

## Attitude of Educated Segment Towards Transgender in Kerala

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### ABSTRACT:

Transgender experiences the most intense form of discrimination in the Indian society and at workplace. Their voices go unheard; they try to hide their identity in order to avoid discrimination and harassment. In India, only a small percentage of transgender are employed reason being, the institutions and employers have a fear to provide jobs to them because of the belief that they may spoil the work culture. Hence, most of the transgender earn their livelihood by dancing at auspicious occasions, sex work and by begging. Transgenders are alone in their genderstruggles because of the lack of information in public as their public representation is very less in educational sectors and media. The increase in the number of college and school dropouts is caused due to lack of family support, discrimination and financial constraints.

The research highlights some of the defiances faced by transgender in Indian society and aims to understand the attitude of educated segment towards transgender in Kerala. The agenda is to identify the variables affecting the attitude of educated segment towards transgender, to study the attitude of educated segment in Kerala towards transgender based on identified variables and to understand the acceptance of transgender in Kerala and give suggestions to improve the attitude of people.

The three districts considered for the study are Calicut, Palakkad and Trivandrum. A questionnaire consisting of 20 items was circulated through Google form and a total of 304 responses were recorded. The respondents were requested to mark their responses over a five-point Likert scale having ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and the analysis tools used were Independent T test and ANOVA.

The result of the study revealed that 73.4% of respondents from Kerala have positive attitude towards transgender community. Significant relationship was discovered between age, occupation, education and attitude towards transgender whereas gender had no impact on attitude formation.

**Keywords:** Transgender, educated segment, Attitude, Discrimination, Demographic factors.

**JEL Classification:** D63, I30, J15, J16, M00.

### Introduction

As per the American Psychiatric Association (2013), transgender denotes a broad spectrum of individuals who momentarily or persistently recognize a gender dissimilar from their own at birth. Transgender is an overarching term; people belonging to this category have a gender appearance or characteristics different from their sex assigned at birth (Levitt and Ippolito, 2014). Traditionally, in India, people had an unbending understanding of the term gender. Society was customary to classify a child as either a male or female at birth and anyone identifying differently was socially discriminated against (Jain *et al.*, 2019). Indian Census has never recognized the third gender, which means, for years, the statistical data related to transgender was never collected for the census. However, in 2011, data related to the caste, education and employment of transgender was collected. As per the Indian Census 2011, the populace of transgender in India stands around 4.88 Lakh and in Kerala around 3902. Gender non-conformity puts people at a high risk of physical and verbal victimization, substance abuse and depression. Transgender individuals are often sidestepped by society and by their own families because they are looked upon as a burden and reason for embarrassment. Some portion of our society

doesn't believe in any identities in between male and female. This leads to an entirely different attitude towards transgender.

In April 2014, the Supreme Court of India gave identification to transgender as "The Third gender" alongside male and female. As per the Supreme Court of India the trans-identifying people will be considered under the OBC category and will be given reservation in education and employment reservation under the OBC section (Sethi, 2018). To prohibit discrimination against them in employment, education, housing, healthcare and other services, the Parliament passed the Transgender Person Bill (Protection of Rights), 2019 on November 26, 2019. The Bill allows self-perception of gender identity (The Hindu, 2019).

This study seeks to understand the attitude of the educated segment regarding transgender in the state of Kerala. It also aims to explore the relationship between attitude and demographic variables mainly education, age, gender, location and occupation.

### **Definition of terms**

- *Attitude*: It is defined as "Positive or negative feelings and thoughts related to a specific social object such as humans, objects, facts or events" (Agir, 2019).
- *Transgender*: "An umbrella term that describes people whose gender identity or expression does not match with the sex assigned at birth. Individuals who were born with male/female anatomies but feel otherwise from their body structure" (Rafeek, 2015).

### **Review of Literature**

#### ***Evolution and rights of transgender***

Michelraj (2015) stated that the transgender community was assigned high positions like political advisors, during the Mughal period. During that era, the kings took initiatives for the welfare of the third-gender community, there were regulations to protect the rights of Hijaras and prevent any harassment towards them (Subramanian, 2017). At the beginning of the British period, transgender was profited from the rights of food and the provision of the land but later they faced problems during British colonial rule. British imposed strict rules and regulations to restrict the basic rights of transgender individuals. In the contemporary period, many government policies and schemes were implemented to protect transgender rights. The Apex Court of India, after giving identity to transgender as the 3<sup>rd</sup> gender in April 2014, stated that "Transgender individual is also a citizen of India, and they must be offered with equal opportunity to grow". To offer support and stop human rights violations of transgender, the Indian Government introduced numerous welfare policies and rights for them, which included consideration in polls, documentation, issuance of citizenship ID cards and permits/visas, police reforms, housing and legitimate safeguards. Institutional mechanisms to address specific concerns of the transgender community were also put in place (Sawant, 2017). As per Aneesh (2017), transgender had many illustrations in ancient epics of India and other parts of the world. They were referred to under diverse names at different locations, 'berdaches' amid American Indian tribes, 'baklas' in the Philippines, 'xaniths' at Oman, 'serrers' in Africa, 'Kathoeys' at Thailand, 'Waria' in Indonesia and 'Hijras', 'jogappas', and 'Shiv-Shaktis' midst South Asia.

#### ***Transgender Health***

As per Sethi (2018), some of the health problems faced by transgender include HIV, Mental health issues, suicidal and non-suicidal self-harm, tobacco use, violence and victimization. To safeguard the health and rights of transgender, the World Health Organization has developed a range of guidance, health advice, policy briefs and guidelines for health practitioners and policymakers. The WHO states that trans people have a low rate of admission to health services because of legal barriers, violence, stigma and discrimination. A study done by Devadason (2017) stated that trans individuals have the same right to health as any others; they need specific and special healthcare such as gender-affirming surgery and hormone therapy. However, medical practitioners have a lower comfort level and lack of confidence in treating transgender individuals. They refuse to touch them and use excessive precautions while being treated. Because of this discrimination, the number of transgender individuals who seek healthcare facilities is very staggering. Chaturvedi *et al.*, (2018) revealed that transgender faced a high level of mental health issues, 48% grieved from psychiatric syndromes oscillating from alcohol exploitation to dependency, depressive spectrum disorders to gender identity disarrays.

The study by Fernandez and Gaitonde (2024) revealed that the discrimination experienced by transgender and gender-diverse (TGD) individuals in Kerala significantly affects their educational achievements, which in turn hampers their access to stable employment. This has led to a majority of the sample (69 percent) living away

from their families and engaging in risky jobs, including sex work, with only 33 percent holding standard employment. Such factors combine to reinforce their marginalized social status, which increases their vulnerability to modifiable risk aspects such as alcohol (40 percent) and tobacco use (40.8 percent). Furthermore, 30 percent of the sample had hypertension, and 18 percent were diabetic. Discrimination, including within healthcare settings (experienced by 41.7 percent in the past year), further limits access to necessary services, making it difficult for many TGD individuals to adopt healthier behaviours. This disadvantaged social position, coupled with structural inequalities, exacerbates their biological risks, particularly for non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Health programs that overlook these social determinants are likely to yield suboptimal results.

### ***Education and Life of Transgender***

The findings of the transgender survey conducted in 2014 revealed that 58% of trans students drop out of school before accomplishing tenth grade, whereas 24% drop out even before finishing ninth grade. In Kerala, only 11.6% of transgender have regular jobs, and 54% earn less than Rs. 5000 in a month (Transgender Survey Kerala 2014-15). The primary problem for the transgender community is unemployment. It arises mainly due to lack of proper education, discrimination, growth in the number of school and college dropouts, lack of family and social support and financial constraints. In India, Kerala is the primary state to implement a policy related to transgender; it has also hosted a few welfare initiatives for mainstreaming the transgender community. The Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority (KSLMA) has launched 'Sasmanwaya', a continuing education programme for members belonging to transgender community (The Hindu, 2018).

The transgender community faces exclusion everywhere; even the Indian government census included transgender in their data after 64 years of independence in 2011. The data thus collected revealed that merely 46% of transgender are literate and the literacy rate amongst the general population stands at 74%. In the education sector, their presence is less because of harassment, bullying, and physical and sexual abuse from their classmates and peers. Hence, the larger part of them is into begging and sex work because of their low employability (John, 2017). To empower transgender children, programs for promoting lifelong learning can be implemented. By providing financial incentives and scholarships we can encourage them to take up higher education. Implementation of anti-discrimination cells in educational institutions can ensure the safety of transgender students (Mary, 2019).

### ***Attitude towards transgender***

Most of the transgender earn their livelihood by dancing at auspicious occasions, sex work and begging. A part of society also believes that transgender have the power to jinx or sanctify, such kind of belief creates fear among some and some take advantage of it. The first stage of the self-realization process starts from childhood when they behave contradictory to the expectation of the society. When they grow, they realize their feelings and behaviour are like what the opposite sex does. That is when society starts pointing out their unnatural behaviour. It is not an illness, but the families treat it like any other mental condition, and they seek doctor's help for treatment (Krishna, 2018). Institutions and employers have a fear of giving jobs to transgender because of the belief that they may spoil the work culture. They are not even getting the proper health benefits from both public and private parties. The violence against transgender is not reported because civil society does not consider it a serious issue (Subramanian, 2017). The study done by Stafford (2018) concluded that emerging adults have a more positive attitude towards transgender than previous generations. Evolving adults who had more personal link and experience with sexual minorities are more liable to report less negative attitudes towards trans people. The study conducted in South India concluded that adults have a significantly more favourable behaviour towards transgender than college students and females have a significantly more favourable behaviour towards transgender than male. Compared to men, women show a highly positive attitude towards transgender (Kisha, 2015). Transgenders are a vulnerable population in Kerala, as a minority community they are ignored and forced to continue their living as second-class citizens in their own country (Aneesh, 2017). The study done by Chaturvedi *et al.*, (2018) concludes that the transgender group received beneath mediocre social support, they get acceptable support from their in-group members but not from the society in general. In India, some religious places offer them recognition in some temples they are treated as devotees of goddesses. (Mary, 2019). A comparison between the United States and India revealed that the U.S. have a positive attitude towards transgender youth and the Indian sample showed a moderately negative attitude. The best predictors of Indian respondents were environmental causal attributions and religion-based disapproval. Political obscurantism and individual contact with gender were not linked with attitudes. For U.S respondents the best predictors were political ideology and general social illiberalism in the form of religious views, gender-specific orthodoxy in the guise of gender binary opinion, and ratification of ecological causes of transgender individuality (Elischberger *et al.*, 2017). Exclusion from the economy, from socio-cultural participation and from citizen participation are the three basic

kinds of exclusion faced by transgender in India. The fundamental rights of India are applicable to all citizens irrespective of race, religion, caste, gender and birthplace (Agarwal, 2017).

Kerala has emerged as a progressive state in India, particularly in its recent efforts to support the transgender community. After the Supreme Court's 2014 NALSA judgment, which accepted transgender individuals as the third gender and affirmed their right to self-identify, Kerala was the earliest to introduce a Transgender Policy in 2015. The policy aimed at "granting legal recognition of their gender identity" and combat prejudice. However, notwithstanding these advancements, societal discrimination against transgender people continues to hinder policy implementation, with ongoing issues in government and public institutions due to a lack of gender sensitization (Poornima r, 2021).

The study by Fenn *et al.* (2020) highlights the significant challenges faced by transgender individuals in Kerala, who are often marginalized and subjected to discrimination. This is particularly striking given that Kerala boasts some of the most progressive transgender-friendly policies in the country. Various factors contribute to this marginalization, including entrenched notions of "normalcy," limited exposure to transgender individuals, a general lack of awareness about transgender issues, Kerala's sexually conservative culture, and pervasive moral policing. To improve the situation, two immediate steps are essential. First, public awareness about transgenderism must be significantly enhanced. Second, comprehensive research is needed to evaluate the efficacy of the government's transgender policies and initiatives. A thorough reassessment is necessary to determine the current state of affairs. Integrating transgender individuals into mainstream society will require continued efforts, with both State and National policymakers playing crucial roles in turning policy promises into tangible realities.

The study by Kuriakose and Vinshy (2018) revealed that Kerala's government conducted a transgender survey and introduced its Transgender Policy in 2015, which was officially launched during the International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE) in Thiruvananthapuram. These efforts have led to some improvements in the inclusion of trans persons in the public sphere over the past three years. However, challenges remain in terms of their ability to openly express their identity and achieve financial stability through education and employment. According to the 2014-15 Kerala Transgender Survey, only 14% of respondents have permanent jobs, half are in temporary employment, and 6% work part-time. The survey also revealed that over 50% of transgender individuals lack secure employment, with 23% working in the private sector and 21% as daily wage labourers.

The study by Fenn *et al.* (2023) found that transphobia—defined as prejudice or aversion toward transgender people or those who do not correspond to societal gender norms—was moderate among a sample of 452 medical doctors and students from Kerala. Females and medical undergraduates exhibited lower levels of transphobia compared to males and practicing doctors. While the contributors had an middling understanding of general information about the transgender community, including its core characteristics and distinctions from similar categories, their knowledge of health-related issues specific to transgender individuals—like physical and mental health concerns, healthcare necessities, and gender affirmation surgery—was notably low. The study concluded that more inclusive measures are required in medical education, judicial frameworks, advocacy efforts, and the creation of multidisciplinary surgical groups to better support the transgender society.

## **Objective & Hypothesis of Study**

### ***Objectives***

The study is conducted to understand and identify how the educated segment interacts and feels about the third-gender community. The focus of the study is on the following:

- a) To identify the variables affecting the attitude of the educated segment towards transgender.
- b) To study the attitude of the educated segment in Kerala (Calicut, Palakkad & Trivandrum) towardstransgender based on identified variables.

### ***Hypothesis***

H0: There is no significant effect of demographic variables (pertaining to the educated segment) on attitude towards transgender.

H01: There is no substantial difference in the attitude of females and males towards transgender.

H02: There is no significant effect of occupation on attitude towards transgender.

H03: There is no substantial association between age and attitude towards transgender.  
H04: There is no significant effect of educational background on attitude towards transgender.  
H05: There is no considerable difference between attitudes of different districts toward transgender.

### Research Methodology

The intention behind conducting this research was to understand the attitude of the educated segment toward transgender in Kerala. For this, three districts of Kerala were chosen which included Calicut, Trivandrum and Palakkad. The research design followed for the study was descriptive and the sampling technique used was convenience. Primary data was accumulated with the help of a questionnaire consisting of twenty items related to attitude and five items related to demographic information. The *sample size* of the research was 304. The survey takers were asked to mark their responses on a five-point Likert scale stretching from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Individuals falling in the age bracket of 19 to 44 years, UG and above qualified were selected for the study. The sample included 88 individuals from commerce or arts backgrounds and 216 individuals from science backgrounds. No missing data was identified. The sample constituted 50.3% male and 49.7% female participants. Most of the sample comprised of students with 60.2%, 30.6% working class, 5.3% currently unemployed and 3% businessmen. The number of participants from Calicut was 116, 98 from Palakkad and 90 from Trivandrum. There were 11 reverse-worded items in the questionnaire. Items 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17 and 19 were reverse worded which were reverse coded before analysis (Suárez-Alvarez, J., et.al.,2018).

**Table 1: Description of Respondents**

Variables	Frequency (N=304)	Percent
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	153	50.3
Female	151	49.7
<b>Occupation</b>		
Student	186	61.2
Working	93	30.6
Currently unemployed	16	5.3
Business	9	3.0
<b>Age</b>		
<20 years	19	6.3
20-24	149	49.0
25-29	67	22.0
30-34	37	12.2
35-39	21	6.9
40-44	11	3.6
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Commerce or Arts (B. Com/B. A etc.)	36	11.8
Commerce or Arts (B. Com/B.A. etc.) +MBA	52	17.1
Science (B. Tech/B.Sc. etc.)	116	38.2
Science (B. Tech/B.Sc. etc.) +MBA	43	14.1
Science (B. Tech/B.Sc. etc.) +related post-graduation programs (M. Tech etc.)	57	18.8
<b>Home District</b>		
Calicut	116	38.2
Palakkad	98	32.2
Trivandrum	90	29.6

### Tools Used

The statistical tools used for analysis are the independent t-test and ANOVA.

### Data Analysis

To determine the significant impact of demographic independent variables including age, gender, occupation, educational background and home district on dependent variable attitude, various tests were conducted. To investigate the association between gender and attitude, the Independent t-test was applied. ANOVA was applied to test the relationship between attitude and the other four independent variables- age, occupation, educational background and home district.

### Reliability Analysis

**Table 2: Reliability statistics**

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Number of Items
.911	.910	20

Cronbach's alpha is applied to measure internal consistency and is the most extensively used objective amount of reliability. Cronbach's Alpha ranging from .70 to .95 is acceptable (Tavakol, M. and Dennick, R., 2011). For the present study, the reliability coefficient was estimated using Cronbach's alpha. The scale demonstrated Cronbach's alpha value .911 which shows high internal consistency. Hence, the items in the test are highly correlated.

### Relationship between Gender and Attitude towards transgender

Table 3 depicts no substantial variance in the attitudes of males and females towards transgender individuals. The significance value is .059 which is higher than 0.05. Thus, hypothesis H<sub>11</sub> is not rejected. The study found that 66.7% of males and 80.1% of females had positive attitudes towards transgender (Table 4).

**Table 3: Independent t-test to investigate the relationship between gender and attitude towards transgender**

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Attitude	Equal variances assumed	3.583	.059	-2.799	302	.005	-.22749	.08129	-.38745	-.06753
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.802	295.261	.005	-.22749	.08120	-.38729	-.06769

**Table 4: Cross tabulation for the variable gender and attitude towards transgender**

Gender * OVERALL ATTITUDE Cross Tabulation						
			OVERALL ATTITUDE			Total
			NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE	
Gender	Male	Count	48	3	102	153
		% within gender	31.4%	2.0%	66.7%	100.0%
	Female	Count	28	2	121	151
		% within gender	18.5%	1.3%	80.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	76	5	223	304

% within gender	25.0%	1.6%	73.4%	100.0%
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#### ***Relationship between Occupation and Attitude towards transgender***

As per Table 5, the p value is .000 ( $< 0.05$ ). Thus, there is considerable effect of occupation on attitude towards transgender. Thus, the  $H_{12}$  hypothesis is rejected. The study found that 88.2% of students and 48.4% of the working class had a positive attitude towards transgender (Table 6). Thus, it establishes that non-working class i.e. students possess higher positive attitude towards transgender than the working class.

**Table 5: ANOVA to test the relationship between Occupation and attitude towards transgender**

ANOVA					
Attitude					
	Sum of Squares	d.o.f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	18.842	3	6.281	13.780	.000
Within Groups	136.739	300	.456		
Total	155.581	303			

**Table 6: Cross tabulation for the variable Occupation and Attitude towards transgender**

Occupation * OVERALLATTITUDE Cross tabulation						
			OVERALL ATTITUDE			Total
			NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE	
Occupation	Student	Count	18	4	164	186
		% within occupation	9.7%	2.2%	88.2%	100.0%
	Working	Count	48	0	45	93
		% within occupation	51.6%	0.0%	48.4%	100.0%
	Currently unemployed	Count	5	1	10	16
		% within occupation	31.3%	6.3%	62.5%	100.0%
	Business	Count	5	0	4	9
		% within occupation	55.6%	0.0%	44.4%	100.0%
	Total	Count	76	5	223	304
		% within occupation	25.0%	1.6%	73.4%	100.0%

#### ***Relationship between Age and Attitude towards Transgender***

As per Table 7, the significance value is .000, hence significant relationship between age and attitude towards transgender can be established. Thus, hypothesis  $H_{13}$  stands. The study discovered that 94.7% respondents falling within age group of less than 20 years had a positive attitude towards transgender. While respondents of age group 30-34, 35-39 and 40-44 years displayed 43.2%, 23.8% and 36.4% positive attitudes towards transgender respectively (Table 8).

**Table 7: ANOVA to test the relationship between Age and attitude towards transgender**

ANOVA					
Attitude					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	24.416	5	4.883	11.094	.000
Within Groups	131.165	298	.440		
Total	155.581	303			

**Table 8: Cross tabulation for the variable age and attitude towards transgender**  
**Age \* OVERALL ATTITUDE Cross tabulation**

Age * OVERALL ATTITUDE Cross tabulation						
			OVERALL ATTITUDE			Total
			NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE	
Age	<20	Count	0	1	18	19
		% within age	0.0%	5.3%	94.7%	100.0%
	20-24	Count	14	3	132	149
		% within age	9.4%	2.0%	88.6%	100.0%
	25-29	Count	18	1	48	67
		% within age	26.9%	1.5%	71.6%	100.0%
	30-34	Count	21	0	16	37
		% within age	56.8%	0.0%	43.2%	100.0%
	35-39	Count	16	0	5	21
		% within age	76.2%	0.0%	23.8%	100.0%
	40-44	Count	7	0	4	11
		% within age	63.6%	0.0%	36.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	76	5	223	304
		% within age	25.0%	1.6%	73.4%	100.0%

***Relationship between the educated segment and attitude towards transgender***

As per Table 9, there is a significant effect of educational background on attitude towards transgender since the significance value is .018 which is less than .05. Thus, hypothesis H<sub>14</sub> stating no significant effect of educational background on attitude towards transgender is rejected. Respondents from science plus related post-graduation have a relatively higher positive attitude towards transgender (82.5%) as compared to commerce background students (Table 10).

**Table 9: ANOVA to test the relationship between the educated segment and attitude towards transgender**

ANOVA					
Attitude					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.889	4	.972	1.917	.018
Within Groups	151.692	299	.507		
Total	155.581	303			

**Table 10: Cross tabulation for the variable educational background and attitude towards transgender**  
**Educational background \* OVERALL ATTITUDE Cross tabulation**

			OVERALL ATTITUDE			Total
			NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE	
		Count	10	2	24	36
	Commerce or Arts (B. Com/B. Aetc.)	% within educational background	27.8%	5.6%	66.7%	100.0 %
	Commerce or Arts (B.	Count	19	1	32	52



<b>Educational background</b>	<b>Com/B. A etc.) +MBA</b>	% within educational Background	36.5%	1.9%	61.5%	<b>100.0 %</b>
	<b>Science (B.Tech/B.Sc etc.)</b>	Count	25	2	89	<b>116</b>
		% within educational Background	21.6%	1.7%	76.7%	<b>100.0 %</b>
	<b>Science (B.Tech/B.Sc etc.)+MBA</b>	Count	12	0	31	<b>43</b>
		% within educational Background	27.9%	0.0%	72.1%	<b>100.0 %</b>
	<b>Science(B.Tech/ B.Sc etc.) related post-graduation programs(M.Tech etc.)</b>	Count	10	0	47	<b>57</b>
		% within educational background	17.5%	0.0%	82.5%	<b>100.0 %</b>
	<b>Total</b>	Count	<b>76</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>304</b>
		% within educational Background	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>73.4%</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>

***Relationship between the Home district and Attitude towards transgender***

Table 11 shows that the significance value is 0.159 which is higher than 0.05. Hence,  $H_{15}$  which states there is no substantial difference among attitudes of different districts towards transgender is not rejected. While comparing the three districts Calicut, Palakkad and Trivandrum, Calicut showed the highest positive attitude towards transgender with 86.2%, Palakkad with 70.4% and Trivandrum with 60.0% (Table 12).

**Table 11: ANOVA to test the relationship between home district and attitude towards transgender**

ANOVA					
Attitude					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.890	2	.945	1.851	.159
Within Groups	153.691		.511		
Total	155.581	303			

**Table 12: Cross tabulation for the variable home district and attitude towards transgender**

Home District * OVERALL ATTITUDE Cross tabulation						
			OVERALL ATTITUDE			Total
			NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE	
Home district	Calicut	Count	12	4	100	116
		% within home district	10.3%	3.4%	86.2%	100.0%
	Palakkad	Count	28	1	69	98
		% within home district	28.6%	1.0%	70.4%	100.0%
	Trivandrum	Count	36	0	54	90

		% within home district	40.0%	0.0%	60.0%	100.0%
Total	Count		76	5	223	304
	% within the homedistrict		25.0%	1.6%	73.4%	100.0%

### Discussion

73.4% of respondents from Kerala showed a positive attitude towards the transgender community, this supports the findings of Stafford (2018) that emerging adults have a more positive attitude towards transgender than previous generations. The study found that there is a considerable relationship concerning age and attitude towards transgender. 94.7% of people in the age group of less than twenty years had a positive attitude whereas, people below the age group of thirty years show a lower percentage of positive attitudes towards transgender. There is also a significant effect of occupation on attitude towards transgender. Students have a more positive attitude towards transgender than the working class. The result thus obtained from the present study is contrary to the findings of Kisha (2015) which states that adults in South India have a significantly more favourable behaviour towards transgender than college students.

The present study reveals that there is no significant variance in attitude towards transgender grounded on gender which is contrary to the findings of Kisha (2015) which states that females as compared to males, have significantly more favourable behaviour and highly positive attitudes towards transgender. However, there is a significant effect of educational background on attitude towards transgender, respondents from science background showed more positive attitudes than people from commerce background.

The districts selected for the study were Calicut, Palakkad and Trivandrum and no significant contrast between the attitudes of different districts for transgender was observed.

### Conclusion

Most of the previous studies revealed an overall higher negative attitude towards transgender, but recent research on this topic has shown a comparatively high positive attitude towards transgender. Therefore, it can be said that with time the attitude is changing and becoming positive. The favourable changes in laws and policies made a difference in attitude, also more awareness in this field can bring positive change. Public representation of transgender will help to identify their presence in the community. A gender-diverse workforce will make a diverse customer base. Organizations can implement policies and guidelines to protect the rights of transgender employees, and providing counselling to these vulnerable groups will help to stabilize their mental health as well.

Since people do not talk about this issue openly, the study faced a few limitations such as high chances of respondents answering in a socially desirable manner rather than sharing their true thoughts and feelings. This social desirability response bias may affect the results of the research. Another limitation was that the study was limited to only three districts in Kerala. Therefore, future research selecting all districts of Kerala can be carried out focusing more on fields like medicine, education and workplaces. The tool tapped for collecting the data was a questionnaire, but future research can be done through face-to-face interviews with transgender individuals to obtain more accurate data.

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