



# SEXUAL ASSAULT AGAINST TRANSGENDER WOMEN: SHATTER THE SILENCE, STOP THE VIOLENCE

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## **Abstract**

Sexual assault is one of the worst form of violation and when it comes to transgender, even more worse. But, it's not given much importance as it deserves to be. This paper would examine the topic on "Sexual Assault Against Transgender: Shatter The Silence, Stop The Violence". The hypothesis would be to understand how law and public are not strong for sexual assault against transgender.

Based on Feminist Research Methodology random 80 men and women from Kerala were questioned based on general public awareness concerning towards sexual harassment on transgender women. Apart from that 6 case studies are taken from those who are the survivors to these sexual assault to get more insight on this topic. The research aims to show how society are not showing the support they show when women experience sexual assault.

The outcome of this research is to broaden the understanding and the hardship they face to get justice for a heinous crime, called sexual harassment.

Key words: *Sexual assault, transgender women, sexuality, human rights*

## **Introduction**

Most of us are aware of the term LGBTQ, though many doesn't know what it actually means. LGBTQ group refers to as 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community'. Awareness and acceptance of the Indian society for lesbians and gays are more due to their acceptance in many parts of the world and their prominence in the social media. However, transgender are the least recognised community not only in India but though out world. Though, we have moved forwards a lot on social equality, transgender community are yet to be accepted into the society as one among us.

The term transgender in general is an umbrella term that includes different types of gender variant people. Though there are many definitions for transgender, to be simple, transgender are those who believe that their physical body does not go with the gender role he/she is assigned at birth. A transgender women or trans women is a women who is assigned male by birth, but whose gender identity is of a female. They undergo substantial discrimination in many areas of life which includes education, employment, hate crimes including physical and sexual violence in their day to day life. Studies have indicated that a large percentage of the sexual harassment towards the LGBTQ community were towards trans women. Trans women go through everything a woman goes through in terms of security and privacy.

Though our country has moved forward with strong legal system to support crime against women, trans women still continues to live an oppressed life. Even today we see majority of them begging at traffic signals or into prostitution. This was mainly due to the absence of any legal recognition, protection and lack

of social awareness. In April, 2014 the Supreme Court of India through a landmark judgement gave legal recognition to the transgender community as an official 'third gender'. This was followed by the introduction of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 by the Government of India with the objective to provide protection of rights of transgender people, their welfare and other related matters. Though there are certain reservations on some of the clauses of this act, this is considered to be a turning point towards the acceptance of the community into the society. However, this community still suffers a lot of violence and harassment. This is mainly due to the absence of a robust system in the country towards their legal protection and lack of nationwide social awareness and recognition.

There are a number of NGOs and organizations in India with the mission to build an empowered and self-sufficient transgender community. Some of these NGOs also provide emergency responses to individuals whose human rights have been violated and also support to fight against sexual assault on trans women. For example there is a small community or more like a home called AajichaGhar (Grandma's house) founded by Gauri Suresh Sawant. It's a home for the abandoned girl children and elder transgender's. Sahodari (Sister) Foundation founded by Kalki Subramaniam is an organization which provides counselling and support services for underprivileged trans-women. These are just few of the organization which support transgender community as well as help the trans-women in every aspect. But how many of us know about these organizations? Will they come out and support them? Is the society ready to accept trans community and comfortable being with them and fight for their rights?

What we don't realise is that we, as a society are directly or indirectly responsible for present condition of transgender community. As part of this study, a survey was also carried out to find the awareness of the society about transgender community, and the harassments trans-women goes through in India. The survey was also aimed to find out the acceptance of the trans-women community by the society, their awareness and concern. Though the outcome of the survey is encouraging, with the young generation showing keenness in coming out and help towards the uplift of the trans-women community, more need to be done to make the this generation to be comfortable to be involved in the company of transgender and trans-women community.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Transgender**

When a child is born, doctor's or nurse say's, "It's a boy" or "It's a girl." Assigning someone's sex on basis of biological character is something we have been known to. But a person's gender identity which is the inner sense of being male, female or both may not always match their biological structure. Those kind of people are called transgender.

Transgender is an individual who believes that their physical body does not correlate with the gender role he/she is assigned to. For example, a person must be having male body structure but he will be having feelings and emotions of a girl. Transgender are of two types : trans-women and trans-men. Trans man is a man who was assigned female at birth but later converted into man whereas trans women is a women who was assigned male at birth but later converted into female. Broadly transgender can be divided into 4 categories:

- (a) Eunuch (Hijras): A term used in India, which includes those who aspire to and/or undergo castration, as well as those who are intersexed. Some Hijras refer to themselves in the feminine, others refer themselves as they belong to a third gender and are neither male nor female. A eunuch realises her sexual orientation generally later in her childhood.
- (b) Hermaphrodite: Hermaphrodite is one who is born with deformed genitals. She may be having both a penis and a vagina at the same time. When grown older she may have breast development or any other type of male symbols like beard and moustache, excess body hair and a hoarse voice.
- (c) Cross dressed/Transvestite: An individual who dresses in the clothing that is typically worn by people of another gender. It is a form of gender expression. Transvestites are often male who dress in the clothing worn by females. They are also known as cross-dressers. A male may dress up like a female and a female may dress up like a male.

(d) Gay/Lesbian: These term can be used to describe any person (male or female) who experiences sexual attraction to people of the same gender Gay is male who is sexually attracted to other males and/or identifies as gay.. Lesbian is female who is sexually attracted to other females and/or identifies as a lesbian. (*Research paper on Sexual victimization against transgender women in prison: Consent and coercion in context*)

Transgender people experience their gender identity at various ways at various stages of their life. Some may trace their transgender identity and feelings much early in their life, whereas some realised their nonconforming attitudes and behaviours only during adolescence or much later in life. Studies have brought out that those who realise their transition later in life normally struggle much more to fit into the reality, than those who identify it much earlier. But the one think which is common among all of them is that they are neither treated equally like any one of us nor have an opportunity for education or follow any field of their interest. Helen R. Friedman, PhD, a clinical psychologist in St. Louis who specialized in gender identity and transgender issues said "It takes a lot of courage to buck the culture's norm that gender is binary,"(*article from WebMD*)and there is a very long way to go to make people understand the fact that they belong to a race, namely “human race”.

### **Transgender Woman (Trans Woman)**

A male to female (MTF) transsexual women (trans woman) is someone who is labelled male by birth but having a gender identity of a female. They can be differentiated from other transgender people by their enormous strong will to live completely and permanently as women, against their original birth label as a male. They normally ensures that their body and gender expressions are in accordance with strong female identity to make it clearly visible to their colleagues, friends and families. Transsexual women often experience significant emotional distress, usually referred to as **gender dysphoria**. Other non-medical names are Hijra (In India), **t-girl**, **tg-girl**, and **ts-girl**.

Trans women existed since the beginning of time. The *Hijra* community has been mentioned in ancient Indian literature. One of the many forms of Shiva, a principal Hindu deity, formed out of merging with his

wife Parvati, to become the androgynous *Ardhanari*, holds special significance to many in the community of Hijra. Moreover they held important positions in court and various facets of administration during the Mughal era of India, from the 16th to 19th century. They were also considered to hold religious authority and were sought out for blessings, especially during religious ceremonies. These people are also called by different names in different regions of India like Kinnar( in North India), Aravani (in tamil Nadu), Shiv-shakthis ( a community in Andra Pradesh) Jogtihazras ( in Maharashtra& Karnataka) etc.( *Research paper Transgender and Sexual Health: A Study on Launda Dancers in West Bengal*)

### **Sexual Assault**

What is sexual assault? It is a heinous crime in which a person touches another person's body without their consent. Many of us still think that sexual assault means physically forcing the other person for sexual activity (without their consent). But there are many different types of sexual assault which takes place but has severe impact mentally and emotionally which varies from person to person

- (a) Rape (physically forcing the other person into sexual activity)
- (b) Fondling (sexual contact without the other person's consent)
- (c) Object penetration (penetrating someone's vagina or anus without their consent)
- (d)Eve teasing (winking ,teasing, staring, making inappropriate gestures in public places like parks, street etc is also a form of sexual assault)

All kind of sexual assault has different kind of impact on different people. Some of the effects are depression, anxiety, PTSD, flashback, substance abuse, suicidal tendency, panic attacks, eating disorders etc. Some takes year's and year's to get out of the traumatic experience and some may not take, it all depends on how much support they are getting. Trans women also goes through all these physiological trauma may be more due to the lackof support system available in the society to support them. In addition, they also get shouted, body shamed, insulted and tortured by the public for no reasons.

As we know women are one of the rising victim of sexual assault all over the world and mostly because since past women were characterized as weak, emotional, sentimental and someone who can't stand for themselves. Whereas men were characterized as strong, bold, independent and someone whose demands should be fulfilled no matter what. Even though lot of such perceptions and mind sets have changed, but there is still increasing trend in the cases of sexual assault against women though out the world.

### **Problems Faced by Trans women**

Studies have brought out that the trans woman are at heightened risk of sexual harassment throughout the world with about 19% of trans women experiencing domestic/ sexual violence compared to about 6.8 % of cisgender women. Though no known such studies have been carried and in India, it can be said with confidence that the state trans women in India is not any better, but may be worse than the world average.

One of the main reasons for this increase in the % of sexual harassment on trans women is the lack of support system in India in terms of awareness, legal and judicial support. These people face severe discrimination, stigma and systemic inequality which make them more vulnerable to sexual harassment. Some of the specific issues facing trans women community are.

- (a) **Trans Bashing**. Trans bashing is a term given for an act of victimizing a person emotionally, physically, sexually, or verbally because they are transgender. This term is also been applied to hatespeech directed at transgender people and at depictions of transgender people in the media that reinforce negative stereotypes about them. They face this every single day! Every moment! Almost 80% of people give them verbal abuses/ hate comments or ignore them when they find them on the streets asking for support or monetary help and way more worse for trans-women.
- (b) **Lack of Compassion**. When a woman goes to police station for filing complaint/FIR against sexual assault, their cases are at least being heard or taken into account. But when trans-women goes to police station to file complaint, the same police people gives lot of judgment on them, their character, body shaming etc. This is one of the single most important reason why most of the harassments against trans women are not reported. This further makes them more vulnerable to sexual harassment. Swati BidhanBaruah, India's first transgender judge said "Transgender person face excessive harassment even when they do try to report a crime, most of the police officers, not

just the lower ranking police officials but even the high ranking police officials aren't aware of how to deal with a transgender person,"

(c) **Negative Reputation**. It is a reality that the general perception of the public about trans women is negative and are those having 'bad behaviour'. Little that we realise what has led them into this state. Being disowned by their own family, harsh treatment from the society along with lack of access to education and jobs after forces them into taking up begging, prostitution and other small criminal ways for a living.

(d) **Poverty**. As brought out above, trans-women are disowned by their own family, friends and relatives once they come to know about their inclinations. It is a reality that being a parent of a trans woman child is considered shameful even in the present day. They disown their own children which is heart breaking. This forces them to fight their life on their own, which intern pushes them into poverty. "Ms Priya (a trans-women) said that she had to take different path like sex work for their livelihood as begging would hardly get any money towards payment of house rent, food, education of their children etc." There was a dialogue from a Hindi movie called Laxmi, in which the trans women ( the lead character of the movie) says " People call us Hijra, Chakka etc. When my dad got to know that I am different from others, he threw me out, and made me orphan. If he would have taught me, even I would have become an engineer or doctor." This actually brings out the state of majority of trans women in India.

(e) **Lack of Legal Protection**. Trans-women people faces a pseudo legal system that often does not protect them from discrimination based on their gender identity. Swati Bidhan Baruah, India's first transgender judge herself had said "The huge discrepancy in rape laws and the punishment for sexually assaulting a transgender person is just another way of showing that our lives don't matter". Punishment for physical and sexual abuse on trans women can be imprisonment of minimum 6 months and maximum 2 years with fine. However, if the victim is women is minimum 10 years in prison or can be extended to life long.

**CASE STUDIES**

It's about a survivor of brutal sexual assault on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2017 in Hyderabad, India. It all happened when she was in a bus stand when 10 uniformed jawans(Indian Army Officials) approached the survivor and began coercing her for sex. When the survivor firmly refused for it, they attacked her and dragged her inside the cantonment area. They assumed her to be a cis-women and all her plea that she is a trans woman was dismissed. This brutal assault left her unconscious for few hours. Later she along with few other transgender activists were humiliated at the police station for demanding registration of FIR. They had to go through a lot of insult and humiliation just because she was a trans-woman. An FIR was only registered after a lot of pressure from higher authorities and persuasion from activists.(*article from*

*<https://countercurrents.org/2017/07/physical-and-sexual-assault-on-a-transgender-woman-by-a-group-of-army-personnel/>*)

This is a horrible real life story of a trans woman in Bangalore, Karnataka. She got a job in a textile industry just after the 2019 transgender bill was passed by the Government. She was happy to go to the office to start a new life. Little did she knew that the place will haunt her forever. She was sexually assaulted by her company people on the first day itself by saying that she doesn't deserve to be there among them. When she went to complain, they laughed and said to provide proof that she was sexually assaulted. The only option in front of her was to either leave the job, which would have pushed her back into poverty or to continue with all the harassment. It is a fact a reality that trans women don't feel safe at all when they go for work, as people keep staring at them, following them to see which washroom they use etc.

This story is about a trans woman in Mumbai, which is experienced by majority of trans women in India on a daily basis. She was travelling in a train when a guy started touching her inappropriately. She shouted at him asking why he is doing it and him to behave properly. To her shock two more guys standing nearby also started harassing her. She somehow managed to run away from that place. What is shocking is that no one around ever bothered to support her, instead they were giving her dirty looks and laughing at her being a trans.

This is about a trans woman who is from Kashmir, India. She works as a matchmaker as well as performs at weddings. She faced a very brutal sexual assault on 29<sup>th</sup> Aug 2018. That night she was raped

inside a dimly lit room while the marriage celebrations continued in the house. They said that they were raping her for dressing like a woman and will teach her how it is to be like a woman.

This is about a trans woman who used to be a bar dancer in Bangalore. She was into this profession so that she can look after her family. One day she was dancing in the bar when the manager told her to go to a place with address written for performing. Once she reached the place, two guys started sexually harassing her. They were more keen to know how a trans woman is like. When she resisted, they assaulted her badly and raped her. She didn't report the matter to police or the manager as they wouldn't have taken her seriously because she is a trans-woman and it would affect her livelihood.

These case studies are just few to bring out the brutal sexual assault trans women goes through, whether it is their work place or otherwise. These cases also show the apartheid that the society has towards the transgender and trans-women in particular. Even though with introduction of transgender protection acts and rules, our society and the legal system in the country still consider transgender as outcasts. The views of a society towards an individual or a community start from each one of us, because we are the part of the society.

### Survey

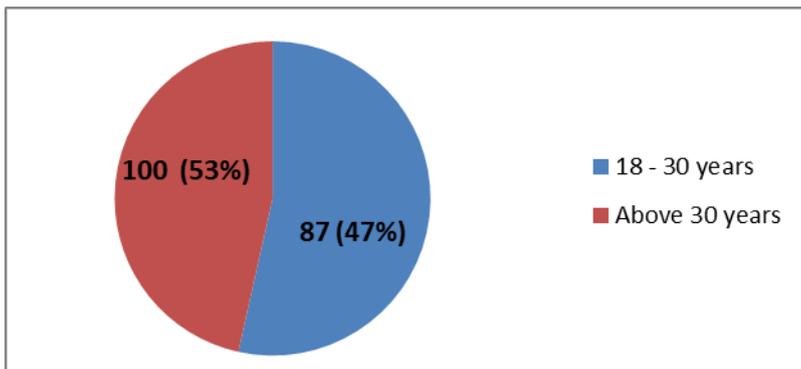
A survey was carried out to find the awareness of the society about the trans-women community, and the harassments the community goes through in India. The survey was also aimed to find out the acceptance of the transgender community by the society, their awareness and concern towards sexual harassments a trans-women in particular goes through in their day to day life and about the law which supports them. Towards this a questionnaire was prepared under the following broad categories.

- (a) Awareness about transgender community
- (b) Awareness on the Law against sexual assault on transgender community
- (c) Concern towards transgender community
- (d) Awareness on social activities towards uplift of transgender's

(e) Keeness in coming forwards towards helping transgender’s and trans women

A target group for the survey was aimed between the age group of 18 to 70 years representing different parts of the society from students to professionals and home makers. 187 people responded to the questionnaire. The respondents were divided into two groups, one between ‘18 to 30 years’ and the second group ‘above 30 years’, representing the younger and the older generation respectively. The proportional distribution of the survey data between the two groups is as given below.

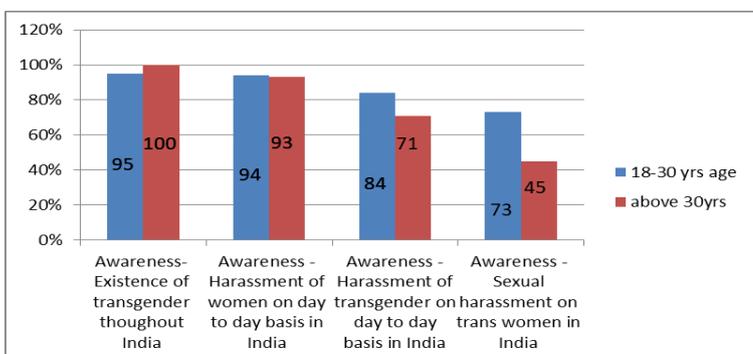
Table 1: Age chart



**Awareness about Transgender Community**

The outcome of the data received regarding the awareness of the society about the existence of transgender community throughout India and the harassments they go through is as given below.

Table 2: Awareness about transgender community



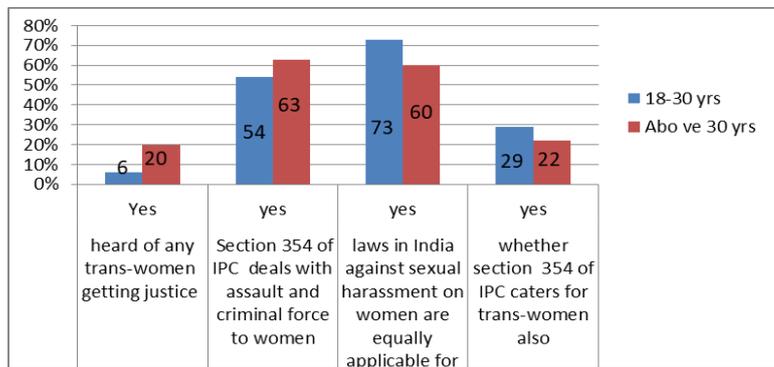
As we can see from the above bar chart, both the age group are very well aware of the presence of transgender community throughout the country. However, the age group between 18-30 years are more aware of harassments transgender women (trans-women) go through in the country. 84% and 73% of the younger generation responded positively against only 71% and 45 % of the older generation on awareness

of harassment on transgender community and sexual harassment on trans-women in India. This could be mainly due to wide use of social media platform by the younger generation through which they are updated about the issues both women and trans-women undergoes on a day to day basis. No doubt social media has a very big role to play here.

**Awareness on the law against sexual assault on Trans-women community**

As it can be seen from the bar chart below, that awareness of the society on the existing laws in India for the safeguard of transgender is very less in both the categories of the age group. It’s very unfortunate to see that public are not much aware of the laws supporting transgender and their right.

Table 3: Awareness on the law against sexual assault on trans-women community

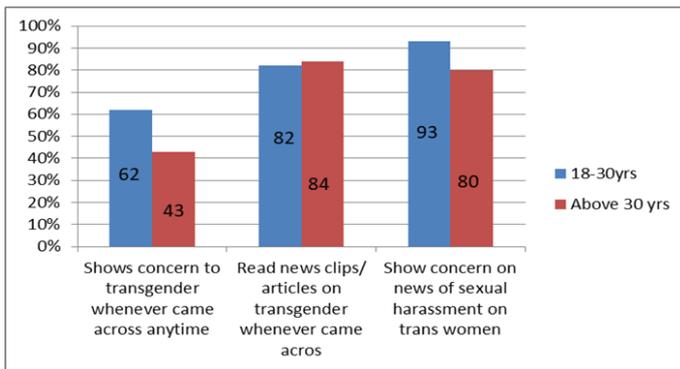


Only 6% and 20% of the respondents in the younger and older generation respectively have ever heard of any trans-woman getting justice for sexual harassment cases in India. It is worthwhile to bring out here that the number of complaints/ cases registered in India on harassment on trans-women is very less. Efforts are to be made to ensure that society is aware about the laws/ rules supporting the rights of transgender through talks in educational institute, campus etc. These would definitely make the public come out to support trans-women and aiding then in registering complaints and following it to its logical conclusion.

**Concern towards Transgender/Trans-women Community**

The analysis of the response received on the concern of the society towards the transgender community is given below.

Table 4: Concern towards transgender/trans-women community

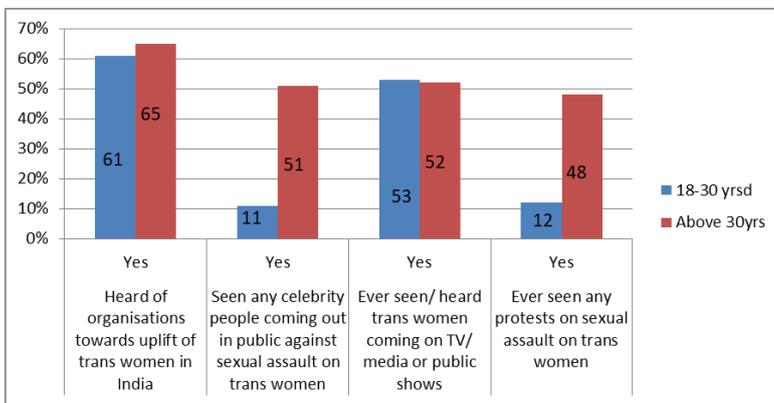


Though people are concerned about the transgender as well as sexual harassment on trans-women, but the survey shows society is still not comfortable to be around with transgender community. It is heartening to see that the Younger age group shows a better acceptance and concern of transgender (62% responding positively) than the older generation (43% responding positively). It could be mainly because they are more exposed to the transgender community through their exposure to social media platform, articles etc. More they get to know about them, more they understand their difficulty. For example, recently a movie was made on transgender person called “Laxmi”. It is heartening to see that, post release of this movie, the society including celebrities actually started talking about transgender in public and social media. This is a welcome sign, as the society has started accepting the transgender community even though there is a very long way to go.

### **Awareness on Social Activities Towards Uplift of Trans-women**

Analysis of the data of the survey indicates that the awareness regarding the social activities underway through, NGOs, social activists and other such organisations towards the uplift of the trans-women community is less in both younger and older generations of our society.

Table 5: Awareness on social activities towards uplift of trans-women



Discussions with people also indicated that, though they were knowledgeable about the existence and activities of various social organisations but very few knew about organisations working for trans-women community. This is mainly due to lack of publicity that these organisations get in social media platforms and mass communication platforms. One think which is worth noting here with concern is that the younger generation (18-30 yrs) showed higher percentage of concern towards transgender and trans-women than the older generation. However, their awareness about social organisation working for the causes of this community and uplift of trans-women is less. This is a dichotomy, because the people who are concerned are not aware of the opportunities and avenues for coming out and helping the community. There are so many women rights groups including National Commission for Women (a Government body) to support women and fight for their causes and against any injustice or harassments against them. These organisations have wide publicity and the general public is aware of such things. Discussions with people indicated that majority are well aware of the rights of women and the organised judicial system available in India to support any injustice to women. But it's highly unfortunate that no such widely publicised or structure systems are there for trans-women in India.

### **Keeness Towards Helping Trans-women**

Though society is aware of the harassment and difficulties faced by the transgender and trans-women in particular, the survey showed reluctance in accepting them into the society. It may be seen that the younger generation (18-30yrs), the group which showed more concern towards the transgender and trans-women are still not comfortable to involve with their community (only 30% respondents felt comfortable with transgender community). On the contrary, this group showed much higher keeness (88%) in coming out and helping for the causes of trans-women whenever they get a chance for the same.

This could be more due the biased negative reputation of the transgender and trans-women community in our society.

Table 6: Keeness towards helping trans-women

S.NO	Do you feel comfortable being around with trans-women Community		Takes lead to Discuss issues of trans- women with others		Ever tried finding out the social harassment a trans- women goes through		Come out to help a trans women whenever you happens to get a chance	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	yes	No
18 – 30 yrs	30%	70%	54%	46%	34%	67%	88%	12%
Above 30	41%	59%	34%	66%	13%	87%	58%	42%

Awareness and concern towards trans-women begins when you start accepting them the way they are. Social media platforms can play a very important role towards this by bringing out their life and showing them as one among us. In the present world people depend more on internet and other social media platforms than any other medium of communication. Once social media, journalists, educational institute's, entertainment field start taking good use of their own fields in educating people about trans-women and their community, then we can definitely see huge amount of change in the coming years.

### **Outcome of the Survey**

The brief outcomes of the survey are.

- (a) Though the society is well aware of the presence of transgender community throughout the country, the younger generation is more aware of harassments trans-women going through in the country.
- (b) The younger generation shows more concern and are aware of the difficulties and harassment transgender/ trans-women goes through than the older generation. This could be mainly because of the awareness of this group to the rights of individuals and the urge to react to injustice seen around in the society.
- (c) The society is well aware of the rights of women and the organised judicial system available in India to support women. However, their awareness on the existence of any organised social

groups/ organisations working for the uplift of transgender community and the judicial system to support them it is very less.

(d) The young generation is very keen in coming out and help in the uplift of trans-women whenever they get a chance for the same. However, they are still not comfortable to be involved in the company of transgender community. This is the major gap which needs to be addressed to ensure that the transgender and the trans-women in particular can have a normal life as any one of us in this society.

### **Way forward**

Governments can make 'n' number of laws and rules to protect the rights of Trans-women and their welfare as being done in many countries including India. Yes, this is the first step toward their recognition into the society. But their upliftment depends on changing the social stigma and ostracism each of us have about trans-women and their acceptance by the society. Some way forwards towards proposed are as given below.

(a) **Right to Education**. Though right to education is a fundamental right in India, we see that transchildren are deprived of the same due to discriminations they face among the peer. Institutions try to avoid admission to these children fearing that it may tarnish the reputation of the institute. How many of us are willing to send out children to a school/class which also have trans children? Or who may will sent our children to a teacher who is a trans-women? There must be law ensuring right to education for trans with very minimum quotas reserved in schools and colleges for them. Reserving about 10 to 15 seats for trans children in total in a city or state (which is not a big number compared to the total school/ college in a state) will definitely help them to be part of the society. If this happens, then the prejudices around trans children today would definitely be erase from the Indian society in no time. This would also have a positive impact on the standard of living of trans women and also the harassment they go through now.

(b) **Support of Family.** We know the discrimination a girl child had to go through in our society in the earlier days. When the society was against them, parents who stood by their children helped them to achieve every dream once told to be impossible for a girl. The same is applicable to trans children also. If parents understands that there is nothing wrong with their child and support then with care and education like any other child, they will definitely become independent and will achieve dreams which were once deprived to them. More counselling sessions through the existing health system and NGOs ends to be organised for the parents and support of trans-women.

(c) **Social Awareness.** Social media which is the biggest and the powerful weapon of the time that can play a very important role in making public aware about trans-women. Schools and other educational institute should have seminars or talks about them so as to make the new generation aware that trans-women people are no different from any one of us. Through our younger generation we would be able to propagate the awareness and negate the wrong myths and negative image about trans women in the society, including family and friends

(d) **National Policy.** There have been demands to have a comprehensive national policy for transgender's. Considering transgender as a minority community and making them eligible for all the privileges including reservation in education, employment, criminal laws and additional schemes of the Government of India would be one of the most important step towards upliftment of trans people. Some of the local Government bodies in India have created public bathrooms to ensure safety and comfort of trans-women, setting up a humane standard for rest of the world to follow.

(e) **Employment Opportunities.** Job opportunities for trans women would definitely bring them into the main stream of the society. The transgender Act 2019 passed by Govt of India, provides provisions for welfare and facilitate livelihood for trans person, which also includes vocational training. Self employment opportunities to trans is one of the steps which the Govt and each one of us as part of the society must encourage. There are few trans women who have

now come out in setting up their own business ventures. The Govt and financial intuitions of the country should encourage more such people to come out through financial helps. The Govt of India provides reservations/ quota for certain job opportunities for women in the country. In similar lines, reservation of jobs for trans women in certain pre-decided jobs should be the first step. This would encourage other private sectors to follow suite.

## **Conclusion**

It is an unwritten truth that almost all the trans-women in the country had gone through some form of harassment in their life. There has always been a pressing need to create awareness among our society to take active responsibility in recognising the rights of trans-women and treating them with basic human dignity. Its heartening to see that the younger age group of our society have shown a better acceptance and concern towards trans women, however, they are still uncomfortable to involve with the trans community. There is a need to change the wrong myths and negativity that trans-women presently has among the younger generation. It's high time that we understand the fact that there is no difference between trans-women and cisgender like each one of us. It all depends on how we see them and with what mindset we interact with them, It cost us nothing to acknowledge another person's gender identity. It neither reduces our rights in any way or it costs us any penny.

The Government must ensure that the transgender should have access to basic human dignity like any other human including educational institutions, legal & educational opportunities and all welfare schemes and benefits of the Govt. The Government and the society together can help to create an atmosphere where every human irrespective of their cast, creed or gender can have a respectful life with dignity and safety.

This reminds me of a famous quote of Mahatma Gandhi who is considered the Father of the Nation in India *"First they ignore you. Then they laugh at you. Then they fight you and then you win."* This quote is very apt towards the current struggle trans women goes through in the society.

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