INTRODUCTION

The caste system and issues of gender minorities are two of many contentious social concerns in Nepal, and the interrelation of the two, in terms of income generation and occupation is the primary theme of this research. Here, gender minorities refer to any person belonging to an identification, which does not adhere to the heterosexual cis male or female binary. Furthermore, the caste system is understood as a system that believes in a birth-awarded hierarchy, beginning at the top with the Brahmins or priests and the "untouchables" at the very bottom. The uncontested base of the entirety of inequality in Nepal, the effects of the ideology reeks and spreads to every establishment, organization, and community, including the gender minorities, which are controversially categorized as "others" or the Third Gender by the Nepalese government. The Third Gender community is often ignored, underrepresented, and an absolute social outcast in Nepal, despite the pioneered legalisation in all of South Asia of "homosexual activity" in 2007 and recognition of the Third Gender in 2011.

OBJECTIVE

A. Design a research project to analyze caste based hierarchy in gender and sexual minorities. Main sample population: Those assigned Male at birth
B. Lack of research makes data not available on these issues, thus detailed analysis required
C. Considers several variables, like literacy, education, occupation, income, housing situation, relationship with family, access to HIV information, to list a few.
D. Each factor will be considered for each caste or socio-ethnic group to produce an amalgamated understanding of the "privilege" received by each ethnicity/caste.
E. Hypothesis: Caste based privilege exists and is prevalent even amongst the marginalized gender and sexual minorities of Nepal

LITERATURE REVIEW

The first report is the UNDP, USAID, "Being LGBT in Asia: Nepal Country Report," which addresses caste-based differences in the LGBT community. This report recognizes the existence of the caste system and that it is translated into the community, which includes gender minorities. It also suggests that issues of the transgender females known as Metis in Nepal are different from the other LGBT groups, and to study the entire community as one is incorrect, which is also why we primarily focus on transgender females assigned male at birth.

The report states, "Caste and class distinctions affect how LGBT people relate to sexual and gender identities and the challenges they face." Additionally, it also suggests that those belonging to the higher castes, and resolutely on top of the social class, may have a relatively progressive perception and tolerance of the issue compared to those at the bottom of the caste/class hierarchy.

UCLA’s "Surveying Nepal’s Sexual and Gender Minorities." This report consists of data like income and details that those assigned males at birth have a lower income than the rest of the gender minorities. The report further includes factors like Housing, Educational attainment, and literary, knowledge of HIV. It provides a generic base for my research, where "privilege" is an amalgamation of all listed as the variables I shall consider.

DATA FOR SURVEY DESIGN

1. Conducting survey, help depending on the Blue Diamond Society (Nepal’s primary LGBT+ rights organization
2. Sample size approximately 600, using UCLA report as a sample and difficulty in collecting data, trend in most developed cities of Kathmandu valley, Pokhara to standardize the data
3. Age (in 2016): 10-40 years and primary cases: Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra
4. The survey will consider questions like: What caste do you belong to? Followed by: literacy, educational level (primary school, middle school, high school, vocational training, college, masters), income, occupation (categorized by highest paying vs lowest), housing situation (number of rooms in the house, whether they have bathrooms attached to the house), knowledge of HIV (if they know about it, know its causes, know its prevention method and medical services), relationship with family (Still part of a family and accepted, still in contact, no contact/abandoned)
5. Sample size divided into equal parts for all mentioned castes. Now, each question will be asked to each participant and will have a separate data set. For each question, we will see four different histograms, for each question, where the independent variable will be the categorical division in the brackets above, and the dependent variable will be the number of participants. The variable on the rightmost on the histogram is the most privileged, and that on the left will be the least privileged
6. Now, we look at the total at each "privileged" category and formulate a line graph, where the "most privileged" category will be the dependent variable, the caste will be the independent variable, where Brahmin will be to the far right, and Shudras to the left. If the line shows an upward slope, it proves our hypothesis that the caste system is prevalent
7. After plotting the graph, overall, if the line shows an upward or positive slope, we understand that the caste system is prevalent and very much a relevant topic even in the gender minorities (male assigned at birth). Now, after going through each question, we count the number of privileged people in all of the questions for each caste and form a more extensive line graph, where, like above, the "most privileged" category will be the dependent variable, and the caste will be the independent variable. Brahmin will be to the far right, and Shudras to the left. We will also repeat this line graph for the "moderately privileged" and the "not privileged" categories and conclude accordingly where the community stands as a whole and whether it is the caste system that is to be blamed. The research will be conducted with the Blue Diamond Society (Nepal’s primary LGBT+ rights organization

These are samples from UNDP survey which gives a rough estimate, and an idea as to what the Nepali demographic looks like. It also showcases some variables, like income and lays a foundation of the research and functions as a guide to develop this research design and eventually conduct it in the future.

REFERENCES


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