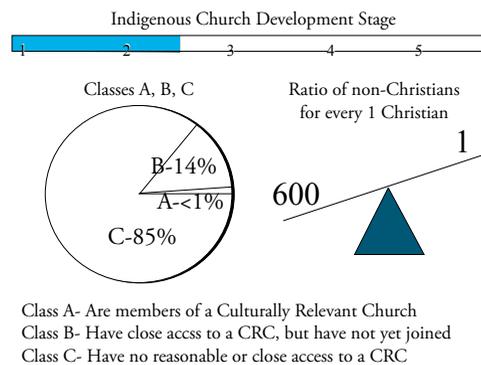


Panjabi Caste Hindus



Quick Facts

Population: 16,000,000
 India: 15,500,000
 United Kingdom: 100,000
 Pakistan: 75,000
 Canada: 30,000
Religion: Hindu
Believers: 0.16% (HBB)
Scriptures: NT, OT
Ministry Tools: JRGT
Church Status: 2
Mission Status: 2
MS Subgroups: 50+



Identity: The Panjabi Caste Hindus are a cluster of over 50 peoples, which are united by the Panjabi language and a common history. Although the majority of the Panjabi converted to Islam, these peoples resisted, sometimes violently. Around 80% of their population belong to Forward Castes, the highest percentage of any Hindu ethno-linguistic cluster. The majority of these high caste Hindus are Khystrias, traditionally the warrior class.

Lifestyle: The Upper Caste Panjabi Hindus are primarily agricultural land owners, traders and entrepreneurs. On the whole, the Panjabi Hindus are one of the most prosperous, well-educated and top-earning communities in India. They once dominated the economy of British Punjab, and were employed by the colonial government as civil administrators throughout India.

Customs: The levirate system is commonly practiced among Panjabi

peoples, making widowhood a rare occurrence. It is said that it is easier for a man to get married who has many brothers, as this is more attractive to a single girl's family. Among some Panjabi this system has evolved into polyandry, in which a sister-in-law is the common property of all the brothers, and in some occasions, the first cousins.

Religion: Among the Panjabi Hindus, devotion of Shiva, known as Shavism, is common. Notable among the Panjabi is the Arya Samaj movement, which is regarded as the Hindu version of the Protestant Reformation. The movement gave the so-called Vedic peoples (upper castes mentioned in the Vedas) access to the sacred Scriptures without the aid of a priest. The movement opposed social evils such as drinking alcohol and gambling, and attempted to raise the status and self-respect of women.

Christian Outreach: There are six Indian mission organizations attempting to

reach out to the upper-caste Panjabi Hindus. The work is difficult as the missionaries generally come from lower caste South Indian peoples. Presently, there are no known contextualized worship services or fellowships for Panjabi Caste Hindus.

How to Pray:

☞ Praise God for the updated Bible translation into Eastern Panjabi, the dialect spoken by Hindus. Pray for its effective use by missionaries and Panjabi believers.

☞ Over 20 Panjabi Hindu peoples are without any known believers. Pray that God will use the emerging breakthrough among the upper caste Jats to birth the Church among these unreached peoples.

☞ Ask God to give supernatural creativity to those Indian missionaries seeking to bridge the gospel between their own people and Panjabi culture, traditions, and worldview.

☞ The poverty of the Indian missionaries tends to limit their exposure to most influential Panjabi families, leaders and institutions. Pray for supernatural power through healings and miracles to call attention to the eternal riches of Christ. bring many Panjabi into the Kingdom.

Every year 135,000 Panjabi Hindus die without Christ.

Panjabi Caste Hindus (cont.)

30 Least-Evangelized Panjabi Hindu Peoples

People, Population, % Evangelical, Caste Type

Jat	7,600,000	0.13%	FC	Nai	140,000	0.01%	BC
Arora	3,400,000	0.00%	FC	Ramdasia	130,000	0.00%	BC
Chamar	1,700,000	0.65%	SC	Megh	110,000	0.00%	SC
Khatri	1,200,000	0.05%	FC	Chhimba	95,000	0.00%	SC
Brahman	650,000	0.00%	FC	Gujar	75,000	0.01%	BC
Tarkhan	560,000	0.01%	BC	Mirasi	66,000	0.00%	BC
Saini	475,000	0.00%	BC	Kahar	60,000	0.01%	BC
Jhinwar	470,000	0.01%	BC	Sonar	55,000	0.00%	BC
Rajput	430,000	0.05%	FC	Awan	53,000	0.00%	BC
Bania	230,000	0.01%	FC	Bazigar	45,000	0.05%	SC
Kumhar	220,000	0.00%	SC	Machhi	37,000	0.00%	BC
Kamboh	210,000	0.01%	BC	Sikligar	32,000	0.00%	BC
Bhatia	155,000	0.00%	BC	Sudh	27,000	0.00%	BC
Lohar	150,000	0.65%	SC	Chhipa	21,000	0.00%	BC

Jat- The Jat are believed to be the descendants of Indo-Aryan nomadic pastoralists which settled in present day Pakistan and North Western India. They consider themselves to be Kshatriyas and are one of the largest land-owning communities in India. Having converted to Hinduism, they are now vegetarians, and practice animal husbandry primarily for dairy purposes. They are divided into 301 exogamous clans, which they call *gots*. It is strictly forbidden to marry within one's clan or within the clan of one's mother or grandmother. The Jat also have one of the highest rates of village exogamy (50%) which is twice the national average. There are numerous sects among them which are essentially reform movements of various Hindu practices. The Kabir sect, for example, denounce the ancient practices of fasting, idol worship, river pilgrimages and *shradh* (ancestor worship, observed mostly at funerals).

Arora- The Aroras are believed to descend from the most ancient and purest Indo-Aryan cluster in India, as they did not migrate from the Punjab following the decline of the Indus valley civilization and practiced strict endogamy rules. They have the status of Kshatriyas, and probably split off from the Khatria during the Muslim invasion of the 10th century. The invasion forced them to leave their homeland in Sindh province and their capital city Aror (now a tiny village). From here, they scattered all over North India and Pakistan. During the partition of 1947 which divided Pakistan and India, most of the Hindu Arora left Pakistan and came to India, traveling 100 to 300 miles. During this migration tens of thousands were killed, raped, robbed, kidnapped and disfigured by Muslims and Pakistani police. They lost all their property and bank deposits. However, the community has since recovered to become one of the most prosperous in India. They are entrepreneurs and professionals, including engineers, doctors and bankers.

Khatria- The Khatria are a prosperous people believed to be the descendants of intermarriage between Brahmans and Kshatriyas, probably from the Rajput caste. One legend states that this intermarriage came about after an ancient epic battle in which many Kshatriya warriors died. Their widows married Brahmans, and their descendants became the Khatria people. The Khatria are vegetarians and will not accept food cooked by non-vegetarian castes. They accept brides from the Arora, but do not reciprocate. Their occupation as traders and moneylenders has made them one of the wealthiest communities in India.