

# SAVING AND SPENDING HABITS OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN KERALA

Rathi K. N.\*

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Sreekrishnapuram V T Bhattathiripad College, Mannampatta, Palakkad 678633.

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**Abstract:** This study sheds light on the challenges faced by transgender individuals in Kerala, including social inequality, financial instability, and limited access to government schemes. Key findings reveal that 93% of respondents are transwomen, with 44% below 25 years old. Over half rely on self-employment for income, prioritizing essential goods and medical necessities. Notably, 85% of those who underwent Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) struggle to meet daily expenses. To address these issues, the study recommends increased awareness of government schemes like Mazhavillu, Saphalam, Karuthal, and PRIDE. Policymakers should focus on mitigating social inequality, financial illiteracy, and unemployment to support the transgender community.

**Keywords:** Transgender Community, Saving and Spending Habits, Financial Inclusion, Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS), Government Welfare Schemes in Kerala.

## Introduction

Transgender people have a different gender identity from their natural gender; that is, sex assigned at birth. Some of them are in the transition from natural gender to acquired gender through medical assistance. Gender identity is one's sense that he or she is being a man or woman. The transgender identity is the identity sensed by the person is not the same as the one he or she was assigned by birth. However, the term sexual orientation is the attraction of one person to another one enduring emotional, physiological and spiritual dimensions.

These persons are included as the third gender. Many transgender people face discrimination in the workplace and in accessing public healthcare. These persons are not protected legally against discrimination. Transgender inequality is the unequal protection transgender people receive in work, school, and society. Transgender people regularly face transphobic harassment. Transgender people face the problem of unemployment and the chance of being appointed to deserved jobs. Thus, they are lacking in their income and financial stability. This study is intended to explore the savings habits of transgender people in Kerala. The study also considers the spending habits of the community members and different programmes by the Government of Kerala for the transgender communities as financial assistance.

## Statement of the problem

Transgender people are not very aware of the government's schemes for their development. Ultimately, one of the most significant reasons for discrimination faced by transgender people is the lack of public understanding of them. Many studies have shown transgender individuals face discrimination within their family units and schools, in employment and housing. Therefore, it would be interesting to see a transgender person from different dimensions of our society. Hence, the present study is undertaken considering all these paramount issues. This study mainly focuses

on the saving and spending attitude of transgender people. This study throws light on the effect of transgender people's financial behaviour. This, in turn, will enhance the development of the economy. This study will be a reference point for other researchers in the same field.

## Objectives of the study

1. To study the income stability of Transgender in Kerala
2. To study the saving habits of Transgenders in Kerala
3. To study the awareness of Transgenders on the government policies introduced to support them.

## Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between education and awareness of Govt. schemes.
2. There is no significant relationship between awareness of Govt. schemes availing of the financial assistance from Govt.
3. There is no significant difference in the purpose of savings of transgender people in Kerala with reference to their age.

## Government initiatives for transgenders

Kerala is the first state in India to have a transgender policy. The transgender people posted in Kochi metro as front office, housekeeping, and ticket counter services. However, many of them get rid of the job within a short period. The causes of quitting the job are financial reasons and social reasons. There are many schemes for the transgender community in the state; they are:

**Mazhavillu** – The Kerala government initiated this policy as financial assistance to transgender people for self-employment. Transgender persons face social discrimination and seclusion in all walks of life, including household, school, work and public accommodations. The Honourable Supreme Court of India 2014

\*Corresponding Author

Rathi K. N.\*

Email: rathi@vtb.ac.in.

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passed a landmark ruling upholding the rights of equality and equal protection for the transgender community. Under the 'Mazhavillu' umbrella scheme, the Social Justice Department has launched several key initiatives for ensuring the inclusivity of the Transgender community. The Department's ultimate goal is to give special privileges to such target populations so that they can be socially rehabilitated. This was an innovative scheme which assisted a maximum of INR.50,000 for transgender people to earn a living through self-employment.

**Saphalam** -The project "Saphalam" provides financial assistance to Transgender students pursuing Degree/Diploma level professional courses. This scheme would provide an opening to Transgender students with high technical/professional competence. The Social Justice Department has considered the project a solution to the lack of proper education and unemployment among transgender people.

**Karuthal** –The main objective of the scheme 'Karuthal' is to cater medical assistance to needy transgender people who require immediate support during a crisis or facing emergencies. Transgender persons resort to Sex Reassignment surgery (SRS) and hormone treatments, which help them transition to a self-identified gender. These surgical transitions may include several procedures and are very complicated and costly. The Social Justice Department will provide financial assistance up to INR. 25,000 in prior approval of the monitoring committee.

**PRIDE** – PRIDE is a unique project to employ in the knowledge sector for the transgender community. The social justice department intended to help all transgender persons get jobs commensurate with their educational qualifications in the next three years. (Bindu, 2023). Pride would provide training to help transgender persons improve their personalities, face interviews confidently, visit the industry, do internships, and so on.

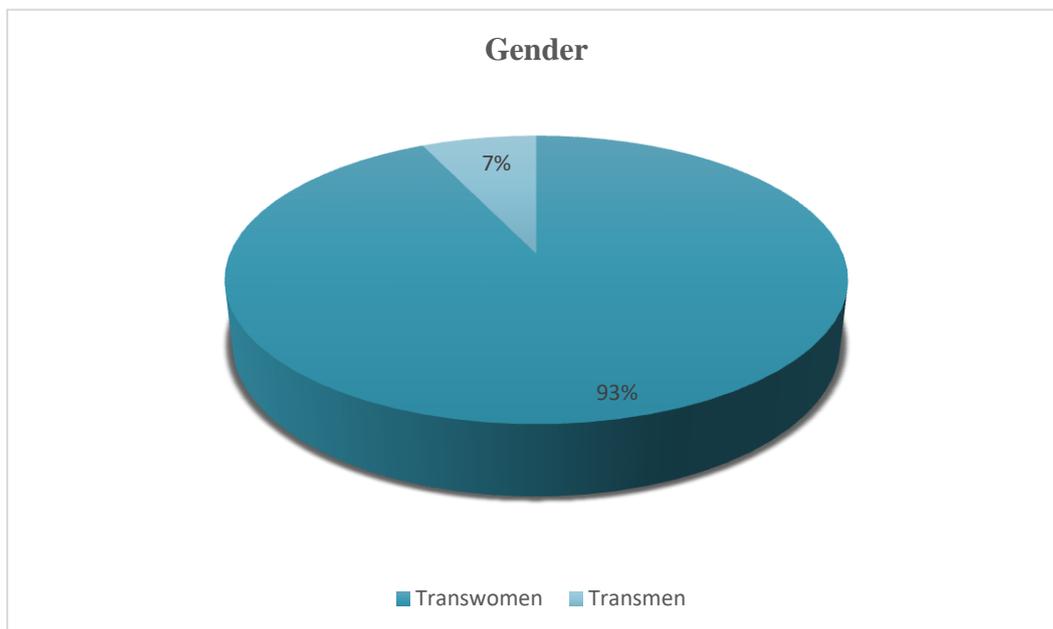
### Methodology

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The investigator has prepared a well-structured questionnaire for both understanding the savings and spending habits of transgender people. The dimensions used for the questionnaire are awareness on different government programmes, savings in different manners and different spending heads. The sample size is fifty and was selected through the snowball sampling technique. The tools used for data analysis are the chi-square test and the Kruskal Wallis H test.

### Results and discussion

Analysis of data was conducted using SPSS 25.0 and M.S. Excel. The descriptive of respondents of the survey are discussed first. The gender-wise analysis of the respondents is depicted in chart no. 1

**Chart No. 1**  
**Gender-wise classification of respondents**

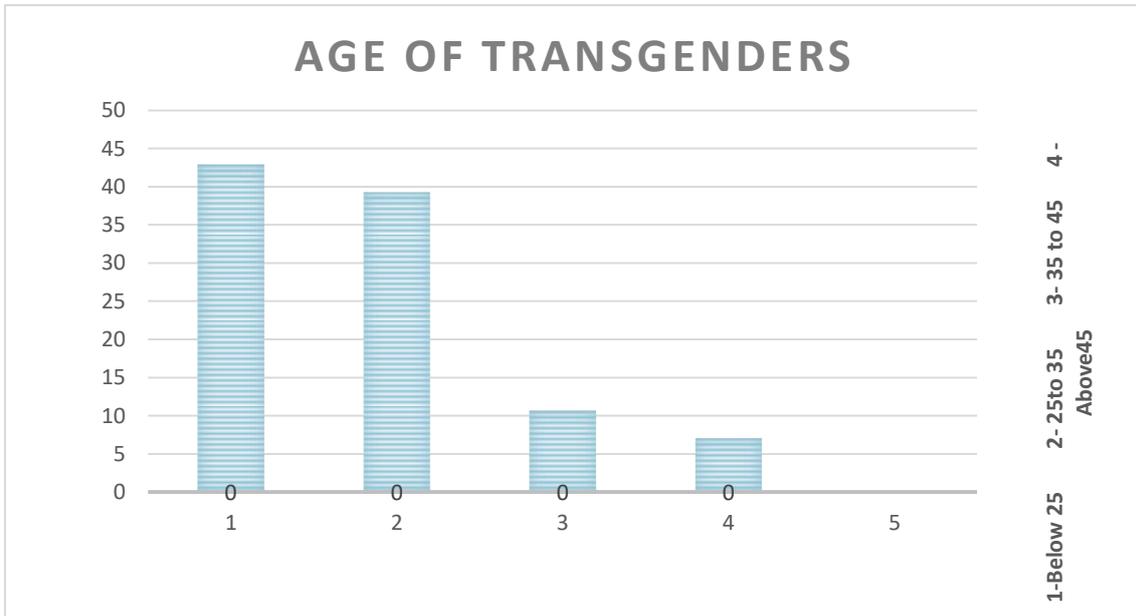


Source: Primary data

Chart no.1 shows that the majority of the respondents, 93%, are transwomen, and nominal respondents are transmen, 7%.

Chart No. 2

Age-wise classification of respondents

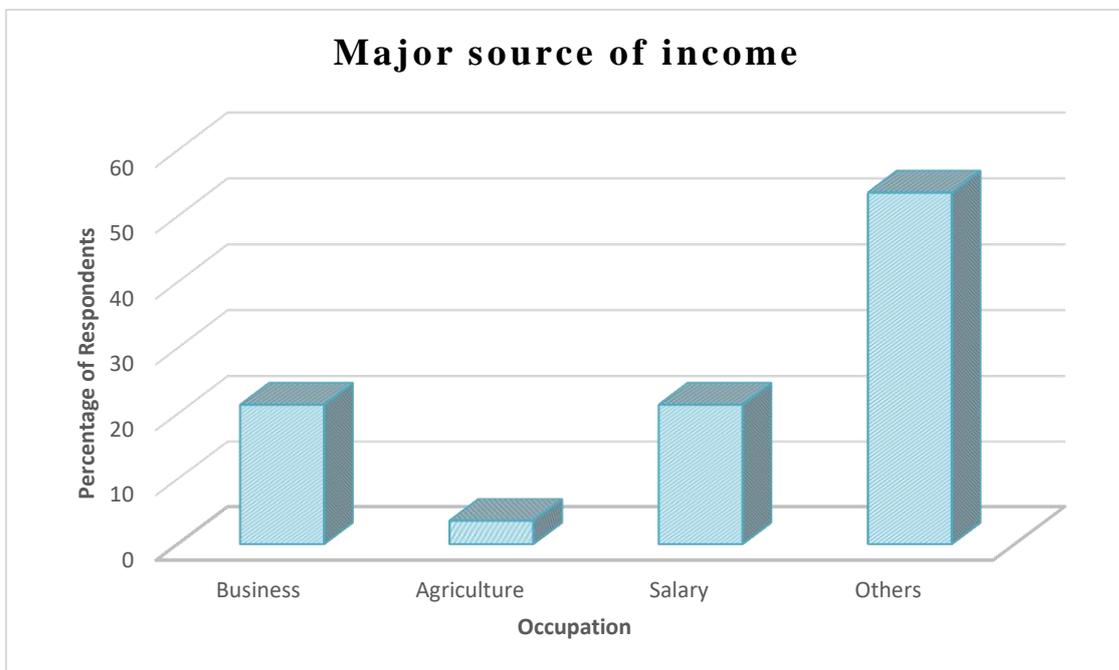


Source: Primary data

Chart no.2 shows that the majority of the respondents, 44%, are below 25 years, and the respondents aged 25 to 35 years are next to it; 38%. The respondents age 35 to 45 years are 10%, and nominal respondents are above 45 years; 7%.

Chart No. 3

Sources of income of respondents



Source: Primary data

Chart No. 3 shows the respondents' income sources shows that more than half the respondents do not specify the source; 54% might include donation, sponsorship or self-employment. Next to that, business and employment are the sources of income, 20%, and agriculture is only 6%.

**Table No. 1**

**Descriptive analysis of financial data of transgenders**

Monthly income		daily expenses		Monthly Medical expenses		Monthly savings	
Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
6050	0.77	298	0.85	1200	0.70	426	0.79

Source: Primary data

As per table no. 1, the respondents' average Monthly income and average monthly savings are INR. 6050 and 426, respectively. Average daily expenses are INR. 298, and medical expenses are 1200 per month.

**Table No. 2**

**Source of income \* Monthly Income Crosstabulation**

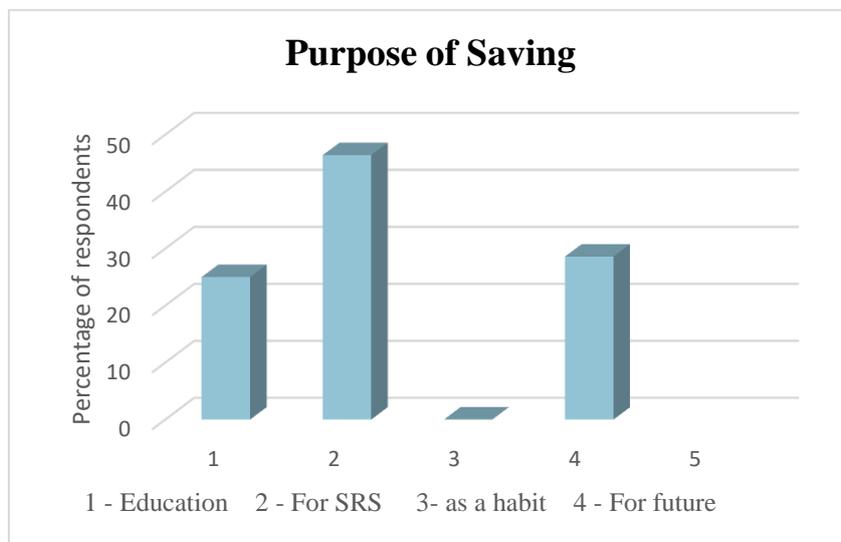
		Monthly Income			Total
		less than 5000	5000-10000	More than 10000	
Source of income	Agriculture	2	1	0	3
	Business	7	2	1	10
	Salary	2	4	4	10
	Others	9	11	7	27
Total		10	19	21	50

Source: Primary data

Table no. 2 shows the frequency of sources of income with their monthly income.

**Chart No. 4**

**Transgender people' objectives of Savings**

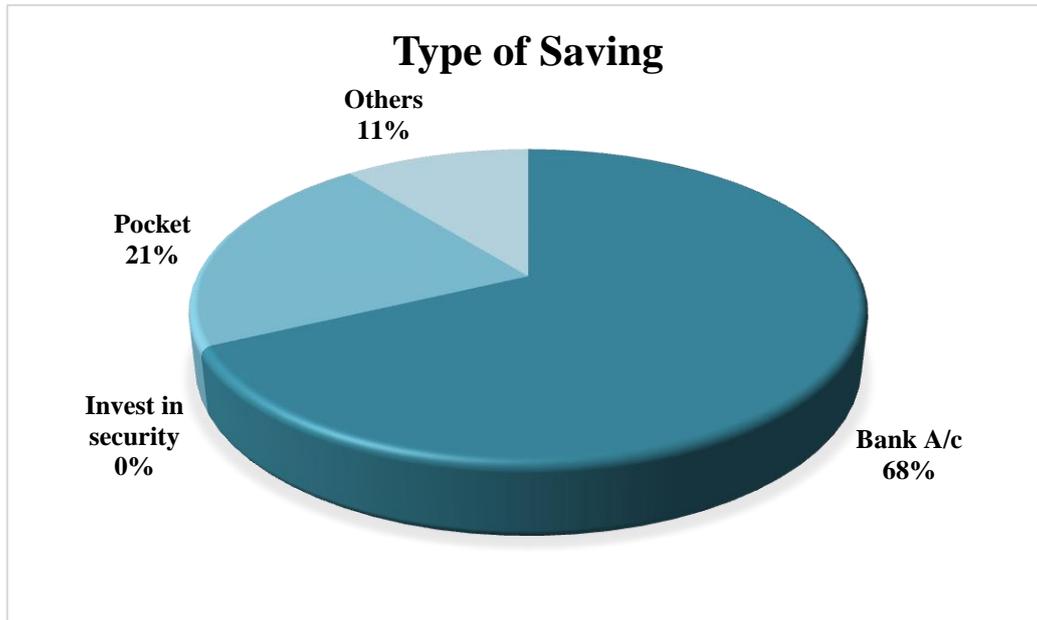


Source: Primary data

The purpose of savings is that nearly half of transgender people are going through Sex Reassignment surgery (SRS). This shows their urge to become a self-identified gender.

Chart No. 4

Transgender people' savings in different avenues

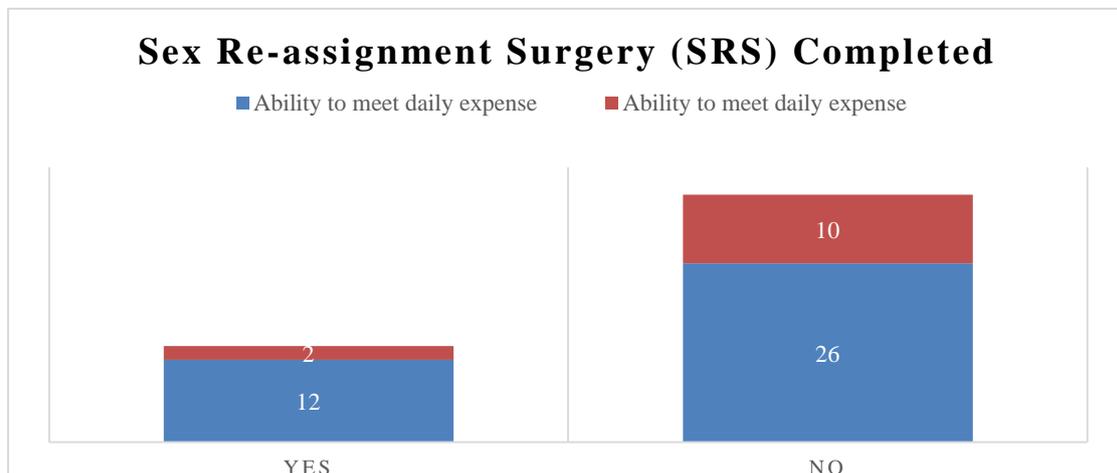


Source: Primary data

Chart no. 4 shows the types of savings; most of them saved their money as bank deposits, and none invested in securities. This shows that they need to provide more importance to return on their current income.

Chart No. 5

Ability to meet daily expenses of transgender people with or without SRS



Source: Primary data

Chart no. 5 shows the ability to meet the daily expenses of those who have undergone the surgery and others. 85% of persons who have changed their gender artificially cannot meet their daily expenses from their income.

Chart No. 6

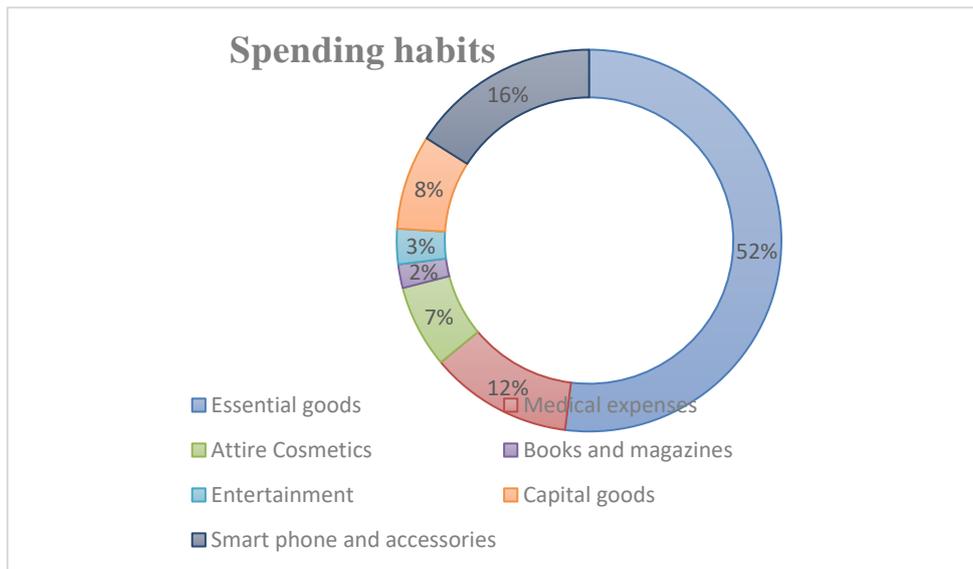
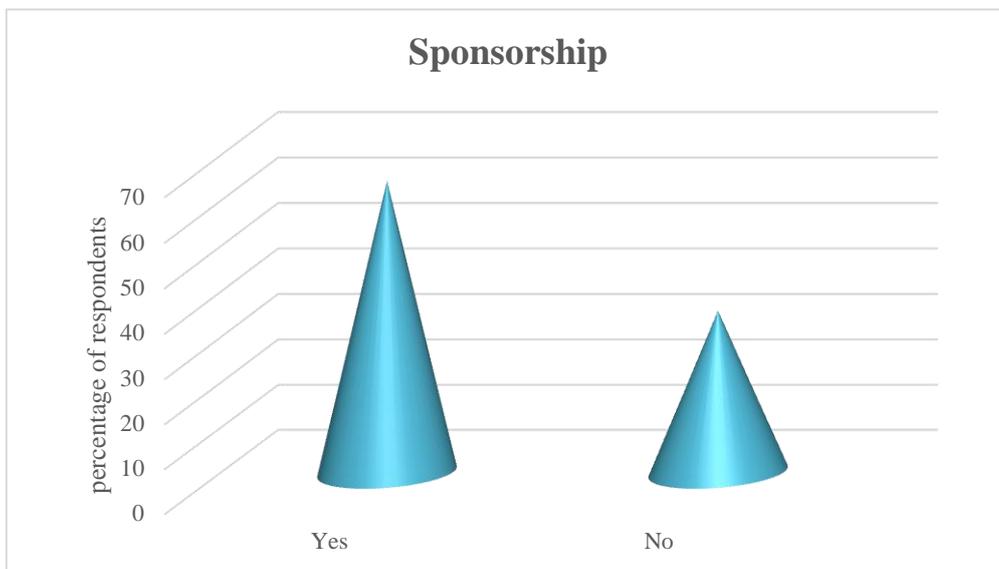


Chart no.6 depicts the spending percentage on different heads. The major portion is for essential goods; the higher percentage is for phone and medical needs.

Chart no. 7

Enjoyment of Sponsorship

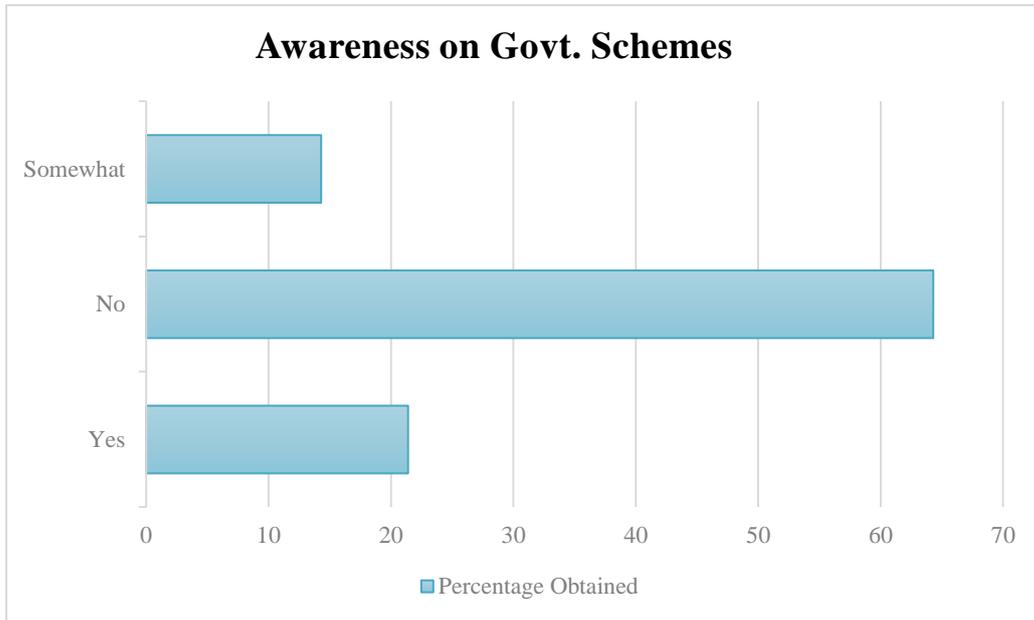


Source: Primary data

The majority of transgender people, around 65%, are enjoying sponsorship. This shows their incapacity to get a sufficient income for their living.

Chart No. 8

Transgender people' awareness of Govt. schemes exclusively for them

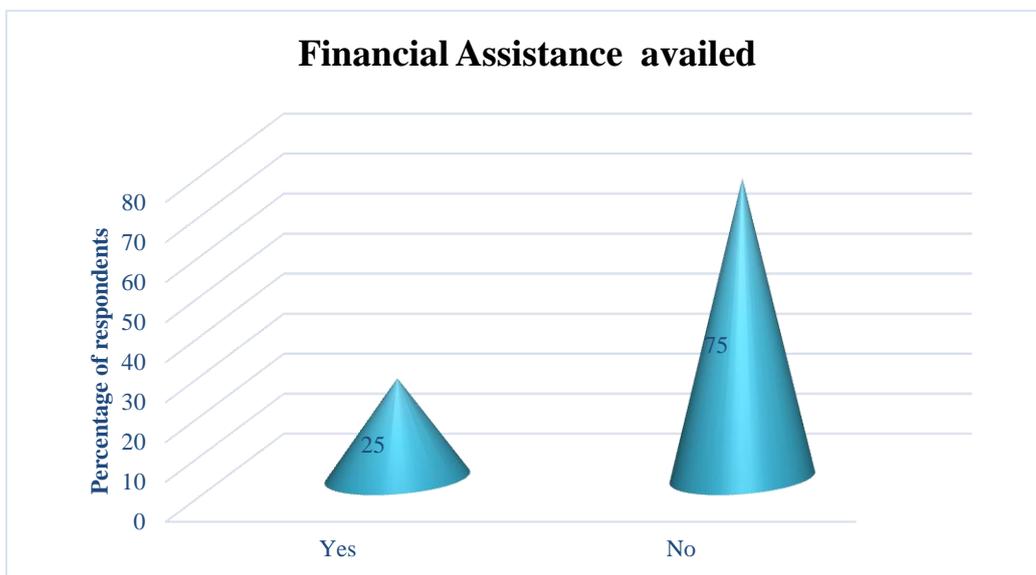


Source: Primary data

Most respondents, around 65%, are unaware of the Govt. schemes for financial support to the transgender community. Only 21% of them are confident that they know about the government schemes. The others are knowledgeable about the schemes.

Chart No. 9

Financial Assistance from Govt. Schemes

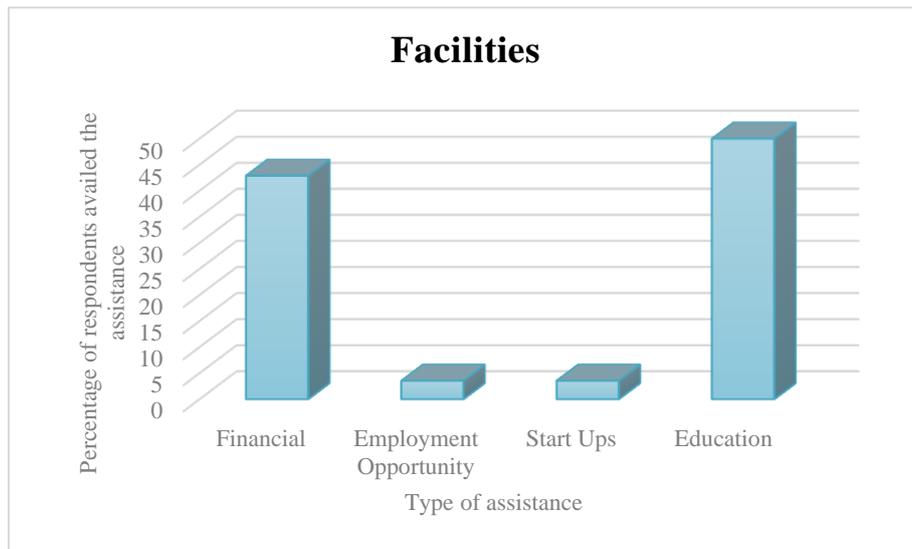


Source: Primary data

Around 75% of the respondents are not availed of any financial assistance from the Government.

Chart No. 10

Facilities received from Govt.

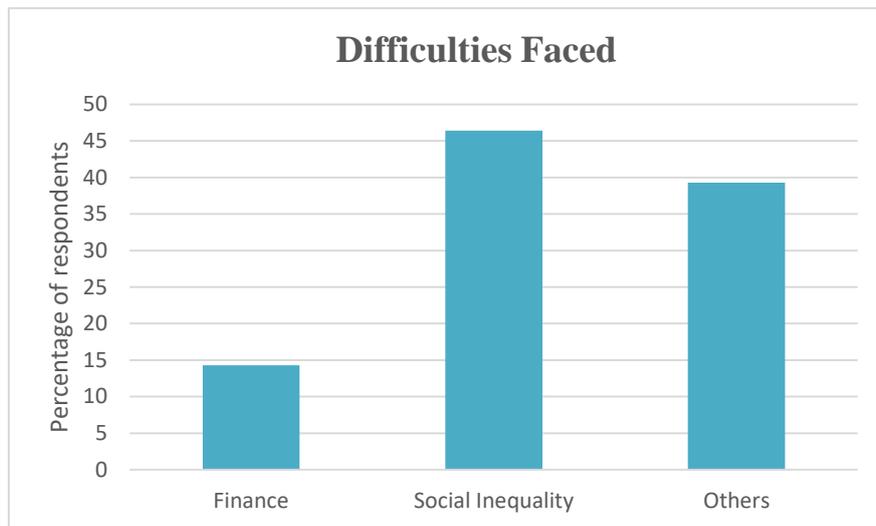


Source: Primary data

About half of the transgender people who availed of the schemes are using the educational facilities provided by the Government. Nearly 40% of the availed persons used financial facilities from the schemes.

Chart No. 11

Difficulty in the Education Field



Source: Primary data

Chart no.10 shows the perceived difficulties in education among transgender people. Social inequality is the primary difficulty in education. The difficulties included in the others category are insecurity, feeling dejected, other psychological spheres of the person and pressure from society. This category is next to social inequality, and financial difficulty is the last cause of lack of education.

Table No. 3

Correlation analysis

	Awareness of Govt. Schemes
Availing Financial Assistance from Govt.	.118*
Education	.139**

Source: Primary data

Table no. Three shows a significant relationship between awareness of government schemes and availing of financial assistance on the scheme. Thus, the hypothesis, that is, there is no significant relationship between awareness on Govt. schemes availing of the financial assistance from Govt. is rejected.

The respondent's education level and awareness of the schemes are also positively related to the T significant level. thus, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between education and awareness of Govt. schemes is rejected.

**Table No. 4**

Purpose of savings and Age			
Ranks			
	Age	N	Mean Rank
Purpose of Savings	Below 25	12	24.49
	25-35	18	23.95
	35-45	13	24.51
	Above45	6	40.29
	Total	50	

**Source: Primary data**

The purpose of savings is studied according to their age. Kruskal Wallis H test was used for group comparison. Above 45

**Table No. 5**

Test Statistics <sup>b</sup>	
Purpose of Savings	
Kruskal-Wallis H	7.799
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.05

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Age

**Source: Primary data**

H test is significant at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis (There is no significant difference in the purpose of savings of transgender people in Kerala with reference to their age) is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the purpose of savings of transgender people in Kerala with reference to their age.

## Conclusions

The transgender community faces several problems and finds it hard to earn a living. Many of them have feelings of social insecurity. The financial behaviour of transgender people concerning spending and savings habits is studied here. Age is a factor in the purpose of savings. Awareness of the government schemes and availing of financial assistance are significantly related. The education level and awareness of the schemes are also related significantly. This study may throw light on the financial and investment behaviour of transgender people in the state.

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