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Dynamics of Urbanization: A Critical Review of Socio-Economic Transformation in Status of Transgender Community

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ABSTRACT

Socio-economic transformation relates to a significant transition in distinct aspects of society, including values, culture, ideology, and its structure. It also revives the productive structure, job pattern, and technological innovation. The advent of socio-economic transformation has brought about urbanization. Urban spaces thereby have become a hub for economic opportunities resulting in the migration of transgender people from peripheral rural areas in search of dignified livelihood. From implementing effective and efficient policies to modernizing the outlook of the society, from imbuing a sense of gender equality to improving the quality of lives, the urban settlement in city life has improvised the life of transgender people in terms of socio-economic acceptance. This paper studies the socio-economic transformation in the status of 59 migrated transgender from Bhubaneswar city in terms of education, job stability, and livelihood and also focuses on the opportunities that have facilitated their mainstreaming in smart society.

1. Introduction

Urbanization has come up with a phenomenal transition in the country's fate by setting in the virtuous cycle of sustainable and inclusive development. The urban structure in the city has accelerated the rate of infrastructure, job creation, and liberalization. It has thereby improved the quality of lives by civilizing wretched socio-economic conditions persisting in the society. With the advent of ¹Urbanization, numerous positive changes were visualized not only in economic sectors but also in the social outlook of the masses.

¹ Urbanization refers to adaptation of the characteristics of an urban city

Development via urbanization can be determined in real sense by weighing how far the residents have undergone socio-economic improvements. Socio-economic improvements relate to a substantial transition in distinct aspects of society, including values, culture, ideology, and structure in one hand and relate to revival in productive structure, job pattern, and technological innovation on the other hand. Urbanization has resolved the concern of unemployment, poor infrastructure, obsolete technological skills, safety issues, cybercrimes, orthodox mindset, gender inequality, conservative beliefs, and cultural conservatism. It has ultimately set in the pathway for development. In an Urbanized scenario, the target of achieving gender equality is not just limited to gender dichotomy of male and female somewhat, it has extended to its subgroups comprising of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexuals, and Transgenders (LGBT). Transgender people are the individuals whose assigned sex mismatches with their gender identity. However, this gender minority section has remained unaccepted for long for transgressing the socio-cultural norm of the division of sexes between males and females. Assuming transgender people as mentally ill and socially variant, they are subjected to socio-economic seclusion. As a result, the life of transgender remained a struggle for existence and acceptance. Consequently, they are subjected to a higher risk of unemployment due to economic seclusion. Lack of employment opportunities pushes them towards ignominious jobs such as begging or sex work or street entertainers to gain a menial livelihood. Consequently, low-income results in absolute poverty. Disowned by the family, bullied by friends, and mocked by relatives has degraded the life of transgender from bad to worse. In the 21st century, transgender is the most vulnerable population in the country and is invisible in the planning process. However, with the help of comprehensive and inclusive policies, the socio-economic status of transgender seems to be improving at an exponential rate in Urban cities. This has been made possible by allocating enough land and housing, providing employment opportunities through creative means, urbanization has played a significant role in uplifting the socio-economic status of these gender minorities.

On the margins of the city Bhubaneswar, there exists an ample exchange of networks that opens up space for both traditional outlooks as well as non-conventional set up hosting transgenders who are engaged in various activities such as social activism, member of political parties, taxi driving, street entertaining and prostitution especially paid sex. Nevertheless, in the case of rural areas lying in the periphery of Bhubaneswar city, transgender people are subjected to the hostile environment facing challenges in terms of fewer or nix employment, negligible healthcare facilities, and educational opportunities and discrimination in every sphere. However, even if these issues are also visible in urban areas, but are profoundly prominent in rural areas. Although many research works have defined the term rural areas vividly, the U.S. Census Bureau describes it as the areas which cannot be brought under consideration for an urban area or a cluster [1]. A Transgender Survey discussed the challenges faced by transgender people in rural areas where they stated that they were not covered under any health insurance and were treated differently

by health care professionals in clinics or hospitals [2]. Further, at the times of sex reassignment surgery, they preferred the traditional method of castration by senior transgender rather than the modern method of transition for fear of being mistreated because of their unique gender identity. Primarily, in rural areas, transgender people are unable to access a range of health care facilities and social services which they can acquire in urban areas because of transgender accepting scenario [1]. Secondly, the traditional and religious background does not permit the politically conservative villagers to accept transgender people openheartedly [1,3]. Recent studies on the transgender people in the countryside or in the periphery show that 44% show high rates of depression, 33% show anxiety [4] and the majority of them were addicted to alcohol use [5,6] and have tried committing suicide [7] and 27% were indulged into illicit drugs and 34% into hormone use [8]. On analyzing the reason to address the concerns faced by transgender people, it was evident that due to lack of opportunities or resources, stigma or discrimination in every sphere has resulted in this treacherous standard of living of transgender people [9]. However, rural areas can vary in terms of these characteristics. As warned by Chuck Fluharty from the Rural Policy Institute, "If you have seen one rural community, you have seen ... one rural community" [10]. In the United States, some transgenders were interviewed who expressed that same sex intimacy was considered as deviant and illegal in the countryside [11, 12] and at the same time, they were also prohibited from serving in military and defense (the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy). Thus, the transgender section in the countryside preferred hiding their real gender identity within one's own family and community [13, 14] instead of coming out and facing stigma and discrimination in the hands of the non-transgender community. However, studies show that urban communities are well equipped in comparison to rural communities in terms of serving the minorities of the society, which can ultimately reduce their mental and physical health conditions [15, 16]. In a recent study in New York, it was found that approximately 77% of transgender participants agreed to be covered under health care insurance, and primary doctors treated 81 % in the past year, which has significantly reduced several high-risk behaviors [17]. The availability of health care resources, up-to-date transportation infrastructure, educated and well-known health care professionals and gender variant accepting community can outweigh hostile climate for transgender people which is not so far possible in rural areas [18, 19, 20, 21].

This paper focusses on how urban area looks like from the gender perspective, especially from the angle of the transgender section of the society. Along with emphasizing on the socio-economic upliftment of migrated transgender, this paper revolves around how urbanization has enabled higher comfort zone and elevated inclusion of transgender people in terms of educational opportunities and health care facilities.

2. Methodology

This research uses the responses of transgender people as a lens to elucidate the scope of urbanization in empowering transgender people in different spheres. A pragmatic approach was used in collecting data from 59 transgender people of age group 14-49 years who were identified through snowball sampling. For being eligible for data collection, participants who have self-identified themselves as transgender people were selected. Respondents who have only migrated from nearby villages to Bhubaneswar city were taken into consideration. Data regarding demographic variables were collected during the leisure time of the respondents and were paid a stipend of Rs 150 for their participation. The measurement used in this analysis included demographic variables such as education, occupation, income, and health care services received by transgender people in Bhubaneswar. Further, variables such as education and income were linked with the comfort zone of the respondents to find out how far they have accepted the society and to what extent the society has accepted them. However, here 'comfort' means the mental and physical ease free from any fear or pain or constraint. Data regarding these transgender people were fetched by visiting the prominent areas of Bhubaneswar, such as Pallashpalli, Vani Vihar, and Behera Sahi of Satya Nagar. Further, in order to be aware of the ground reality of the lifestyle of transgender people in Bhubaneswar city, the primary focus was laid on the respondents working in the unorganized sector. However, the time taken in collecting data from 59 transgender respondents took approximately eight months. The experiences of transgender respondents in Bhubaneswar were recorded and translated from Odia to English.

3. Discussions

3.1. Migration of transgender people to Bhubaneswar

The transgender population is one of the most susceptible and marginalized populations in the country. When transgender people seek shelter within queer urban spaces, at times, they are warmly welcomed, but sometimes they are tolerated. However, by introducing more inclusive plans such as employment opportunities, educational and health care facilities, discrimination-free working space, implementation of gender laws, equal treatment, and greater acceptance have made the life of transgender people easy and comfortable. These externalities of urbanization have attracted many transgender people who were living a wretched life in the peripheral rural areas of Bhubaneswar. Due to lack of any employment opportunities, societal boycott, discord from family and relatives prompt transgender people to migrate from rural areas to urban areas. Many transgender people from peripheral rural areas preferred migrating to Bhubaneswar with an expectation of social acceptance and economic stability. Transgender people have migrated from villages like [Sarua](#), [Simor](#), Lokanathpur, Muktapur, Palla, Nuapada, Pubusahi, Tarakai, Totapada, Keranga, Kuadhilo, Talagrah, Balisahi, Chandapur, Bhogada, Taratua and Binkudia to Bhubaneswar in search of a better life. Figure 1 shows that out of

59 transgender people, the highest numbers of respondents migrated from Simor (6), and Talagrah (6) and the least number of transgender people migrated from Muktapur (2), Nuapada (2), Totapada(2) and Kuadhilo(2).

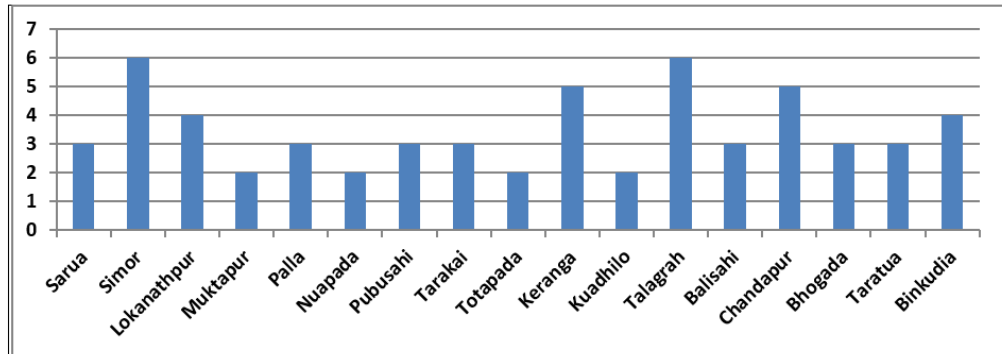


Fig 1. Frequency of Transgenders migrated from peripheral villages to Bhubaneswar

Migrated transgender people preferred to migrate to Bhubaneswar city as the villagers rejected them, and side by side, they also migrate in search of jobs, health facility, and educational opportunities and fellow transgender people. A 16-year transgender respondent from Chandapur expressed that she willingly absconded her home as she was discriminated from her siblings in terms of educational facilities. Consequently, she migrated to Bhubaneswar to continue her education by simultaneously working in an NGO for her livelihood. Another respondent from Muktapur, who was 19 years old, voiced that when she was identified as transgender, she was boycotted by her family and other villagers and was warned to quit the village the other day. From the data collected from the interviewed transgenders, it was found that majority of transgenders (47%) migrated to Bhubaneswar in search of Jobs, followed by 29% of transgenders who were boycotted by the villagers, 14% in search of other transgenders, 7% in search of health facilities including sex reassignment surgery and hormonal treatment during the transition and 3% for getting enrolled in any educational institutes which is shown in Figure 2.

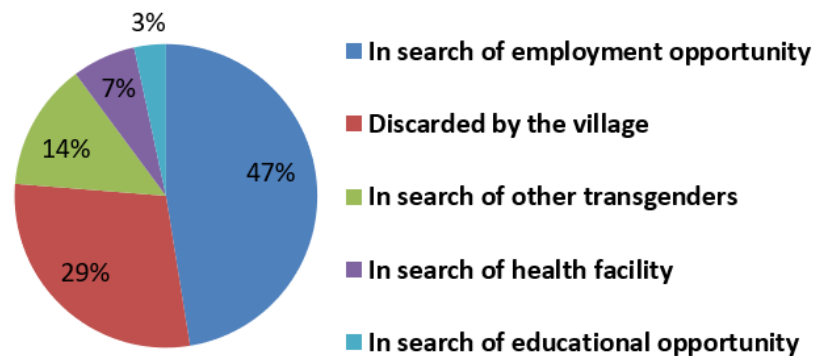


Fig 2. Reasons behind transgenders migrating to Bhubaneswar city

3.2. Perception of Comfortableness by Transgenders in smart city Bhubaneswar

There are significant differences in the perceptions of comfortableness among transgender people in Bhubaneswar and in their respective villages. However, here 'comfort' means the mental and physical ease free from any fear or pain or constraint. The perception of transgender people on comfortableness in Bhubaneswar and their respective village is categorized under five headings that is 'Do not prefer going out,' 'Always Nervous,' 'Comfortable,' 'Not Comfortable,' 'Very Comfortable.'

Do not prefer going out shows that transgender people were less likely to go out for amusement or social reasons or to earn their livelihood because of a lack of social outreach and fear of verbal and physical abuse by non-transgenders. 6.77% of transgender agreed that they were not willing to go out in Bhubaneswar, whereas 93.22% of transgender people expressed their unwillingness to go out in their respective villages.

Always Nervous represents that the transgenders remain nervous due to the possible imagined threat by them from non-transgenders and due to their uniqueness in the crowd. 3.38% of transgender people always felt nervous in the overall situations in Bhubaneswar, whereas 96.22% of the respondents felt nervous only in Village but not in Bhubaneswar.

Comfortable signifies the ease of reaching out to others and facing the crowd without any hesitation. 71.18% felt comfortable in Bhubaneswar city, whereas 1.69% were comfortable in their village.

Not Comfortable indicates the difficulty in reaching out to common masses and remaining in an awkward position in society. 98.30% of respondents reported that they were uncomfortable in their village, whereas no respondent agreed to stay behind uncomfortable in Bhubaneswar.

Very Comfortable connotes no awkwardness or embarrassment in showing off in public places and representing self in any line of work. 28.81% of transgender people were very comfortable staying in Bhubaneswar, whereas no respondent agreed to stay behind in a very comfortable way in their village.

Figure 3 shows that none of the respondents were very comfortable in their respective village and none were uncomfortable in Bhubaneswar, 71.18% felt comfortable in Bhubaneswar city whereas 1.69% were comfortable in their village, 3.38% of transgender people always felt nervous in overall situations in Bhubaneswar whereas 96.22% of the respondents felt nervous only in Village but not in Bhubaneswar, 6.77% of transgender agreed that they were not willing to go out in Bhubaneswar whereas 93.22% of transgender people expressed their unwillingness to go out in their respective villages. A transgender respondent from Totapada mentioned that she was not allowed by her parents to go out from her home due to the fear of being revealed as a transgender person, but when she escaped her home and moved to Bhubaneswar, she is now very comfortable in living her life here. She added that despite several struggles in earning daily income, she is very comfortable in comparison with the life she was living in her village. However, it can be concluded that the majority of transgender people are comfortable in

Bhubaneswar because of the availability of basic facilities and greater acceptance and uncomfortable staying in villages due to the obsolete outlook of villagers and lack of any socio-economic opportunities to grow.

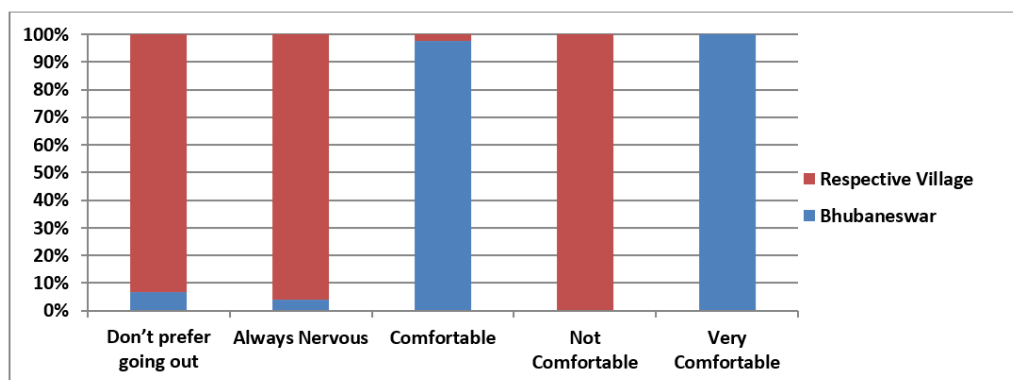


Fig 3. Comparative analysis in perception of safety among transgenders in Bhubaneswar and in their respective village

3.3. Educational Platform for Transgenders in Bhubaneswar

The section of transgender is, in general, subjected to social ostracization and economic boycott. As a result, they face humiliation and societal prejudices, which leave them with limited opportunities in every sphere. Thus, this left out category has limited access to education. Although they are enrolled in any educational institution, they are either harassed or bullied by peers, administrators, or teachers and are forced to drop out either on their own or due to external pressure (parents of students, management). These issues are visible both in rural areas and urban areas but are profoundly prominent in rural areas. With the modernization of society, non-transgenders have learned to accept transgender people open-heartedly due to their broad outlook. Fully cemented development in urban spaces has resolved the issues of gender inequality by transforming the orthodox mindset, conservative believes, and cultural conservatism related to transgender people and has ultimately set in the pathway for developing every gender in all the spheres. Thus now, transgender people can avail of educational facilities with limited obstructions and can also register a complaint against any individual bullying or harassing them.

However, Figure 4 represents the level of education completed by Transgender respondents in Bhubaneswar. The level of education is categorized to 6 headings explicitly, i.e., being illiterate, illiterate, but know how to read, completed primary level, Metric, Pre-Graduation, and Graduation.

Illiterate: According to the Indian Census, any individual aged seven or more than seven years who can read and write with understanding in any language can be considered as a literate person. However, out of 59 transgender people, 6.77% are entirely illiterate, i.e., they do not know how to read and write in any language.

Illiterate but knows how to read: Few individuals are partially literate as they only know how to read but cannot write. 27.11% of transgender individuals are considered as partial illiterate as they only know how to read.

Primary level: Primary level, otherwise known as the elementary level of education that covers the lower primary level (I-IV) and upper primary level (V-VIII). 30.5% have completed the primary level of education.

Metric: 20.33% of transgender respondents have completed their matriculation level or secondary education level (class X).

Pre Graduation Level: Pre Graduation Level is otherwise known as Plus-two or Intermediate course. 6.77% of transgender respondents have completed their Pre Graduation Level.

Graduation Level: A Graduate refers to the individuals who have degrees in any of the educational streams by completing a graduation course with a duration of 3 or 4 yrs. Only 2 Graduates were found from the sample of 59 transgender, I.e., 3.38%.

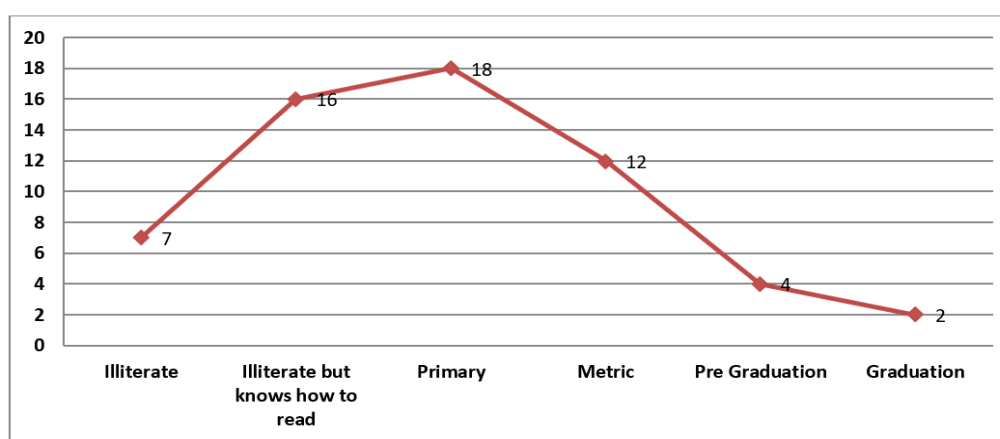


Fig 4. Highest level of education completed by Transgenders in Bhubaneswar

Figure 4 shows that the line graph has sloped upward to the primary level of education and then sloped downward. Most of the transgender have completed their elementary education, but the number of transgender people significantly reduced for higher studies reason being their financial constraint and lack of interest in pursuing academics. Education is inter-related and interdependent on society, i.e., education and society, which can be considered as complementary to each other. Education plays a significant role in building an ideal society where the educated masses are instilled with moral values, optimistic attitudes, and modest behaviors in order to bring a positive difference in society. Education not just widens the approach of individuals in every aspect of life but also plays a noteworthy task in judging the difference between wrong and right. Talking about gender diversity, it becomes easier for educated non-transgenders to accept transgender people because they can understand the fact that “being transgender is not a matter of choice.” Further, highly educated transgender people gain more respect in comparison to less educated or illiterate transgender people due to easy acceptance and a better approach towards their issues, which makes their life more comfortable. Table 1 shows the comfortableness of transgender people in society concerning their level of

education. It can be analyzed from table 1 that the higher the level of education, the more is the comfortableness among transgender people in society. Out of seven illiterate transgender people, four were just comfortable, whereas two were utterly uncomfortable, and no transgender was very comfortable in society. In the case of 16 Illiterate transgender people who just know how to read, ten transgender people were comfortable, three were not comfortable, and three were very comfortable in the smart city Bhubaneswar. The 18 transgender people who have completed their primary level of education reported that 11 were comfortable, three were not comfortable, and four were very comfortable. Five matriculated transgender people were just comfortable, and at the same time, five more matriculated transgender people were very comfortable. However, two matriculated transgender people are still struggling to live a comfortable life in smart city Bhubaneswar. Four transgender people who have completed their Intermediate course expressed that only 1 out of them was just comfortable, and rest three were very comfortable in society. Two graduate transgender people are very comfortable in leading their lives in Bhubaneswar. Even a graduate transgender respondent stated that she had seen the changing perception of society towards her when she became successful in establishing her identity in the real world. She is now very comfortable in representing herself in public places and is not at all hesitant in reaching out to others, which shows that with a higher level of education, transgender feels empowered, and this escalates their comfortableness in the society.

Table 1. Comfortableness of transgender people concerning their level of education

Sl. No	Level of Education	Comfortable	Not Comfortable	Very Comfortable	Total
1	Illiterate	4 (57.14%)	3 (42.85)	0 (0%)	7
2	Illiterate but knows how to read	10 (62.5%)	3 (18.75%)	3(18.75%)	16
3	Primary	11 (61.11%)	3 (16.66%)	4(22.22%)	18
4	Metric	5 (41.66%)	2 (16.66%)	5(41.66%)	12
5	Pre Graduation	1 (25%)	0(0%)	3(75%)	4
6	Graduation	0 (0%)	0(0%)	2(100%)	2
Total		31	10	18	59

3.4. Livelihood and income of Transgenders in Bhubaneswar

The stigmatized minority section of transgender people faces socio-economic ostracization due to their undesirable uniqueness and frivolous outlook of society towards them. When transgender people identify their real identity and confront it with their family, they are mostly disowned by their parents. As a result, it becomes difficult for them to continue their education due to financial constraints. Due to the lack of skill and education, they remain jobless and

poverty-stricken. Unfortunately, to earn a livelihood, they remain dependent on begging, prostitution or paid sex, street entertainment for their bread and butter. Further, due to discrimination or exclusion in the job sector, most of the transgender people were forced to get indulged in undignified occupations despite being eligible enough for a suitable job. However, despite hardship, two eminent transgender people of Odisha, i.e., Sadhana Mishra and Meera Parida, have proved to be a distinguished personality in Bhubaneswar. Sadhana Mishra is a Social development officer in reputed institute KISS², and Meera Parida is the President of Transgender community and also a social activist who is evidence of the fact that Bhubaneswar city being a smart city is accepting transgender people to a certain extent. Figure 5 shows the modes of occupation of 59 transgender people in Bhubaneswar city. 37.28% of transgender people are entirely dependent on paid sex or prostitution for their livelihood, 20.33% are reliant on begging, 20.33% on entertainment activities like dancing and showering blessings in marriage functions, baby showers and birthday parties, 11 are enrolled in NGOs and 2 in social development activities.

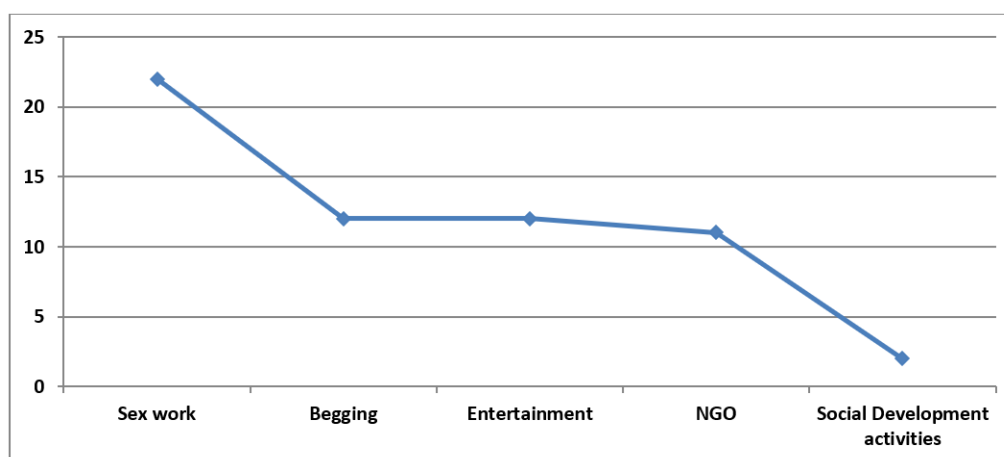


Fig 5. The livelihood of Transgenders in Bhubaneswar

In rural areas, transgender people were unable to earn a livelihood by any means due to social boycott. However, in the case of the urbanized area such as Bhubaneswar, transgender people earn a livelihood by getting indulged in sex work, begging, entertainment, NGOs, and social development activities. Even if they are yet not accepted wholeheartedly, but the urban spaces have become a hub for economic opportunities and social progress for them by imbuing a sense of gender equality and greater acceptance in order to improve their quality of life. Figure 6 shows the income of transgender people in Bhubaneswar. It is evident enough that highest number (37.2%) of transgenders are earning within the income slab of Rs 10,000-15000 followed by 20.33% earning between Rs 15000-20,000, 16.94% within Rs 5000-10,000, 11.86% above Rs 20,000 and 13.55% below Rs 5000.

² KISS- Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, Bhubaneswar

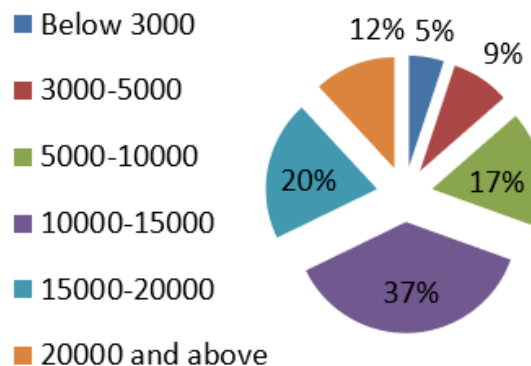


Fig 6. The income of transgender people in smart city Bhubaneswar

Table 2 shows the comfortableness of transgender people in day and night time concerning their level of income. Here day and night time is taken into consideration because of the risk factor involved in their profession. Most of the transgender people who are indulged in sex work are open to threats, especially in the night time whereas, in the day time, they mostly feel just comfortable to work. However, even if they are not comfortable to work at night time, still they work to earn their daily bread and butter. Thirty-nine transgender people are very comfortable, 18 are just comfortable, and two are uncomfortable working in the day time, whereas 18 transgender people are very comfortable, 23 are just comfortable, and 24 are uncomfortable working in the night time. The transgender people who are engaged in entertaining works, NGOs, and social works mostly have higher earning and feel comfortable in both day and night time. However, transgender people who are engaged in sex work feel uncomfortable working in the night time even if they fall under the category of 20,000 and above. Transgender people who expressed that they were uncomfortable working at night time mostly faced bullying and harassment and were sometimes molested and raped and who expressed that they were uncomfortable in day time meant that they were criticized and humiliated for their existence. Some transgender people who earned below Rs 5000 through begging voiced that they were mercilessly beaten by policemen and were put into jail for a few days. In contrast, non-transgenders abused some of them for just begging, which leaves them uncomfortable in day and night time. However, at the same time, a transgender person from Keranga who has migrated to Bhubaneswar disclosed that the policemen of Bhubaneswar once saved her while she was being harassed and molested by few goons at night time. Further, a transgender respondent from Nuapada who has also moved to Bhubaneswar expressed that once she was regularly followed and bullied by few men a night in Bhubaneswar but a family comprising of 4 members rescued her by giving her a lift and helping her out. These events show the growing comfortableness status of transgender people due to the acceptance of transgender people by people of smart city Bhubaneswar.

Table 2. Comfortableness of transgenders in day and night time in relation to their level of income

Day time					
Sl. No	Level of Income	Comfortable	Not Comfortable	Very Comfortable	Total
1	Below 3000	1 (33.33%)	1 (33.33%)	1 (33.33%)	3
2	3000-5000	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	3 (60%)	5
3	5000-10000	5 (50%)	0 (0%)	5 (50%)	10
4	10000-15000	7 (31.81%)	0 (0%)	15 (68.18%)	22
5	15000-20000	3 (25%)	0 (0%)	9 (75%)	12
6	20000 and above	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (100%)	7
Total		18 (30.50%)	2 (3.38%)	39 (66.10%)	59
Nighttime					
Sl. No	Level of Income	Comfortable	Not Comfortable	Very Comfortable	Total
1	Below 3000	1 (33.33%)	2 (66.66%)	0 (0%)	3
2	3000-5000	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1 (10%)	5
3	5000-10000	3 (30%)	5 (50%)	2 (20%)	10
4	10000-15000	12 (54.54%)	8 (36.36%)	8 (36.36%)	22
5	15000-20000	3 (25%)	5 (41.66%)	4 (33.33%)	12
6	20000 and above	2 (28.57%)	2 (28.57%)	3 (42.85%)	7
Total		23 (38.98%)	24 (40.67%)	18 (30.50%)	59

3.5. Health care services received by transgender respondents in Bhubaneswar

Most transgender people face significant obstacles in accessing and receiving health care facilities in rural communities, which is one of the significant reasons to migrate to urban areas. With the transformation of just cities to smart cities, the hospitals are adequately serving transgender patients affordably, and respectfully, Health insurance companies have also included transgender people under health care insurance; doctors are willingly conducting Sex reassignment surgery and hormone therapies. Figure 7 shows the health care facilities received by transgender people in Bhubaneswar. 38.98% of the sample is covered under health care insurance, 81.35% of transgender people have undergone through Sex reassignment surgery by professional doctors, and 66.10% are currently under hormone therapy, 30.50% meet psychiatrists in a regular pattern, and 28.81% regularly meet sexual health care professionals for their problems related to sex life. These health care facilities provided by hospitals in Bhubaneswar has improved the quality of lives of transgender people.

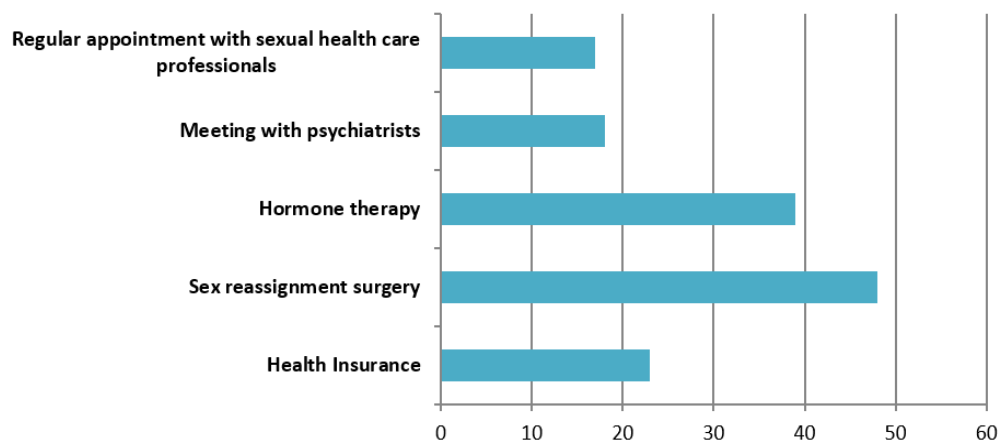


Fig 7. Health care services received by transgender respondents in Bhubaneswar

4. Results

The result of this study shows that transgender people in urban space are exposed to several job opportunities and better facilities, which empowers them for a better tomorrow. Most of the transgender people migrate from rural communities to urban areas with an expectation of social acceptance and economic stability. Fifty-nine transgender respondents migrated from different nearby villages to Bhubaneswar as they were rejected by the villagers and also in search of jobs, health facilities, educational opportunities, and fellow transgender people. However, out of 59 respondents, 36 transgender people could read and write, and most of them have completed their elementary education, but the number of transgender people significantly reduced for higher studies reason being their financial constraint and lack of interest in pursuing academics. Further, the perception of transgender people on comfortableness in Bhubaneswar was also measured, and out of 59 respondents, 31 respondents expressed that they were comfortable staying in Bhubaneswar and 18 voiced that they are extremely comfortable life in Bhubaneswar. It was also observed that highly educated transgender people gain more respect in comparison to less educated or illiterate transgender people due to easy acceptance and a better approach towards their issues, which makes their life more comfortable. They no more feel awkward or embarrassed in showing off in public places and representing themselves in any line of work. They do not face any difficulty or hesitation in reaching out to common masses, which shows that with a higher level of education, transgender feels empowered, and this escalates their comfortableness in society. By moving out to urban areas, transgender people have also overcome the difficulties they faced in obtaining health care services. It is worth noting down that out of the sample collected, 38.98% of the sample is covered under health care insurance, 81.35% of transgender people have undergone through Sex reassignment surgery by professional doctors, and 66.10% are currently under hormone therapy, 30.50% meet psychiatrists in a regular pattern, and 28.81% regularly meet sexual health care professionals for their problems related to sex life which makes it clear that these health care facilities provided

by hospitals in smart city Bhubaneswar have improved the quality of lives of transgender people. It was believed that transgender people are born to entertain others. However, in Bhubaneswar city, transgender people have also enrolled in many social development activities and NGOs, apart from being engaged in paid sex or begging or entertaining. It is also found that 37.2% of transgenders are earning within the income slab of Rs 10,000-15000 followed by 20.33% earning between Rs 15000-20,000, 16.94% within Rs 5000-10,000, 11.86% above Rs 20,000 and 13.55% below Rs 5000. However, considering income slabs, 39 transgender people are very comfortable, 18 are just comfortable, and two are uncomfortable working in the day time, whereas 18 transgender people are very comfortable, 23 are just comfortable, and 24 are uncomfortable working in the night time. The collected data from the sample of transgender people in Bhubaneswar city shows that Bhubaneswar, being an urban area, has successfully empowered them in socio-economic aspects of their lives.

5. Conclusions

Pervasive stigma and prejudices attached to gender nonconformity in the society have significantly affected the socio-economic lives of transgender people. Lack of social support and acceptance is the basic reason behind their wretched lives. However, development via urbanization has brought in growing awareness of diversity in gender identity and expression among the population. As a result, a comprehensive understanding of gender variations beyond gender binary is gradually developing among cisgenders³. Greater visibility of transgender people in Bhubaneswar has revealed the awareness created among the people regarding their acceptance and resilience. The advent of urbanization has resolved the issues concerning unemployment, health and education constraints, financial instability, and stigmatization in society to a certain extent by bringing a positive change in values, culture, and behavior in favor of transgender people, which is proved in the study. However, in order to create a more respectful atmosphere for transgender people, self-assessment of employees in working space, doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals in nursing homes and hospitals and greater acceptance and resilience among family and community members is essential. Further, transgender individuals need to boost their confidence to fight for their rights and sustain resilience to resolve the challenges and navigate the opportunities to live a better socio-economic status in an urban scenario.

³ a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

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