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Baseline Report

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Social and Economic Inclusion of Women, Queer and Trans People with Disabilities

Contents

1 Executive Summary

The intersection of gender and disability has been a largely neglected topic in India, even though women, queer and transgender people with disabilities face significant barriers in accessing education, employment, healthcare, and social services.

One key issue is the lack of adequate policy and legal frameworks to protect the rights of women, queer and transgender people with disabilities. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPDA) 2016 and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013 offer some protection. Still, they do not fully address the specific needs of these groups. The National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006) recognised the intersectional discrimination faced by women with disabilities, but its implementation has been limited.

Research has shown that women, queer and transgender people with disabilities are more likely to experience violence, abuse and neglect than their non-disabled peers. This is due to a combination of factors, including the stereotyping and stigmatisation of disability, gender-based violence, and limited access to justice and support services. Women with disabilities are also more likely to be subjected to forced sterilisation and abortions, which violate their reproductive rights. Education is another area where women, queer and transgender people with disabilities face exclusion. They are less likely to attend school, and when they do, they often encounter barriers such as a lack of accessible infrastructure, discrimination, and harassment. As a result, their educational attainment and employment opportunities are limited, which perpetuates the cycle of poverty and exclusion.

Employment discrimination is also a major issue for these groups. They are less likely to be employed and when they are, they often face lower wages, limited job security and opportunities for advancement, and inadequate accommodations. This leads to economic exclusion and limits their ability to participate fully in society.

In conclusion, the intersection of gender and disability leads to significant social and economic exclusion of women, queer and transgender people with disabilities in India. This exclusion is due to a combination of factors, including inadequate policy and legal frameworks, violence and abuse, limited access to education and employment, and discrimination in the workplace. Addressing these issues will require a multifaceted approach that includes policy reforms, awareness-raising campaigns, and improved access to services and support. It is crucial to ensure that the specific needs of these groups are recognised and addressed in all efforts to promote inclusion and social justice in India.

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2 Background

This study aims to explore the unique challenges and barriers encountered by women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities in pursuing higher education. The research will delve into the intersectionality of gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability, shedding light on the experiences of this marginalised group. The goal is to identify potential solutions and interventions to enhance accessibility and inclusivity in higher education institutions.

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To identify the barriers faced by women, queer and transgender people with disabilities in accessing higher education, according to the available source
- To re-examine the available policy and schemes for women, queer and transgender people with disabilities
- To perform a comparative study on the schemes and budget expenditure between India and developed Western nations
- To include perspectives from multiple stakeholders, such as disability rights organisations, LGBTQ+ advocacy groups, educators, administrators, and policymakers
- To develop a comprehensive plan to propose recommendations and interventions for higher education institutions and policymakers

3 Study Design

Challenges and barriers faced by women, queer and transgender people with disabilities in accessing higher education

Location: Delhi

Sample Target: 50-100 people

Literature Review

Conduct an extensive review of existing literature on the subject, including academic articles, reports, policy documents, and case studies. The literature review will provide a comprehensive understanding of the historical context, current state, and research gaps related to the challenges faced by women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities in higher education.

Research Design

Decide on an appropriate research methodology (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods) that aligns with the research objectives. Determine the data collection techniques, such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, or case studies.

    a. Sampling: Develop a suitable sampling strategy to ensure a diverse representation of participants, considering different types of disabilities, gender identities, sexual orientations, and cultural backgrounds.

    b. Ethical Considerations: Address ethical concerns related to the research, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and protecting participants' identities.

1. **Data Collection:** Implement the chosen research methodology by collecting data from participants. This may involve conducting interviews, administering surveys, or organising focus groups. Gather information on participants' experiences, challenges faced, coping strategies, and aspirations related to higher education.

2. **Data Analysis:** Transcribe and code qualitative data from interviews and focus groups. Analyse survey data using appropriate statistical tools. Identify common themes, patterns, and significant findings related to the challenges and barriers faced by women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities in accessing higher education.

3. **Policy and Institutional Analysis:** Examine the existing policies and practices of the institutions of higher education regarding accessibility and inclusivity. Assess the effectiveness of disability support services, gender-inclusive policies, and LGBTQ+ initiatives. Identify areas of improvement and best practices.

4. **Stakeholder Perspectives**: Include perspectives from various stakeholders, such as disability rights organisations, LGBTQ+ advocacy groups, educators, administrators, and policymakers. Understand their views on the challenges and potential solutions to promote equitable access to higher education.

5. **Case Studies:** Include case studies of successful initiatives and programs that have improved the access and experiences of women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities in higher education. Analyse these case studies to draw lessons and recommendations for other institutions.

6. **Recommendations and Interventions:** Based on the research findings, propose practical recommendations and interventions for higher education institutions and policymakers to enhance accessibility and inclusivity for this marginalised group. These may include improved accommodation facilities, sensitivity training for faculty and staff, and more comprehensive support services.

7. **Dissemination and Advocacy:** Compile the research findings, recommendations, and interventions into a comprehensive report. Disseminate the findings through academic journals, conferences, and presentations. Engage in advocacy efforts to raise awareness and promote positive change for the inclusion of women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities in higher education

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcome of this study plan is to generate valuable insights and actionable recommendations that can drive positive change and promote equitable access to higher education for women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities.

Limitations

- Limited availability of secondary sources.
- Geographical limitation in collecting primary data
- The study design may be subject to resource constraints and time limitations

4 Literature Review

Abstract

Access to higher education is crucial for individuals seeking personal and professional growth. However, certain marginalised groups face unique challenges in accessing higher education opportunities. This literature review aims to explore the barriers and challenges faced by women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities in Delhi in their pursuit of higher education. By analysing existing research and academic literature, this review identifies key themes and provides insights into the intersectional experiences of these individuals. The findings shed light on the structural, social, and systemic barriers that impede their access to higher education, and emphasise the need for inclusive policies and supportive measures to promote equitable educational opportunities for all.

Introduction

Access to higher education is considered a fundamental right and a catalyst for individual growth, empowerment and societal progress. However, various social, cultural, and economic factors create barriers for marginalised groups, including women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities, in their pursuit of higher education. Delhi - the capital of India - presents a unique context for studying these challenges, due to its diverse population and complex social dynamics.

This literature review aims to examine and synthesise existing research on the access to higher education faced by women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities in Delhi. By critically analysing the available literature, this review seeks to identify the barriers and challenges that impede their access to higher education and explore potential strategies and initiatives to promote inclusivity in the educational system.

Methodology

A comprehensive search of academic databases, scholarly articles, reports, and relevant sources was conducted to collect literature focusing on the access to higher education faced by the target population in Delhi. The selected literature was critically reviewed and categorised based on key themes and findings. The analysis focused on identifying common barriers and challenges, and existing initiatives and recommendations to address them.

Theoretical Framework

Intersectionality Theory

The review adopts an intersectional lens, drawing from intersectionality theory, to understand how the multiple identities of women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities interact and compound the challenges they face. This framework recognises that individuals experience overlapping forms of discrimination based on gender, disability, and sexual orientation, which influence their access to higher education.

Disability Studies

The theoretical underpinning of disability studies helps analyse how social and cultural attitudes, inaccessible infrastructure, and lack of accommodation contribute to the exclusion of disabled individuals from higher education. It explores the social model of disability, emphasising that disability is caused by societal barriers rather than an inherent individual limitation.

Gender Studies

Gender studies provide insights into the gendered dimensions of educational inequality. It examines how societal norms, gender roles, and biases impact women's access to education and shape their experiences in academic settings. The review utilises gender studies to understand the specific challenges faced by women with disabilities, including intersecting factors of ableism and sexism.

Queer and Transgender Studies

Queer and transgender studies contribute to the analysis by shedding light on the unique challenges faced by queer and transgender individuals in educational settings. The review examines the discrimination, prejudice, and lack of acceptance that impact their access to higher education...

Access to Higher Education: Overview

Global research highlights gender disparities in higher education, demonstrating the lower enrollment rates and limited opportunities for women in certain regions. Factors such as socio-cultural norms, unequal distribution of resources, and stereotypes contribute to these disparities. Studies examining the experiences of disabled individuals in higher education globally reveal barriers related to physical accessibility, lack of accommodations, and ableist attitudes. Such barriers hinder their participation, academic success, and social integration. Research on queer and transgender students reveals discrimination, harassment, and lack of support in higher education institutions. These challenges include bias from peers and faculty, limited access to inclusive resources, and inadequate policies.

Women, Queer, and Transgender People with Disabilities in Delhi: Sociocultural Context
The cultural context of Delhi influences gender roles and norms, often perpetuating inequality and discrimination against women. Societal expectations regarding women's roles and limited opportunities hinder their access to higher education. Delhi, like many societies, exhibits stigmatising attitudes towards disabilities. Negative perceptions, stereotypes, and lack of awareness contribute to the exclusion of disabled individuals from educational opportunities. Delhi's socio-cultural context presents unique challenges for queer and transgender individuals. Homophobia, transphobia, and societal prejudices limit their access to education and exacerbate their marginalisation.

Barriers to Accessing Higher Education in Delhi

Physical barriers such as inaccessible campuses, transportation, and lack of assistive technologies, restrict the mobility and participation of individuals with disabilities in higher education.

Attitudinal Barriers and Stigma

Attitudinal barriers, including ableism, sexism, and homophobia, manifest in discriminatory practices, negative stereotypes, and a lack of understanding among peers and educators. These attitudes hinder the educational experiences of marginalised individuals.

Lack of Inclusive Policies and Support Systems

The absence of inclusive policies, guidelines, and support systems in educational institutions in Delhi further marginalises women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities. Inadequate accommodations, limited access to support services, and insufficient awareness contribute to their exclusion.

Socio-economic Constraints

Socio-economic factors, such as poverty, limited financial resources, and lack of scholarships or grants, pose additional barriers to marginalised groups seeking higher education in Delhi.

Intersectional Discrimination

The intersectional experiences of women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities often expose them to multiple layers of discrimination. The compounded effects of gender, disability, and sexual orientation discrimination create unique challenges that inhibit their access to higher education.

Initiatives and Strategies for Inclusive Higher Education in Delhi Legal Framework and Policy Initiatives

The review explores Delhi's legal and policy framework, including disability rights acts, anti-discrimination legislation, and affirmative action measures. It examines the implementation of these policies and their impact on promoting inclusive higher education. Inclusive practices, such as disability support services, reasonable accommodations, and assistive technologies, play a crucial role in ensuring the accessibility and success of disabled students in higher education. Support services catering to the specific needs of queer and transgender students, including safe spaces, counselling, and awareness programs, contribute to creating an inclusive environment in higher education institutions. Investment in accessible infrastructure, including ramps, elevators, and accessible digital platforms is essential to remove physical barriers and promote equal access to higher education.

Conclusion

This literature review highlights the challenges faced by women, queer, and transgender individuals with disabilities in accessing higher education in Delhi. It emphasises the intersectional nature of these challenges and the need for a comprehensive understanding of the social, cultural, and systemic factors that perpetuate educational inequalities. The findings of this review suggest the importance of inclusive policies, support services, and accessible infrastructure in promoting

equitable access to higher education. It calls for implementing measures that address the specific needs and experiences of the marginalised.

In conclusion, this literature review underscores the urgency of promoting inclusive higher education in Delhi. It advocates for a multi-faceted approach that considers the intersecting identities of individuals and addresses the structural, social, and systemic barriers that hinder their educational aspirations. By fostering inclusive environments, institutions can create opportunities for personal growth, empowerment, and social change.

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5 Problem Tree

"Access to Higher Education for Women, Queer and Transgender People with Disabilities in Delhi"

I. Root Causes

1. Lack of Inclusive Policies and Regulations
   a. Higher education institutions lack comprehensive policies addressing the unique needs of transgender individuals with disabilities.
   b. Absence of clear guidelines for accommodating diverse identities and disabilities.

2. Societal Stigma and Discrimination
   a. Widespread societal prejudice against transgender individuals with disabilities creates barriers to their participation in education.
   b. Discriminatory attitudes contribute to reluctance to provide necessary accommodations.

3. Inadequate Awareness and Sensitisation

a. Limited understanding among faculty, staff, and students about the challenges faced by transgender people with disabilities.
b. Lack of training programs to sensitise the campus community to these intersectional issues.

II. Immediate Causes

1. Limited Accessibility
a. Physical infrastructure, including ramps, gender-neutral restrooms, and accessible transportation, is lacking.
b. Technological barriers prevent equal access to digital resources and online courses.

2. Documentation Issue
a. Transgender individuals often face challenges in updating their official documents to reflect their true gender identity.
b. Mismatch between legal documentation and self-identified gender leads to confusion and potential discrimination.

3. Exclusion from Reservation Benefits
a. Absence of a reservation quota for transgender individuals with disabilities.
b. Existing reservation systems do not account for this intersectional identity, leading to unequal opportunities..

III. Underlying Causes

1. Lower Enrollment and Retention Rates
a. Transgender individuals with disabilities may be discouraged from enrolling due to the perceived unwelcoming environment.
b. Lack of necessary accommodations and support may lead to higher dropout rates.

2. Mental and Emotional Strain
a. Constant discrimination and lack of acceptance contribute to higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression.
b. Feeling marginalised and unsupported negatively impacts overall well-being and academic performance.

3. Limited Career Opportunities

    a. Inadequate access to higher education leads to restricted career options for transgender individuals with disabilities.

    b. Job market discrimination against this intersectional group further limits employment prospects.

4. **Ableism**

    a. Limited access to education perpetuates a cycle of economic and social disadvantage for transgender people with disabilities.

    b. They are more likely to remain unemployed or engage in low-skilled jobs.

5. **Stifled Social Progress**

    a. Excluding transgender individuals with disabilities from higher education hinders societal progress by not utilising their unique perspectives and talents.

    b. Limits the potential for positive contributions to research, policy-making, and cultural diversity.

IV. Potential Solutions

1. **Data Collection and Analysis**

    a. Regularly collect data on enrollment, retention, graduation rates, and academic performance of transgender individuals with disabilities.

    b. Analyse trends to identify improvements and areas that need further attention.

2. **Reservation Quota for Intersectional Identities**

    a. Lobby for a reservation quota specifically addressing transgender individuals with disabilities.

    b. Collaborate with relevant authorities to ensure accurate representation within existing reservation systems.

3. **Awareness and Sensitisation Programs**

    a. Implement training programs to educate faculty, staff, and students about the challenges faced by transgender people with disabilities.

    b. Foster a culture of inclusion and respect through workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns.

4. **Accessible Digital Resources**

    a. Ensure that online platforms, learning management systems, and educational materials are designed for accessibility.

    b. Provide assistive technologies and training for equitable participation in virtual learning environments.

5.   **Mental Health Support**
    a. Establish counselling services tailored to the needs of transgender individuals with disabilities.
    b. Create safe spaces for peer support and mental health resources.

6.   **Scholarships and Financial Assistance**
    a. Develop scholarship programs targeted at transgender individuals with disabilities to alleviate financial barriers.
    b. Collaborate with NGOs, corporations, and government agencies to fund these initiatives.

7.   **Research and Advocacy**
    a. Encourage research on the experiences and challenges faced by transgender people with disabilities in higher education.
    b. Use research findings to advocate for policy changes and increased awareness.

6 Survey Analysis

| Overview	
Number of Participants	57
Age Group	18 -30
Number of Participants between 18-25	40
Number of Participants between 25-30	17
Educational Qualification	35 - Bachelors 17 - Masters 05 - Professional Degree
Gender/Sexuality Division	39 - Women 12 - Lesbian 06 - Transgender
Economic Status	24 - Middle Class 18 - Lower Middle Class 15 - Not Disclosed

Visual Representation of Survey Data

1. Gender And Sexual Orientation
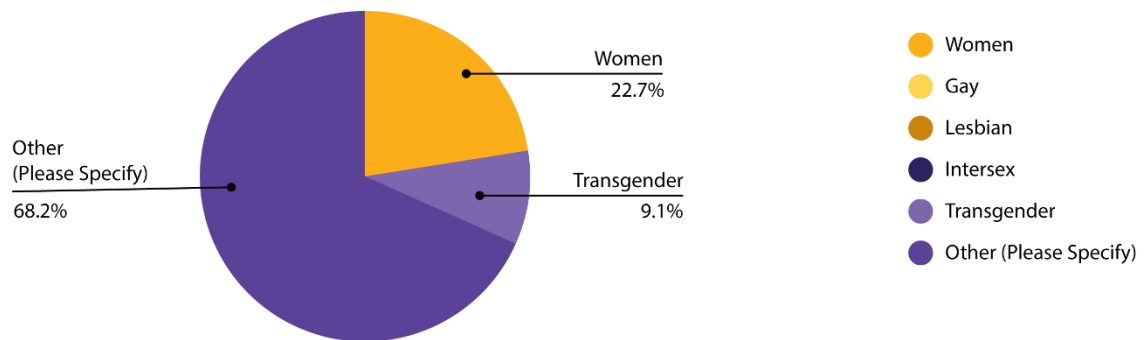
68.2% identified as Women, 22.7% identified as Lesbian, and 9.1% identified as Transgender.

2. Type Of Course
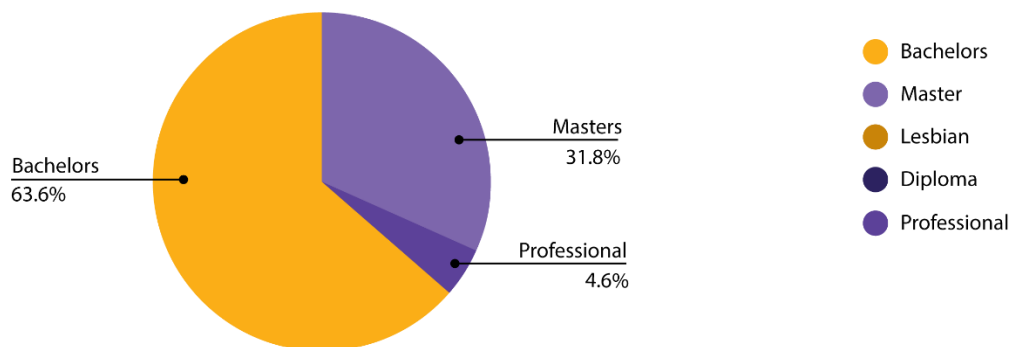
The majority of the participants (63.6%), were enrolled in Bachelor's programs, followed by 31.8% in Master's programs. The remaining 4.6% were enrolled in various professional courses.

3. Your University Privately Funded or Government Funded?
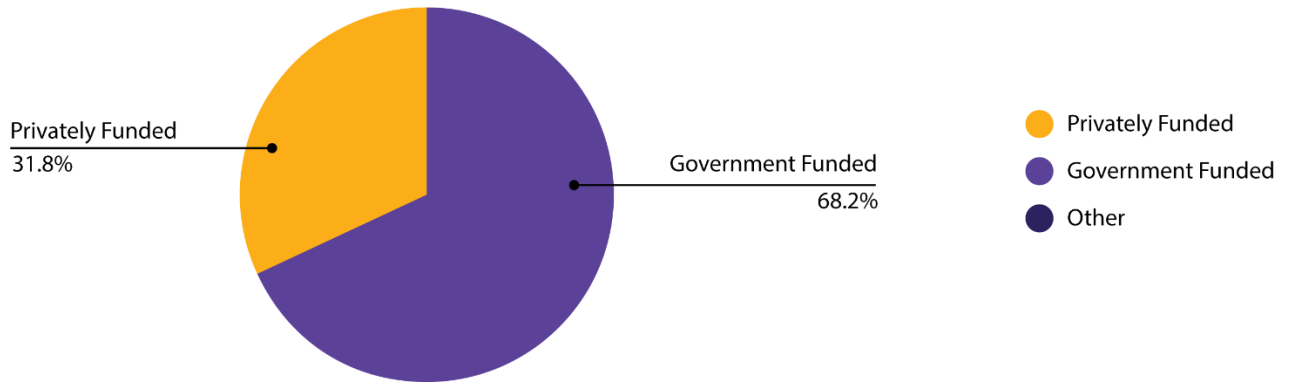
68.2% of participants are enrolled in government-aided universities, while the remaining 31.8% are enrolled in private universities.

4. Is Your Campus Accessible?
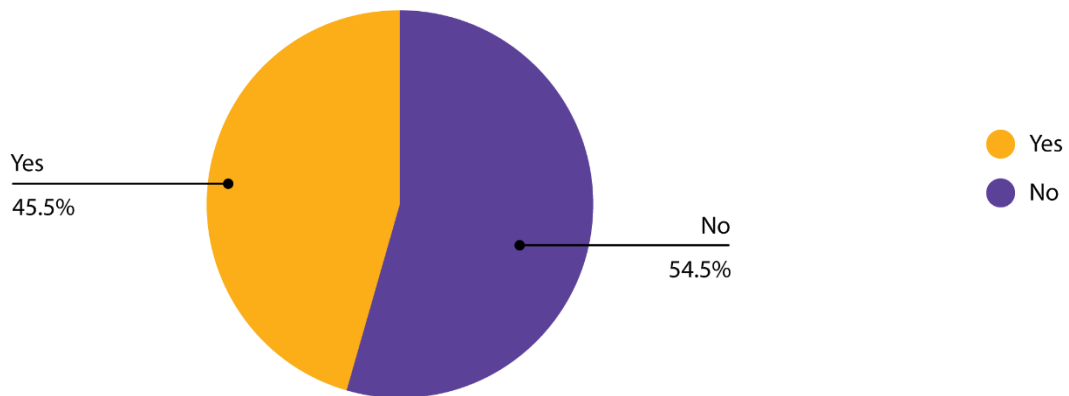
45.5% of participants encounter significant difficulties accessing their university space, whereas 54.5% experience fewer challenges.

Sonali Verma's Journey
*(**Disclaimer:** Real name not been used in order to maintain the privacy of the individual)*
Sonali Verma, born in a small village in Gonda, Uttar Pradesh, faced numerous challenges due to her visual disability throughout her educational journey. Born to parents who made a living through farming, Sonali's determination led her to pursue higher education in the capital, Delhi, hoping for better accessibility and opportunities. Eventually, she enrolled in the History program at Jamia Millia Islamia.

However, the reality at Jamia Millia Islamia presented unexpected hurdles, as Sonali struggled to access study materials and faced difficulties navigating the campus. Reflecting on her experiences, Sonali shared, "It was the day of my Medieval History exam in the second semester. I had prepared well and was ready for the exam. I had always relied on the assistance of a scribe during exams. Unfortunately, that day, there was no access to a scribe as the administration had failed to make proper arrangements. Feeling anxious and helpless, I approached the Comptroller and Examination office, hoping for a solution but found none. Without the necessary support, I found myself unable to take the exam. Consequently, I received a back paper for that exam."

Sonali expressed frustration with the administration, highlighting their lack of concern for her problems and how, instead of helping, they seemed to be causing more trouble. When asked about her action in this issue and whether she approached anyone or wrote to the university for support, she said, "I have written multiple times to the Vice Chancellor's office but have received no response. It is disheartening to see such a prominent university unable to provide a single scribe for the exam, leading to consequences that will impact my final grades. I hope this gets resolved soon, or it will adversely affect my academic progress."

Sonali's case sheds light on the challenges faced by students with disabilities in accessing basic accommodations, hindering their academic progress. The lack of responsiveness from the university administration underscores the urgent need for improved support systems and inclusive policies to ensure equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their abilities.

5. Does Your University/College Have A Grievance Redressal Committee Especially For Disabled Students?
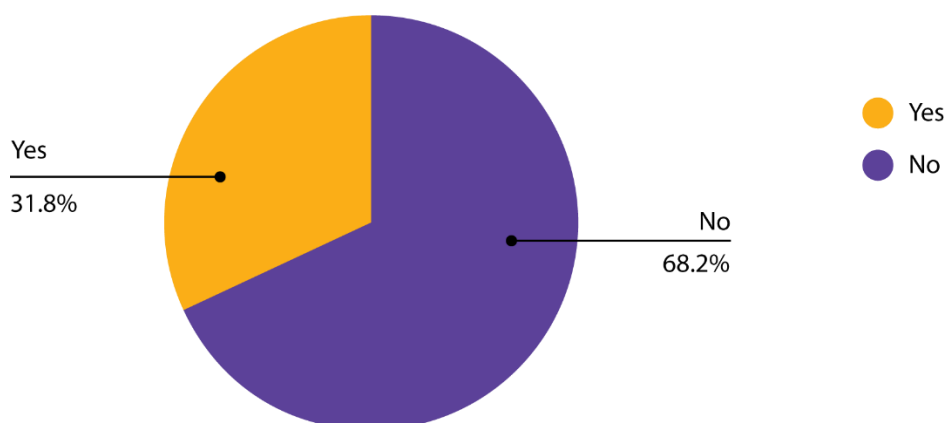
68.2% of respondents indicated that their college or university lacks a grievance redressal committee specifically tailored for disabled students, while 31.8% stated that their institution does have such a committee.

6. **Have You Ever Faced Any Problem/Issue Due To Your Gender Identity Or Disability, Amongst Your Peers, Professors, Faculty Members, or University/College Administration?**
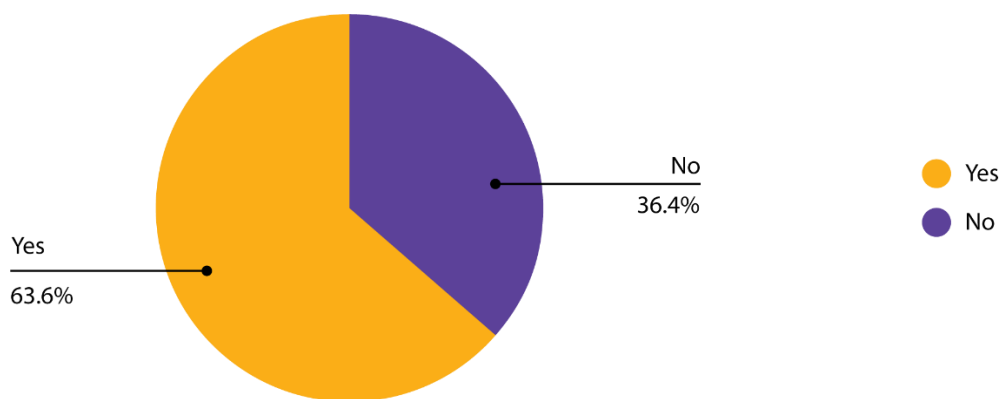
68.2% of respondents indicated that their college or university lacks a grievance redressal committee specifically tailored for disabled students, while 31.8% stated that their institution does have such a committee.

Sam's Journey
*(**Disclaimer:** Real name not been used in order to maintain the privacy of the individual)*
Sam identifies as a queer trans man in their early twenties. Born in Churu district of Rajasthan in a middle-class family with dyslexia, they migrated to Delhi in 2020, to pursue higher education. Sam enrolled in a renowned private institute of fashion design, which had been their lifelong dream. Reflecting on their achievements, Sam expressed, "I was very excited about this; nobody in my family before me has been able to accomplish something like this. However, all of my dreams were crushed when I came out with my identity to my peers and professors."

Recalling the distressing incident, Sam shared, "I still remember when I first mentioned my sexual orientation to a class friend whom I trusted. I was so naive that I did not realise someone could betray my trust like this." Sam continued, "I mentioned this to my friend on July 31, 2021. I thought this would be a secret between us, but I was wrong. The very next day, the trust was breached. Soon, the word about my identity spread like wildfire. It first circulated in the class WhatsApp group and then reached the faculty and college administration."

The problems for Sam began immediately. Describing them, they said, "Soon after learning about my identity, I started facing discrimination from my peers and professors. People who were earlier claiming to be friends started mocking and avoiding me. I can barely remember a day when I was not subjected to body shaming." Sam went on to add, "Professors were also

not supportive of me. When I went to a professor with a complaint, I got ridiculed. On one occasion, I went to a professor to clear a doubt after a lecture. He not only refused but called me out with derogatory language. All of these incidents left a deep mental scar on me, and I had to drop out of college."

What happened to Sam is unfortunate, but not uncommon for people coming from the LGBTQIA community. Although there are laws protecting individuals with dyslexia against discrimination, they are not sufficient to prevent such incidents.

7. Do You Feel Your Current University/College Is Capable Of Providing Equal Opportunity Compared To Non-Disabled Counterparts?
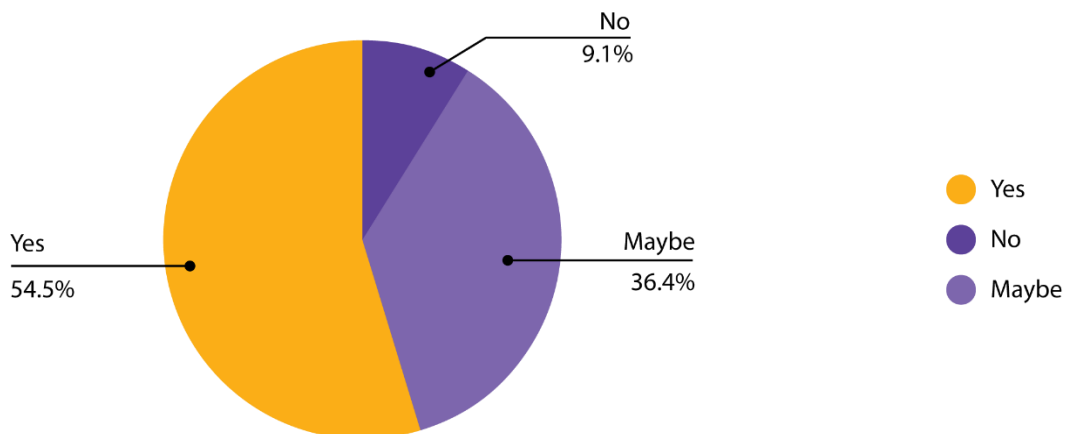
54.5% of the participants perceive that their university/college offers them equal opportunities compared to their non-disabled counterparts, 9.1% believe they are not provided with equal opportunities, and 36.4% are uncertain about the equality of opportunities.

Voices from the Ground

Ash, 19, Transgender, Learning disability + ADHD, Hindu College
"I haven't but my disabled peers did. They couldn't travel to college every day due to their disability and there was no boys' hostel in college. When they voiced their concern to the Principal, they were called horrible names and dismissed from the college."

Rashmi Maruvada, 23, Women, Visually Impaired, TISS
"My university is queer and disabled-friendly. We are the first university in India to have a gender-neutral hostel. There are different initiatives for persons with disability in the institute

and we all work towards giving equal opportunity and recognition to the queer and disabled community."

Sukriti Suri, 20, Women, Visually Impaired
"Small incidents happen often, from teachers not being sensitive to the requirements of spelling complex terms and the like."

Roshni Patra, 18, Women, Visually Impaired
"Proper sensitisation of staff members. Making classrooms and colleges more accessible and giving accommodations to students with an invisible disability. Making the disability cell more active."

7 Policy Recommendations

So far, the data collected through qualitative and quantitative research shows that there are numerous challenges for women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities in accessing higher education and employment. These range from facing societal stereotypes to inaccessibility and poor implementation of existing policies. To foster a robust mechanism of support for women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities in their social and economic inclusion, the following recommendations can be adopted.

1. **Draft Specific Policies:** Since transgender people with disabilities are doubly marginalised and vulnerable to society, we must draft exclusive policies, as has been done by the state of Maharashtra[1] to support their inclusion in society.
2. **Setting Up of Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Cells:** The experiences of individuals like Sam reveal an urgent need to set up anti-bullying and anti-harassing cells across colleges and universities. This will act as a support mechanism and will likely provide psychological assistance to individuals, especially when they are going through trauma.
3. **Effective Implementation of RPWD Act 2016:** Research indicates that there is still a significant gap in the implementation of the RPWD Act 2016, as most campuses are still inaccessible and lack basic infrastructure to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.
4. **Gender-Neutral Washrooms:** Apart from a few colleges, there are no gender-neutral washrooms for transgender people, which poses a problem to their existence within the campus. It can be humiliating for a transgender individual when they are forced to use washrooms for men or women. It needs to be understood that transgender people are a separate gender.

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1. [PUNE NEWS](#)

8 Limitations

1. **Societal Stigma and Discrimination**: One of the most pervasive challenges is the deeply ingrained societal stigma and discrimination against women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities. In India, there exists a complex intersectionality of gender, sexuality, and disability, leading to heightened marginalisation. Discriminatory attitudes often manifest in the form of exclusionary practices, verbal abuse, and social ostracisation, making it difficult for individuals to consider pursuing higher education.

2. **Inaccessibility of Infrastructure:** The physical infrastructure of educational institutions in India often lacks accessibility features necessary for individuals with disabilities. Rampant architectural barriers, absence of elevators, inaccessible washrooms, and inadequate transportation facilities pose significant hurdles for mobility-impaired students. This inaccessibility not only deters prospective students from enrolling but also hinders their academic progress and participation.

3. **Lack of Specialised Support Services:** Many higher education institutions in India lack specialised support services catering to the diverse needs of women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities. Adequate provisions such as assistive technologies, sign language interpreters, note-takers, and counsellors trained in addressing the unique challenges faced by these individuals are often unavailable. This absence exacerbates feelings of isolation and impedes academic success.

4. **Financial Constraints:** Economic barriers further exacerbate the challenges of marginalised groups in accessing higher education. Women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities are disproportionately represented among economically disadvantaged populations. The high cost of education, coupled with limited opportunities for employment and financial support, creates formidable obstacles to pursuing higher education.

5. **Lack of Awareness and Sensitisation**: There is a pervasive lack of awareness and sensitisation among educational institutions, faculty members, and peers regarding the intersectional issues faced by women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities. Prevalent misconceptions and stereotypes contribute to an unwelcoming environment, wherein individuals feel invisible, invalidated, or misunderstood. This lack of awareness perpetuates systemic inequalities and inhibits meaningful inclusion efforts.

6. **Legal and Policy Gaps:** While India has enacted various legal frameworks and policies to promote inclusivity and accessibility, implementation remains a significant challenge. Enforcement mechanisms are often weak, leading to non-compliance by educational institutions. Additionally, the existing legal and policy frameworks may not adequately address the intersecting identities of gender, sexuality, and disability, leaving marginalised individuals vulnerable to discrimination and neglect.

7. **Limited Representation and Advocacy:** The voices and experiences of women, queer, and transgender people with disabilities are frequently marginalised within mainstream discourse and advocacy initiatives. There is a dearth of representation in decision-making processes, resulting in policies and interventions that inadequately address their needs. Amplifying marginalised voices and fostering inclusive advocacy efforts are imperative for driving meaningful change

9 Annexure

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