

A Study on Family and Social Acceptance of the Third Gender Community

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ABSTRACT

The freedom to choose one's gender identity is essential to living a decent life for humans, protected by Articles 14, 15, and 21 of the Indian Constitution. Humans identify mostly as male and female gender. People with other gender identities also exist. However, for centuries, one group of people has been neglected in almost every part of the world – the Third Gender. As Third gender community face discrimination in every aspects of their life such as in family, educational institutes, society, healthcare, work and their rights. The present study is focused to find out the family and social acceptance of the third gender community of Patiala district of Punjab. A descriptive survey method was adopted in this study. The researcher used self-prepared structured questionnaire for the present study. The researcher selected 40 third gender individuals from 2 deras out of total 6 deras of Patiala district. The data was statistically analyzed using the percentage analysis technique. The study results indicate minimal family acceptance, but social acceptance is on the rise.

KEYWORDS: Third Gender, Family Acceptance, Social Acceptance,

INTRODUCTION

“Sex is what you are born with, gender is what you recognize and sexuality is what you discover”.

By Anita Chettiar.

The freedom to choose one's gender identity is essential to living a decent life for humans, protected by Articles 14, 15, and 21 of the Indian Constitution. Humans identify mostly as male and female gender. People with other gender identities also exist. According to the census of 2011, India has 4,87,803 people who identify themselves as the third gender and they can now register in schools, colleges, and universities, with all amenities accepting them under the "disadvantaged group" segment under the Right to Education Act of 2009 (Michelraj, 2015). However, they face many issues and discrimination and thus have fewer options than others. They need refinement because they are neither educated nor socially accepted.

The Indian Census of 2011 included a category for the first time to recognize people who identify as neither male nor female, also known as transgender or other-gender individuals, when collecting information. This information was released in a separate document called the Primary Census Abstract. This was the first time this type of information was made available. The PCA for people of a different gender only gives a little information about their socioeconomic traits, like how many can read and write, how many are employed or not, and how many children are between the ages of 0 and 6. It also shows the information separately for a different gender. In 2011 census it was the first time they counted people who

identified as a different gender in India. Out of the total 487,803 people who identified as a different gender, approximately 323,120 people lived in rural areas, and 164,683 people lived in urban areas. The most significant number of them live in Uttar Pradesh (28.2%), followed by Andhra Pradesh (9%), Maharashtra (8.4%), and Bihar (8.3%). More than half (54 percent) of the people who identify as a different gender in India live in only these four states. In Puducherry, Goa, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Meghalaya, only 0.1% of the population is of a different gender. The information given by the census is vital for counting people. However, it can also be used to improve access to things like food, healthcare, and education for people who identify as a third gender.

It is widely recognized that a nation's advancement is closely linked to its human resources. India is a democratic country, and the core principle of its Constitution is to ensure that every citizen, regardless of their background, faith, or gender, has an equal opportunity to contribute and succeed. The government has made extensive efforts to develop the full potential of its human resources by providing access to quality educational facilities, which in turn helps the nation to keep pace with the progress of other countries worldwide. However, for centuries, one group of people has been neglected in almost every part of the world – the Third Gender.

Individuals who identify as the third gender are often prevented from living according to their preferred gender. This initial level of discrimination is followed by further mistreatment in family, society, schools, and workplaces, including abuse, physical assaults, verbal insults, vandalism of their property, unwanted sexual contact, and harassment. They are also denied access to toilets of their choice, housing, healthcare, legal recognition of their marriages, and the ability to adopt children. Additionally, they are often deprived of financial, family and social support.

This study aims to understand the reasons why society does not accept third-gender individuals as equal fellow citizens and the issues faced by third-gender communities, including their lower living standards and literacy rates. Third-gender individuals have faced social stigma for centuries and need societal and family acceptance to improve their quality of life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To investigate the family acceptance of the third-gender community.
2. To find out the level of social acceptance of the third-gender community.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The present study was delimited to the hijras/kinner (non-castrated eunuch in Patiala) and intersex individuals only among transgender individuals from the Patiala district of Punjab.
2. The present study was confined to deras of Patiala district only.
3. The present study was delimited to 2 deras (the place where individuals of hijras/kinner community live together) i.e. dera Guru Nanak Nagar and dera Jattan Wala Chhontra Patiala .
4. The present study was confined to the respondents of 18 years above.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

The sample of the present study under consideration was Third gender individuals or eunuchs/hijras/kinner of Patiala district of Punjab. The researcher decided to conduct the survey at those specific places called deras/community gatherings of Patiala district where people belonging to this

community reside. The researcher selected 40 third gender individuals from 2 deras out of total 6 deras of Patiala district.

**Table-1
Distribution of Sample**

Sr. No.	Name of Dera	No. of Respondents
1.	Guru Nanak Nagar, Patiala	21
2.	Jattan Wala Chontra, Patiala	19
	Total	40

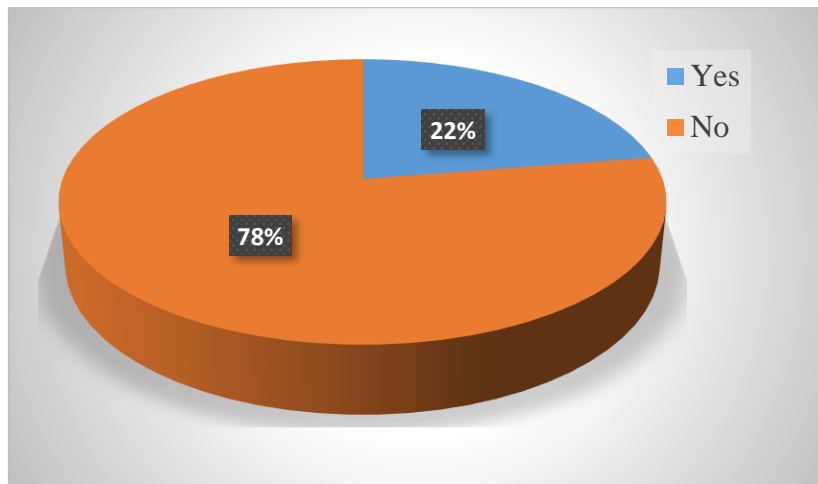
RESEARCH TOOL USED FOR THE STUDY

A research tool is used to collect the data for the present study. The researcher used a self-prepared structured, close-ended questionnaire after reviewing various studies from the literature review.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The percentage analysis technique was used for the statistical analysis of the data. The inferences elaborated based on percentage analysis against every option corresponds to each item in the questionnaire. Conclusions and generalizations were developed on the basis of their responses.

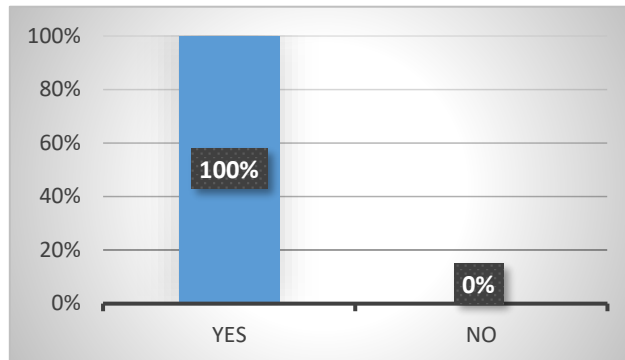
IS YOUR IDENTITY OF BEING A THIRD GENDER ACCEPTED BY YOUR FAMILY?



“Figure 1: Family Acceptance”

It is evident from the Figure 1: that the gender identity of 78% respondents is not accepted by their families whereas the identity of 22% respondents is accepted by their families. As majority of the respondents face identity crisis in their own families and due to the fear of social stigma, their parents abandoned them which forced them to live in Deras.

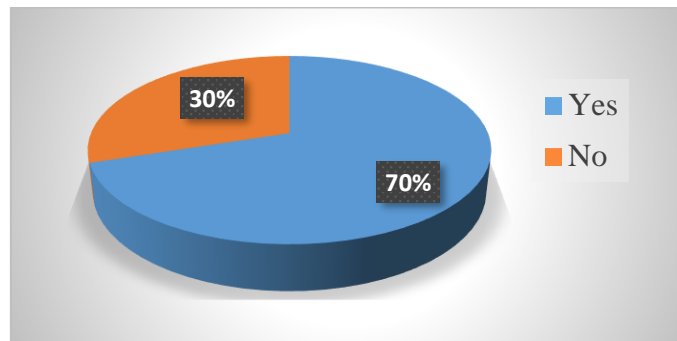
HAVE YOU BEEN DENIED FAMILY PROPERTY RIGHTS BECAUSE YOU ARE A THIRD GENDER?



“Figure 2: Family Properties Rights”

Figure 2 indicates that 100% respondents reported that they are denied from family property rights due to their third gender identity. As per the results, this community faces social and family exclusion as well as violation of their basic rights.

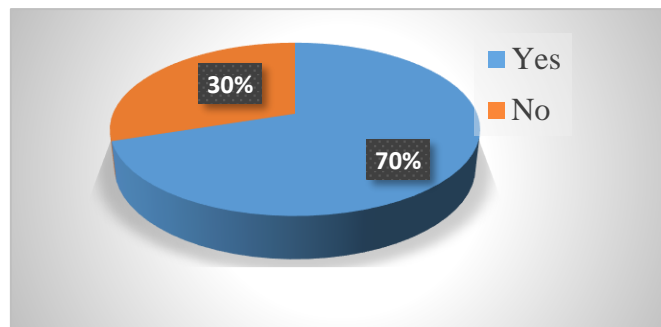
DO YOU THINK PEOPLE VALUE YOUR PHYSICAL APPEARANCE?



“Figure 3: Physical Appearance”

Figure 3 depicts that in view point of 70% respondents, their physical appearance is valued by other people of the society and 30% respondents disagreed with this statement.

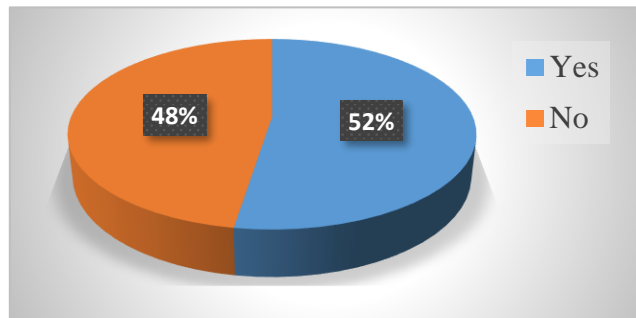
DO PEOPLE LIKE TO MEET OR TALK TO YOU AFTER THEY FIND OUT YOUR IDENTITY AS THIRD GENDER?



“Figure 4: Impact of Revealing Gender identity”

Figure 4 shows that 70% of the respondents encounter with no discrimination from others after the revelation of their identity to other people while 30% gave negative response to this.

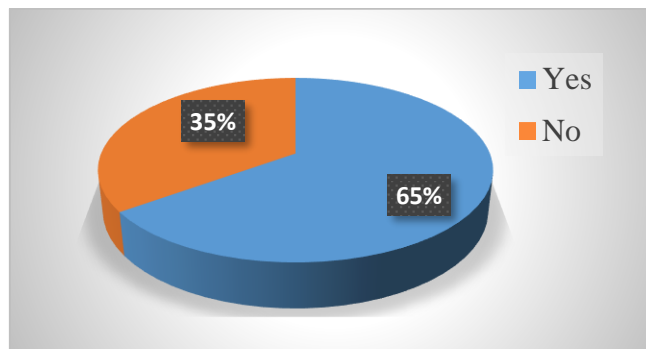
HAVE YOU BEEN ACCEPTED INTO SOCIETY BY THE PEOPLE



“Figure 5 : Social Acceptance”

Figure 5 reveals that 53% respondents report that they have been accepted in the society and 47% respondents opine that they are not accepted by the society.

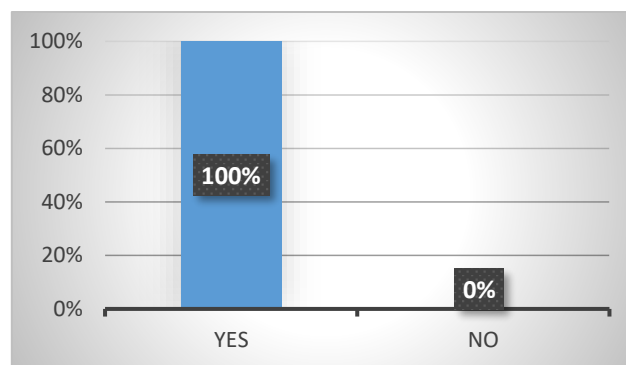
DO OTHER PEOPLE BECOME YOUR FRIENDS EASILY?



“Figure 6: Friendship”

Figure 6 indicates that according to 65% respondents other people easily become their friends and 35 % respondents shows disagreement with the statement.

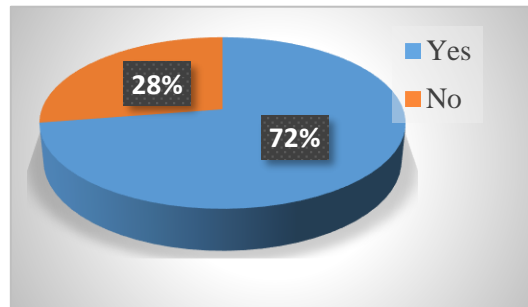
DO YOU WANT TO BE ACCEPTED IN THE SOCIETY LIKE OTHERS?



“Figure 7: Acceptance in Society”

Figure 7 shows that 100% respondents want to be a part of the society just like normal population. It results that third gender community also want to enjoy their life as normal as others.

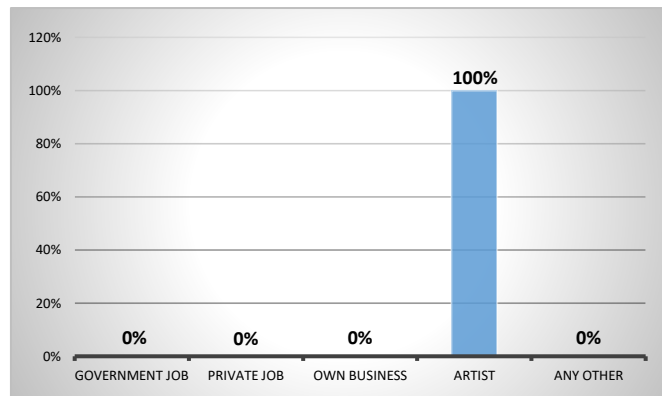
DO YOU THINK YOUR SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE HAS INCREASED DUE TO THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA?



“Figure 8: Influence of Social media”

Figure 8 indicates that 73% respondents agree with the fact that due to the influence of social media, there is an increase in their social acceptance and 27% respondents deny this fact.

CHOOSE YOUR WORK LEVEL



“Figure 9 : Work Level”

Figure 9 indicates that 100% of the respondents are artists. According to the data, third gender earn their livelihood by receiving offerings for singing and dancing at joyful events in the lives of the general population.

CONCLUSION

Family Acceptance

- Majority of respondents reported that their gender identity is not accepted by their families. It generalizes that majority of respondents face identity crisis in their own families and due to the fear of social stigma their parents abandoned them and which force them to live in Derras.
- 100% of the respondents reported that they are denied from family property rights due to their third gender identity. It generalizes that this community faces social and family exclusion as well

Social Acceptance

- 70% of the respondents reported that their physical appearance valued by other people of society. It generalizes that majority of them face no discrimination when it comes to their physical appearance.
- 70% of the respondents reported that they do not encounter with any discrimination from others after the revelation of their gender identity to other people. It generalizes that the people of Patiala district accepted them wholeheartedly.

- Only 53% respondents reported that they have been accepted in the society and 47% respondents opine that they are not accepted by society. It generalizes that a big part of society is still in a process of accepting them.
- 65% of the respondents reported that other people easily become their friends. It generalizes that the people of Patiala district are quite friendly.
- All the respondents (100%) want to be a part of the society just like normal population. It generalizes that third gender community also want to enjoy their life as normal as others.
- The majority of the respondents (73%) reported that due to the influence of social media there is an increase in their social acceptance. It generalizes that social media can play an important role to provide them social acceptance.
- 100% of the respondents reported that they are artists. It generalizes that they face discrimination in jobs due to their gender identity.

FURTHER STUDIES

This subject has a broad scope. To widen the scope of the present study, the following few topics are recommended for doing further research:

1. The study can also be conducted over other districts of Punjab state and other state of India.
2. The study can also be conducted on economical and psychological issues faced by the third gender community.
3. The research can also be conducted on learners of third gender individuals at higher institutions.
4. A survey can also be conducted on healthcare facilities for third gender individuals.
5. A comparative study of Educated Third gender and Uneducated Third gender individuals can also be conducted.

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