



## SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION OF TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS IN RAJASTHAN: CHALLENGES AND PATHWAYS

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### ABSTRACT:

In Rajasthan, transgender people continue to live on the margins of society, facing exclusion and discrimination in almost every aspect of life. Although Indian laws such as the *NALSA v. Union of India* (2014) judgment and the *Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act* (2019) legally recognize the rights of transgender persons, the reality on the ground is very different. This study examines the idea of social equity—ensuring fairness, dignity, and equal opportunities—and how it applies to transgender communities in Rajasthan.

The research is based on in-depth interviews with 15 transgender participants from different districts of the state. Their experiences reveal how social barriers and prejudice shape their daily lives. In education, many are forced to drop out due to bullying, harassment, and a lack of supportive teachers or peers. In employment, bias and stereotyping limit their chances of finding stable, respectful work, often pushing them into insecure or informal jobs. In healthcare, participants reported facing neglect, misgendering, and insensitivity from medical staff, making it difficult for them to access even basic services. Beyond these, everyday stigma and ridicule from society harm their mental health, reduce their self-esteem, and deny them a sense of belonging.

The findings make it clear that legal recognition alone does not guarantee equity. Social equity requires more than laws on paper—it demands changes in attitudes, practices, and systems. Building true equity means designing inclusive policies, creating safe spaces in schools and workplaces, and ensuring healthcare providers are trained to treat transgender people with respect. It also requires community awareness, support systems, and platforms where transgender voices can be heard and valued.

Ultimately, achieving social equity in Rajasthan means that transgender people should not only be recognized by law but also be given the real opportunities to learn, work, access healthcare, and live with dignity. True inclusion will come when transgender people are able to participate fully in society, free from stigma and discrimination, and enjoy the same rights and respect as every other citizen.

### KEYWORDS:

TRANSGENDER RIGHTS, SOCIAL EQUITY, INCLUSION, EDUCATION ACCESS, SOCIAL STIGMA, TRANSGENDER EMPOWERMENT.

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### INTRODUCTION

In Rajasthan, many transgender people continue to face challenges that affect their right to live with dignity. They are often rejected by their families, bullied in schools, denied jobs, and treated unfairly in hospitals. These experiences show how social stigma and discrimination create barriers in their lives. Although India has laws to protect transgender rights, these laws are not always practiced effectively in Rajasthan. This gap highlights the need to focus on **social equity**, which means ensuring that everyone, including transgender people, has equal access to education, work, and healthcare without bias.

In rural and semi-urban areas of Rajasthan, awareness about transgender identities is still very limited. Lack of

understanding often leads to prejudice, pushing transgender people further to the margins of society. Because of this lack of understanding, prejudice and exclusion remain strong, making it harder for transgender people to be accepted as equal members of society. Studying their lives helps us see these inequities more clearly and guides us in building a fairer system where rights are not just promised but also experienced.

At the same time, such research gives transgender people a chance to share their own voices and experiences. When their stories are heard, they become stronger in demanding their rights and building supportive communities. It also helps families, teachers, and doctors

learn to treat them with respect and understanding. This study, therefore, is not just about highlighting problems—it is about working toward a Rajasthan where every transgender person feels included, valued, and free to live with dignity.

By bringing attention to these struggles, this study aims to promote **social equity** and inclusion in Rajasthan. It encourages families, schools, workplaces, and healthcare providers to show respect and understanding. Most importantly, it works toward creating a society where transgender people are valued as equal citizens and can live with dignity, security, and pride.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Research on transgender lives in India consistently shows how the absence of social equity contributes to exclusion and inequality.

**1. SOCIAL STIGMA AND EXCLUSION**

Raj (2024) demonstrates that stigma and discrimination deny transgender individuals access to safe spaces, increasing vulnerability to violence and mental distress. This exclusion directly undermines social equity by treating transgender people as outsiders.

**2. EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS**

Preeti (2022) highlights how transgender people in Rajasthan, despite legal recognition, face systemic exclusion in schools and workplaces. The lack of equitable opportunities pushes many into begging or Badhaai (traditional blessings). Ensuring social equity here means making schools inclusive and workplaces respectful.

**3. HEALTHCARE ACCESS AND NEEDS**

Ahuja et al. (2024) report that transgender individuals in Western Rajasthan struggle with inadequate healthcare access due to financial barriers and provider insensitivity. Social equity in healthcare requires training staff, offering gender-affirming care, and removing prejudice in hospitals.

**4. MENTAL HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

The Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine (2024) found that discrimination worsens mental health, lowering life satisfaction. Equity in mental health support—through

counseling and safe spaces—is crucial for improving quality of life.

**5. SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT**

Preeti (2022) further argues that weak implementation of laws prevents equity in daily life. Grassroots activism and community empowerment become central to achieving real social equity for transgender individuals.

**6. NEED FOR THEMATIC, CONTEXT-SPECIFIC STUDIES**

Sharma & Aggarwal (2025) emphasize that equity requires local interventions. Context-specific studies, like this one in Rajasthan, make it possible to design targeted pathways toward social equity and inclusion.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore how social equity is absent or practiced in the daily lives of transgender people in Rajasthan.

**RESEARCH DESIGN:**

A qualitative, interview-based design was chosen to capture lived experiences in depth. Since social equity is not just about policies but also about how fairness is practiced in everyday life, personal narratives help reveal gaps between rights and realities.

**SAMPLE AND SAMPLING:**

**SAMPLE SIZE:** 15 transgender individuals across Rajasthan.

**SAMPLING METHOD:** Purposive and snowball sampling were used to ensure diversity in age, socio-economic status, district, and gender identity.

By focusing on different voices, the study examines how social equity is denied or achieved in education, employment, healthcare, and community participation.

The interviews sought to understand not only barriers—such as bullying in schools, discrimination at work, or neglect in healthcare—but also aspirations for equity, dignity, and inclusion. This methodology centers transgender voices as experts of their own lives, which is essential when studying social equity.

**DEMOGRAPHIC TABLE (TRANSGENDER PARTICIPANTS IN RAJASTHAN)**

Participant ID	Age	Gender Identity	District	Education Level	Employment Status	Type of Livelihood	Healthcare Access	Rights Awareness
P01	22	Transfeminine	Jaipur	Secondary Dropout	Unemployed	Begging	No	No
P02	28	Transfeminine	Sri Ganganagar	Primary	Informal	Badhaai	No	No
P03	19	Transfeminine	Churu	Primary	Unemployed	Begging	No	No
P04	35	Transfeminine	Churu	Drop out	Unemployed	Begging	Yes	Yes
P05	27	Trans masculine	Ajmer	Sr. Secondary	Informal	Daily Wage Labour	No	No
P06	24	Transfeminine	Bikaner	-	-	Badhaai	No	No

P07	30	Transfeminine	Jaipur	Secondary Dropout	Informal	Performance	No	Yes
P08	40	Transfeminine	Jaipur	-	Unemployed	Badhaai	No	No
P09	21	Non-Binary	Ajmer	Secondary	Informal	Tailoring (NGO training)	Yes	Yes
P10	33	Transfeminine	Bikaner	Primary	Informal	Badhaai	No	No
P11	26	Trans masculine	Hanumangarh	-	Unemployed	Begging	No	No
P12	38	Transfeminine	Bikaner	Primary	Informal	Badhaai	No	No
P13	20	Transfeminine	Hanumangarh	Primary	Informal	Badhaai	No	No
P14	29	Transfeminine	Jaipur	Secondary	Informal	Beauty Parlour (training)	Yes	Yes
P15	32	Transfeminine	Sri Ganganagar	Primary	Informal	Badhaai	No	No

**KEY FINDINGS (SUMMARY TABLE)**

Category	Findings
<b>Demographics</b>	Total: 15 • Avg. Age: ~28 (Range: 19–40) • Transfeminine: 12 • Trans masculine: 2 • Non-binary: 1
<b>Geographical Spread</b>	Jaipur: 4 • Bikaner: 3 • Sri Ganganagar: 2 • Churu: 2 • Ajmer: 2 • Hanumangarh: 2
<b>Education</b>	Primary: 6 • Secondary: 2 • Secondary Dropout: 2 • Sr. Secondary: 1 • Other/Unspecified: 4
<b>Employment</b>	Informal: 9 • Unemployed: 5 • Missing: 1
<b>Livelihood Types</b>	Badhaai: 7 • Begging: 4 • Daily Wage: 1 • Performance: 1 • Tailoring (NGO): 1 • Beauty Parlour (training): 1
<b>Healthcare Access</b>	Yes: 3 • No: 12
<b>Rights Awareness</b>	Yes: 4 • No: 11

**DISCUSSION**

The findings from this study show that most transgender people in Rajasthan live with limited opportunities in education, work, and healthcare. While India has progressive laws like the NALSA judgment (2014) and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, these rights are not fully implemented at the ground level.

**Education:** Many participants dropped out of school due to bullying, rejection, or lack of safe spaces. This shows that transgender children do not get equal chances in education.

**Employment and Livelihoods:** Most depend on informal work such as Badhaai (traditional blessings), begging, or low-paying jobs. Only a few have access to skill-based training or dignified work. This reflects inequality in access to stable and respectful employment.

**Healthcare:** A majority reported having no proper access to healthcare. Many face discrimination in hospitals and cannot afford gender-affirming care or counseling. This is a violation of their basic right to health.

**Rights and Awareness:** Very few participants were aware

of their legal rights. Without awareness, legal recognition becomes meaningless.

**Social Stigma:** Everyday discrimination makes it difficult for transgender people to feel accepted in families, schools, or communities. This damages mental health and prevents social inclusion.

In short, legal recognition has not translated into social equity. Social equity means more than equal laws—it means fair opportunities in education, work, healthcare, and community life, free from stigma and discrimination.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

To promote social equity and inclusion of transgender people in Rajasthan, the following steps are needed:

**1. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

Train teachers and staff to create safe and respectful classrooms.

Include transgender topics in school curricula to reduce bullying and stigma.

Provide scholarships and financial support for transgender

students who drop out.

## 2. EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

Offer skill-based training (tailoring, beauty work, digital skills, arts) linked to actual job opportunities.

Encourage private companies and government programs to hire transgender individuals with dignity.

Provide microfinance and self-help groups for small business opportunities.

## 3. HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Train doctors and nurses in transgender-friendly healthcare practices.

Set up special health clinics for transgender persons, including mental health and counseling services.

Provide financial support for gender-affirming medical care.

## 4. AWARENESS AND SENSITIZATION

Conduct awareness programs in villages, schools, hospitals, and government offices about transgender rights.

Use media and community campaigns to reduce stereotypes and promote respect.

## 5. COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Support local transgender groups and networks to act as safe spaces for sharing and advocacy.

Encourage community-led initiatives where transgender people design and lead their own empowerment programs.

## 6. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Ensure that the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 is actually enforced in Rajasthan.

Appoint monitoring committees to check if schools, workplaces, and hospitals follow inclusive practices.

Provide state-level welfare schemes—such as housing, pensions, and legal aid—specifically for transgender individuals.

## CONCLUSION

True social equity for transgender people in Rajasthan cannot be achieved through laws alone. While legal recognition is an important first step, it does not automatically change the social realities that transgender individuals face every day. Equity requires putting these laws into action through effective implementation, continuous monitoring, and genuine efforts to reduce discrimination in schools, workplaces, hospitals, and public spaces.

Education should be made safe and welcoming so that transgender children are not forced to leave school due to bullying or harassment. Equal opportunities in employment are needed so that they are not pushed into insecure or marginalized forms of work but can build stable careers with dignity and respect. Healthcare must also become inclusive, where doctors and staff treat

transgender people with sensitivity, understanding their specific needs without judgment or neglect.

Beyond institutions, society itself must change. Awareness programs, sensitivity training, and community engagement are crucial to breaking stereotypes and reducing stigma. Support systems, such as counseling services, self-help groups, and local networks, can empower transgender people to live with confidence and resilience.

Ultimately, true social equity means that transgender people in Rajasthan are not seen as outsiders but as equal citizens, with the same opportunities to study, work, receive healthcare, and participate fully in social and cultural life. It means creating a society where they can live with dignity, self-respect, and pride in their identity—free from fear, exclusion, or discrimination. Only then can fairness and justice be realized in their everyday lives.

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