsexual community into the mainstream of national life. The NGOs should also provide series of educational, healthcare, human rights and development oriented services to the transgender people. Shelter homes should be made accessible for the disadvantaged transsexuals who are facing violence. The research and development institutions are called upon to play a pro-active role, explore new redressal mechanisms, identify development measures and facilitate the sustainable development of transgender community.

Conclusion

The transsexual people are subjected to multi faceted inconveniences, injustices, deprivations and discriminatory tendencies in modern society. The present study conducted to understand socio-economic status, health status and human rights violations of male to female transsexuals in Karnataka state. The

present study reveals that male to female transsexuals face pervasive discrimination in virtually all walks of life. 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. They have been educationally most backward and economically marginalized sections of our society. They are also victims of ill health and other health related disadvantages. They are also deprived of their civic amenities and basic health care facilities. The respondents have also reported experiencing homelessness in their lives. The Government should take steps for bringing the transsexual community into the mainstream by providing adequate healthcare, education, employment and security.

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