# An Exploration of Attitudes Towards Transgender People on a Q & A website

Jeerawan Wongburi[1], Sompatu Vungthong[2]

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## Abstract

Online social question and answer (Q & A) websites have become an important venue for individuals to seek information and voice their opinions through questioning and answering on a broad range of topics. This study aims to explore people's attitudes towards transgender people on a social Q & A website based on the 'attitude' system in Appraisal Theory. 194 sentences which include the term 'transgender' or something related from the first 100 written answers to the question "What is your opinion on transgender people?" from the Quora website were collected as data of the study. After that, each sentence was analyzed and categorized into each type of the attitude system. The findings of this study reveal that people tended to have more positive attitudes towards transgender people. For their expression of positive attitudes, the sentences in the category of 'judgement' were mostly used to reveal their opinions that transgender people are normal and there is nothing wrong with being a transgender person. Negative attitudes towards transgender people were expressed through the category of 'appreciation' to show their reaction to transgender people's negative traits.

**Keywords:** Attitudes, Transgender people, Question and answer (Q & A) websites

## Introduction

Transgender is one of the most important contemporary issues. The term 'transgender' refers to an umbrella term for all people whose internal sense of their gender identity is dissimilar to the biological gender appearance they were assigned

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[1]MA graduate, School of Liberal Arts, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi
Email: jeerawanwon@gmail.com
[2]Lecturer, School of Liberal Arts, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (PhD)
Email: sompatu.vun@kmutt.ac.th

at birth (Schneiders, 2014). The topic of transgender is worth exploring because of the significant number of visible transgender people (Meerwijk & Sevelius, 2017), discrimination and stigma which transgender people have been encountering (Shires & Jaffee, 2015) and the evidences of social movement on transgender issue which have been raised in many forms of medias. Transgender inequality as a social problem has been witnessed in various types of society. Some transgender people have faced the discrimination in many forms such as transbashing (the act of harming a transgender person emotionally, physically, sexually, or verbally) and discrimination in an employment sector. An analysis of people's attitudes towards transgender people can reveal their stereotypical roles and the prejudice against them.

The use of social media platforms has become an integral part of people in daily routine for many purposes including contributing to online interactivity (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). Attitudes and opinions can be expressed in various sites of social media platforms especially in a 'Discuss' type and 'Social Q & A' sites of social media used. Social Q & A sites are becoming more popular because people can post questions, get answers, and be friends with experts (Patil & Lee, 2015). With the focus on the international media platforms with a wide range of audience, this study selected the Quora website as it has been ranked as one of the top 10 social networking sites by Market Share Statistics in 2017 and it has almost 30 million visits per week (Market Share Statistics, 2017).

Quora is a question-and-answer (Q & A) website founded in 2009 which provides functions that allow users to ask and answer questions on a variety of topics, as well as to "follow" or subscribe to an activity by other users which is related to a particular interest. Every Quora Question page has three main information blocks; Question, Answer and Follower blocks. Each question can be answered by zero or more answers. Each answer has four parts (1) the answerer details, (2) a partial list of voters (who upvoted the answer), (3) the answer text, and (4) comments. The answerers can access answers either by using a name with a short description or by using the Make Anonymous option to give answers and express their opinions toward a particular topic including the transgender issue. This study aims to analyze the evaluative language used by the answerers as a way of revealing their attitudes toward this topic.
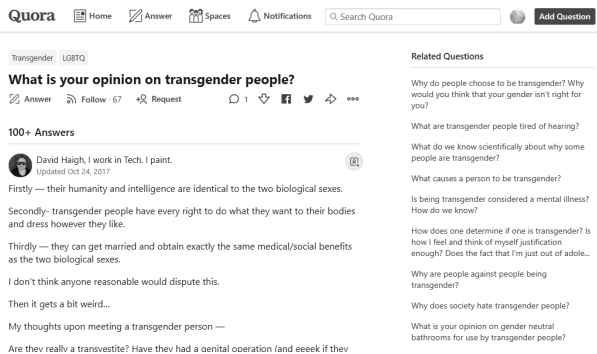
**Figure 1** An example of a question page on the Quora website
(Source: https://www.quora.com/What-is-your-opinion-on-transgender-people)

People's attitudes can be examined by different approaches such as using survey questionnaires and interviews. For survey questionnaires, the respondents are commonly requested to answer the questions with fixed choices ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree on a Likert scale. Examples are the studies on customers' attitudes towards advertising (Popović & Milašinović, 2016) and public attitudes toward mental illness (Yuan et al., 2016). For interviews, this approach can provide in-depth information about participants' inner values and beliefs. Researchers can also investigate participants' external behavior by using observation during interviews (Alshenqeeti, 2014). An example is an analysis of Indian medical students' attitudes toward abortion (Sjostrom, Essen, Gemzell-Danielsson, & Klingberg-Allvin, 2016).

However, this study adopted the method of content analysis to analyze the answers to the topic of transgender people on the Quora website based on appraisal theory to explore people's attitudes. Appraisal Theory can be used to uncover attitudes of people towards a certain issue or thing through the analysis of language which they use to "appraise" or evaluate that issue or thing. Furthermore, using appraisal Theory on attitudinal analysis would enable us to look into the deeper meaning of language that people use and not only group the themes according to thematic analysis. In addition, Appraisal Theory has already been used in a variety of studies exploring attitudes e.g. the work of Wu (2013) which analyzed the attitudinal meaning of public service advertising discourse in China. Nevertheless, the attitude analysis of people's comments on Social Q & A websites

based on appraisal theory is still rare although they can be a rich source of data for analyzing public attitudes.

The investigation of people's attitudes towards transgender in this study contributes to the field of critical discourse analysis. In particular, this study aims to analyze how people use language to represent transgender people and uncover the public attitudes towards them through the use of Appraisal Theory. In the process, some negative stereotypes of transgender may be revealed and this can help raise awareness about the marginalized position and inequality of transgender people in society.

**Literature Review**

    **1. Appraisal theory**

Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) is a theory describing the types of language adopted to communicate the emotion and opinion of an appraiser. Appraisal is one of three major discourse semantic resources which are used to interpret interpersonal meanings. Appraisal itself is categorized into three interacting domains: attitude, engagement, and graduation. Read and Carroll (2012, p. 423) gave a brief explanation as below:

    **ATTITUDE** is concerned with one's personal feelings (emotional reactions, judgements of people and appreciations of objects);

    **ENGAGEMENT** considers the positioning of oneself with respect to the opinions of others (heterogloss) and with respect to one's own opinions (monogloss);

    **GRADUATION** addresses how language functions to amplify or diminish the attitude and engagement conveyed by a text.

The particular domain of appraisal theory which is the focus of this study is 'attitude'. Attitude is a system for mapping feelings which are interpreted in English texts. It has three sub-systems - affect (expressions of feelings and emotions), judgement (evaluations of human behaviors), and appreciation (evaluations of things and entities).

    **1.1 Affect**

Affect is defined as a semantic resource for interpreting emotions or feelings (Martin, 2003). It could be conveyed through various lexical items as verbs, adverbs and adjectives of emotion. Affect can be classified into four main sub-systems:

    **1.1.1 Dis/Inclination** is a set of meanings which involve intention

        1) Inclination e.g. miss, long for, yearn for

2) Disinclination e.g. fearful, terrorized, wary

**1.1.2 Un/Happiness** is a set of meanings that involves the moods of feeling happy or sad and the aspects of liking or disliking it.

1) Happiness e.g. cheerful, love, adore

2) Unhappiness e.g. joyless, dreary, cheerless, unhappy, sad

**1.1.3 In/Security** refers to the feelings of peace and anxiety.

1) Security e.g. together, confident, comfortable with

2) Insecurity e.g. uneasy, anxious, startled

**1.1.4 Dis/Satisfaction** deals with our feelings of achievement and being upset in the activities in which we are engaged.

1) Satisfaction e.g. impressed, pleased, satisfied

2) Dissatisfaction e.g. angry, bored with, furious

## 1.2 Judgement

Judgement refers to attitudinal evaluation of human behavior and the way they behave which is negatively or positively assessed by some set of social norms (Wu, 2013). Judgements can be divided into those dealing with 'social esteem' and those positioned to 'social sanction'.

### 1.2.1 Social esteem

There are three types of social esteem judgement: normality, capacity and tenacity. Each type is used differently to judge people.

1) Normality focuses on 'how special?' e.g. normal, natural, unpredictable

2) Capacity focuses on 'how capable?' e.g. healthy, mature, uneducated

3) Tenacity involves the depiction of 'how dependable?' e.g. brave, careful, impatient

### 1.2.2 Social sanction

The elements of social sanction consist of veracity and propriety.

1) Veracity [truth] is assessed by the concept of 'how honest?' e.g. honest, lying

2) Propriety [ethics] focuses on 'how far beyond reproach?' e.g. good, moral, bad, immoral

## 1.3 Appreciation

Appreciation refers to the evaluations of things people make and performances they give (Martin & White, 2005). Appreciations can be divided into our 'reactions'

to things, their 'composition', and their 'value'.

      **1.3.1 Reaction** can be indicated by asking questions as "Do they catch our attention: Do they please us?" to ourselves. Reaction is classified into impact reaction such as fascinating, exciting or boring and quality reaction such as lovely, beautiful or ugly.

      **1.3.2 Composition** mainly focuses on balance and complexity of appreciation. Balance of composition is defined as the evaluation of the question "Did it hang together?" e.g. symmetrical, harmonious and irregular. Complexity of appreciation comes from the evaluation of the question "Was it hard to follow?" e.g. clear, simple and extravagant.

      **1.3.3 Valuation** deals with the evaluation of the 'value' of things in aspects of how innovative, authentic, timely, etc. Valuation of appreciation comes with evaluation of answering the question "Was it worthwhile?" such as innovative, original, insignificant and overdue.

Attitude in appraisal theory has been used to examine the evaluative representations of gay literary characters in novels (Rodrigues, 2013) and the representation of an LGBT community in newspaper articles (Bartley & Castro, 2016). However, few studies have been conducted to explore attitudes of answerers through their answers in social Q & A sites towards transgender people. This study focuses on the representation of transgender people in people's responses to the topic of the transgender issue on the Quora website.

### 2 Research on people's attitudes towards transgender people

Research on people's attitudes towards transgender people can be categorized into two main groups. The first one refers to the studies which explore factors affecting people's attitudes towards transgender people. All of the research in this group adopts the survey method through telephone interviews or questionnaires. For the factors which affect people's attitudes towards transgender people, gender has been considered as one factor. Whereas most studies (e.g. Flores, 2015) found that women more than men had a more positive attitude towards transgender people, some research shows that men had a more positive attitude (e.g. Kisha, 2017). The difference may be caused by the certain setting of study. Age is another factor which affects people's attitudes. Most of the studies reveal that younger people had more positive attitudes (Flores, 2015). However, one study in South India stated that adults which were 30-50 years old had more positive attitudes towards transgender people when compared to college students between 18 and 19 years old (Kisha,

2017). Contact is another factor affecting people's attitudes. Many studies show that more contact was related with more positive attitudes towards transgender people (Claman, 2007; King, Winter & Webster, 2009). Contact experiences with transgender people such as being peers and parents, and appearances on media were associated with less social distancing and social discrimination. The other factors which are mentioned as being associated with more positive attitudes towards trans people in certain situations are being American Democrats (Flores, 2015), lower levels of religiosity, and liberal beliefs about the roles of women in society (Claman, 2007).

The second group of research refers to studies which investigate people's attitudes towards transgender people in general rather than the study of factors. Most studies in this group (e.g. Claman, 2007; King, Winter & Webster, 2009) focus on a particular country whereas much fewer pieces of research explore the attitudes of people from different countries (Ipsos, 2018).

For the research focusing on an individual country, the results are different. From the work of Kooy (2010) with the use of online questionnaire surveying to measure attitudes towards transgender people in the US, it was found that most participants believed that transgender people should have the basic right in terms of the opportunity to change their name title to better reflect their personal identification. Jones, Brewer, Young, Lambe & Hoffman (2018) conducted a telephone survey of US adults (N=901) and found that they held the negative attitudes toward transgender people and transgender political candidates as well as negative stereotypical character of transgender people (e.g. less truthful, less moral, and less happy). The 2011 Equality Awareness Survey in Northern Ireland (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2012) was also conducted to measure people's attitudes towards specific groups through interviewing 1,000 people and the results showed that most of them do not feel comfortable with trans people through their ranking of transgender people as the second cluster in a group of people they are most uncomfortable with.

For the research on the attitudes of people across different countries, Ipsos (2018) which conducted an online survey from 16 countries (e.g. Argentina, Germany, Great Britain, South Korea, and United State) examined global opinions on transgender people. For the global opinions on transgender, most of the participants (52%) thought that transgender people are a natural occurrence whereas 34% of participants disagreed and 14% had no idea about this statement. Only 26% of the participants believed that being a transgender person is a mental illness. In addition, the findings

of this study show that most of the participants agreed that transgender people should have rights in terms of protection from discrimination by governments, authority to have transsexual surgery, and approval of same-sex marriage.

From the review of the previous studies, it seems clear that attitudes towards transgender people can be explored through the use of questionnaires and interviews. It can also be said that the methods which are used to examine people's opinions are not diversified. However, people's attitudes towards transgender people in social media are rarely studied. This present study, therefore, aims to explore the attitudes of people toward transgender people in an online international social media platform based on the framework from appraisal Theory.

## Methodology

### 1. Data Collection

The data of this study were derived from the first 100 written answers to the topic **"What is your opinion on transgender people?"** created on 24 August 2017 on the Quora website (https://www.quora.com/). The data were retrieved on 5 February 2018. This question was chosen because it is an open-ended question which can encourage people to express their personal views about transgender people and the analysis of their evaluative language can uncover their attitudes. The number of 100 written answers from 100 people was decided as it can provide a reasonable amount of data for this research. This study chose only the sentences containing the phrase transgender people or the term transgender as the participants. The following are some examples of answers:

- This is probably the most uncommon answer on the topic, but I believe that transgenderism is a mental illness, because that's what it used to be called and transgenderism seems to have a high correlation to suicidal tendencies.

- They are, shockingly enough, people.

- They are humans, just like anybody else, and deserve the same rights and respect.

### 2. Data Analysis

In this study, content analysis, which is a qualitative research technique used for coding texts, was used for data analysis. The texts to be coded in this study were retrieved from Quora (a Q & A website). A unit of analysis is a sentence and the total number is 194 units/sentences from 100 written answers. It should be noted that one answer can feature more than 1 sentence. Each sentence was

categorized into positive and negative attitudes towards transgender based on the consideration of the meaning of the whole sentence. A non-negative meaning sentence was also categorized as being positive. After that, each sentence was analyzed based on the framework of attitude system in appraisal theory (Martin & White, 2005). For intercoder reliability, the second coder was asked to code 30% of the data (around 60 sentences) based on the appraisal theory. In this study, the kappa statistic was used to test interrater reliability. The kappa value is 0.922 which is considered highly reliable (See Table 1).

**Table 1:** Intercoder reliability: Cohen's kappa value

**Symmetric Measures**

|  | Value | Asymp. Std. Errora | Approx. Tb | Approx. Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measure of Agreement | .922 | .037 | 18.056 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 60 |  |  |  |

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Then each type of the attitude system was counted and the percentage was calculated for each type. Finally, the results were discussed in terms of the overall attitudes of answerers towards transgender people on the website. To clarify the data analysis, examples of positive and negative categories are shown in Tables 2 and 3, respectively. However, some subcategories did not appear in the study. All key words for each subcategory are highlighted in bold.

**Table 2:** Examples of positive category

| Category | Subcategory | Examples from the study |
|---|---|---|
| Affect | Happiness | The point is, I love all transgenders |
|  | Inclination | I **want** to do what other transgender people are doing.. |
| Judgement | Normality | Transgender people are human. |
|  | Capacity | This awesome person is Manabi Mukherjee, the first trans person to complete Ph.D. |
|  | Propriety | I have transgendered friends, and they are good, decent,... |
| Appreciation | Reaction | I know a couple of them and they're all pretty cool. |

**Table 3:** Examples of negative category

| Category | Subcategory | Examples from the study |
|---|---|---|
| Affect | Insecurity | In some cases trans people can make me feel **uncomfortable.** |
| | Dissatisfaction | OK well I admit I'm **mad at** one of them. |
| Judgement | Capacity | They had no choice but to **beg** (in whatever form it may be). |
| | Normality | To be perfectly honest, I think changing your gender is **unnatural.** |
| Appreciation | Reaction | And three of the four of them do the absolute **weirdest shit** with their clothes. |
| | Valuation | In cases where they seem **artificial,** it usually either comes down to facial structure or strongly **exaggerated** makeup/fashion choices |

### Results

From the use of appraisal theory to analyze people's attitudes towards transgender and transgender people, it is found that most of Quora answers' sentences used to describe transgender people are positive (150 sentences, 77 %) whereas 23% (44 sentences) are negative. For their expression of positive attitudes towards transgender people, the answerers tended to use sentences in the categories of Judgement (47%), Appreciation (42%), and Affect (11%). For negative attitudes (44 sentences, 23%), they used the sentences in the categories of Appreciation (61%), Judgement (30%), and Affect (9%), respectively.

**1. Positive attitudes towards transgender people**

For positive attitudes towards transgender people, the answerers used various ways to express their opinions. According to appraisal theory, their answers can be categorized as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Statistics of positive attitude towards transgender people

| Attitude's Subsystems | Distributions | Number of Sentences | Positive |
|---|---|---|---|
| Judgement | Normality | 68 | 62(41%) |
| | Capacity | 13 | 6(4%) |
| | Tenacity | 0 | 0 |
| | Veracity | 0 | 0 |
| | Propriety | 3 | 3(2%) |
| | Total | 84(56%) | 71(47%) |
| | | | |
| Appreciation | Reaction | 89 | 63(42%) |
| | Composition | 0 | 0 |
| | Valuation | 1 | 0 |
| | Total | 90(60%) | 63(42%) |
| | | | |
| Affect | Happiness | 8 | 8(6%) |
| | Inclination | 6 | 6(4%) |
| | Security | 0 | 0 |
| | Satisfaction | 3 | 2(1%) |
| | Total | 20(13%) | 16(11%) |
| Total | | 194(100%) | 150(100%) |

From the answers regarding positive attitudes, for judgement (71 sentences/ 47%), transgender people were judged as being (1) normal, (2) capable and (3) decent.

For being normal through the category of judgement, answerers in the Quora website tended to use the category of normality (62 sentences, 41%) to argue for the positive portrayal of transgender people. To explain, they revealed their opinions that transgender people are normal and there is nothing wrong with being a transgender person. For the aspect of normality, the answerers in the website tended to point to two main aspects of normality: 1) being a human like any other people and 2) behavior. For transgender people as being humans, it was stated as a fact that they are similar to any other people as they are also human beings and there is nothing abnormal about that (e.g. "Transgender people, surprise surprise, are people). For the aspect of behavior, the answerers also stated that transgender people are normal and similar to others in terms of their behavior and that they

can be good or bad like others (e.g. "I would assume they have good and bad like any other category of humans.").

Transgender people are also represented as being capable. Six sentences (4%) have shown positive attitudes for transgender people's capacity. In terms of capacity, it involves transgender people's ability to get a good education and good career (6 sentences). Transgender people were portrayed in a positive way in terms of education, unique ability and work. It should be noted that when transgender people were presented in a positive way in terms of ability, Quora answerers tended to talk about an individual experience rather than a whole group of people in general (e.g. "This awesome person is Manabi Mukherjee, the first Trans person to complete Ph.D.")

In addition, for being decent, 2% of the sentences (3 sentences) portrayed transgender in a positive way in terms of propriety. In other words, it is about good, moral, and ethical judgement. The examples of sentences are "I have transgendered friends, and they are good, decent," and "They aren't predators.".

Apart from the category of judgement, the Quora answerers used the appreciation/reaction category for a positive representation of transgender people (63 sentences, 42%). The reactions of the answerers towards them can be shown into four ways: 1) showing sympathy for transgender people and the need for human rights (e.g. "I have lots of empathy for them." and "They are entitled to basic human decency and respect."), 2) showing positive traits of transgender people (e.g. "Caroline Cossey is an underrated Bond girl and seems like she's pretty awesome in real life.", 3) showing non-negative feelings for transgender people (e.g. "It doesn't affect me in any negative way at all that people are transgender." and "Some of them are pretty ok."), and 4) showing good transgender appearance or fashionable transgender people (e.g. One girl has amazing fashion sense and I always love seeing her in the hallways because she looks fantastic every time.").

Based on the category of affect or expressions of feelings (16 sentences, 10%), transgender people were portrayed as (1) lovable (e.g. "I love them."), (2) desirable "I want to do what other transgender people are doing."), and (3) satisfying (e.g. "I am completely okay with transgenders.")

## 2. Negative attitudes towards transgender people

For Negative attitudes (44 sentences) towards transgender people, the Quora answerers expressed their attitudes by using different ways as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Statistics of negative attitude towards transgender people

| Attitude's Subsystems | Distributions | Number of Sentences | Negative Attitude |
|---|---|---|---|
| Appreciation | Reaction | 89 | 26(59%) |
| | Composition | 0 | 0 |
| | Valuation | 1 | 1(2%) |
| | Total | 90(60%) | 27(61%) |
| | | | |
| Judgement | Capacity | 13 | 7(16%) |
| | Normality | 68 | 6(14%) |
| | Tenacity | 0 | 0 |
| | Veracity | 0 | 0 |
| | Propriety | 3 | 0 |
| | Total | 84(56%) | 13(30%) |
| | | | |
| Affect | Security | 3 | 3(7%) |
| | Satisfaction | 3 | 1(2%) |
| | Happiness | 8 | 0 |
| | Inclination | 6 | 0 |
| | Total | 20(13%) | 4(9%) |
| Total | | 194(100%) | 44 (100%) |

From the answers showing negative attitudes, in the appreciation/reaction category, the answerers' attitudes towards transgender people were revealed (26 sentences/59%). Transgender people were represented negatively through two ways, Firstly, transgender people were portrayed as having negative traits which can be further categorized into five main types ((1) being sexist ("I think being trans is kind of sexist."); (2) being impulsiveness ("And transgender people cannot control how they feel."); (3) being aggressiveness ("They can be aggressive as well, but one needs to see the trouble they face on a daily basis.); (4) attention seeking ("They are trans for two reasons only: They are seeking attention or have gender dysphoria); and (5) being problematic ("I believe that transgenders are those who are bored and then just make up problems for themselves.")). Secondly, some answerers talked about the appearance (e.g. the bad fashion taste of transgender people (e.g. "And three of the four of them do the absolute weirdest shit with their clothes.")).

For judgement (13 sentences/ 30%), the answerers revealed their negative attitudes towards transgender people by stating that they are not capable or normal. For pointing out the negative capacity of transgender people, the answerers indicated transgender people's lack of power, having no opportunities to get a good education or job (e.g. "Up until very recent times, they did not have access to any education or healthcare what so ever."). For abnormality, transgender people were represented as being unnatural and having a disorder (e.g. "To be perfectly honest, I think changing your gender is unnatural." and "but I believe that transgenderism is a mental illness.").

For the category of affect or personal feelings (4 sentences, 9%), the answerers revealed negative feelings for transgender people by showing insecurity and dissatisfaction. Insecurity feelings for transgender people were shown in terms of being uncomfortable (e.g. "In some cases trans people can make me feel uncomfortable."). Some answers also revealed the dissatisfaction towards transgender people (e.g. "OK well I admit I'm mad at one of them.")

## Discussion

The findings of this study shed light on two main aspects regarding the public attitudes towards transgender people. Firstly, although some previous research shows that most people had negative attitudes towards transgender people (e.g. people in Northern Ireland (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2012) and the attitudes of the US people towards transgender political candidates (Jones et al., 2018)), this present study shows that most of the Quora answerers' sentences (77%) reflect a positive attitude. A possible explanation is that the answerers in this study are an international audience who know English and potentially have a more liberal attitude. People who know English can access the Quora Q & A website and express their attitudes towards this particular group of people. Although no research has been conducted to find the correlation between knowing English and having more liberal attitudes, knowing English for non-native speakers is associated with being educated and being educated has been confirmed in various studies (e.g. Pew Research Center, 2016) to lead people to have more liberal attitudes.

In this study, for the sentences showing positive attitudes, when the answerers expressed a concept of transgender people's capability in a sentence, they tended to identify an individual trans person whom they personally knew. This aspect is supported by some other studies which reveal that previous contact with transgender

people is significantly associated with more positive attitudes towards transgender (e.g. King, Winter & Webster, 2009). Moreover, in line with previous research (e.g. Norton & Herek, 2013), this study reveals the public's positive attitudes towards transgender people in the form of sympathetic attitudes (e.g. pointing out the suffering of transgender people and arguing for the same basic human rights for them).

Secondly, 23% of answers in this study reveal negative attitudes. It is worth noting that the foundations of negative opinions in this study are mainly related to the stereotypical characteristics of transgender people which are not necessarily true. The negative representation of transgender people in this study involves personal traits in the appreciation/reaction category such as impulsiveness, attention seeking, problem making and having bad fashion taste. In addition, in some sentences, transgender was associated with the concept of abnormality in the judgement category through the use of terms such as 'unnatural', 'mental illness' and 'disorder'. The negative stereotypes of trans people found in this study as well as in other pieces of research (e.g. the work of Jones et al. (2018) which reveals most people considered trans people as being untrustworthy and less moral) should be looked into in order to reduce the social distance and discrimination against trans people. In order to reduce the social distance and discrimination against transgender people, the public need to become aware of their own prejudice and the misrepresentation or underrepresentation of transgender people in the media. More studies can be conducted to uncover the public attitudes towards transgender people to examine whether there are embedded negative stereotypes as well as to analyze the representation of transgender people in the media which can influence public attitudes (e.g. the work of Jobe (2013) which reveals transgender people were often misrepresented and treated as comedic props in the media).

In conclusion, although the results of this study show that most of the sentences show positive attitudes towards transgender people, their negative stereotypes were still present. Research also needs to be conducted in order to gain further insight into this topic and shed light on hidden stereotypical attitudes toward transgender people.

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