

Suicidal ideation and self-harm in transgender youth: role of social exclusion

Rabbia Javaid¹, Asma Khalid², Shoaib Akhtar³

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Author Information

^{1,3}Fatima Jinnah Woman University,
Rawalpindi Islamabad

Corresponding Author

Asma Khalid
Fatima Jinnah Woman University,
Rawalpindi Islamabad
Email: asmakhalid@fjwu.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Transgender community across the world is extremely vulnerable for abuse, discrimination and violence. This vulnerability leads the transgender community towards suicidal ideation and self-harm. This paper attempts to study the phenomenon of social exclusion and how it relates to suicidal ideation and self-harm amongst the transgender youth living and working in a society.

Material & Methods: The study adopted qualitative approach using document analysis, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion. Interviews and focus group discussion were held with twenty-six respondents selected through snowball sampling technique.

Results: The results indicated that transgender community was prone to suicidal ideation and self-harm tendencies. Loneliness, gender identity crises, police behavior and bad attitude of gurus were some of the contributing factors to suicidal ideation in the studied group of transgenders.

Conclusion: The biggest reason among transgender for suicidal ideation is their gender identity having the concept of 'incomplete life'. The ambiguous gender identity of studied transgender has more suicidal ideation in them than their normal counterparts. The behavior of their families and unsuccessful relationships are the strong predictors of self-harm in them.

Key Words: gender identity, self-harm, suicidal ideation, transgender

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INTRODUCTION

Transgender is a broad term that is used to describe people with different gender identities (different from their natal sex), expressions or behaviors¹ including cross-dressers² and genderqueer.³ Due to different gender identities, transgender people are extremely vulnerable to discrimination, violence and marginalization, ultimately affecting their health and wellbeing.⁴ This is evident from various studies that have highlighted suicidal ideation and suicidal attempts among transgender youth.⁵⁻⁸ Suicidal ideation is referred to as suicidal thoughts such as thinking about, considering or planning suicide.⁹ These thoughts occur mostly in people who are depressed and not satisfied from the way they are living. Unlike heterosexual people with strong network support in times of depression, transgender people find themselves deprived of network and social support system. Non-existence of such support leads transgender people towards suicidal attempts. The main cause of depression among transgender people is the discriminatory attitude of a society towards them. Previous researches have highlighted that transgender youth face discrimination especially in education¹⁰⁻¹² and employment.¹³⁻¹⁵ Due to lack of education and limited employment opportunities, a big number of transgender youth are found to be engaged in sexual activities in developing countries.¹⁶ In developing countries, transgenderism remained a taboo like some of the other taboos in these countries. As a result, transgender community is socially excluded from the main stream

and sometimes, is not even allowed to perform the normal social activities and roles.² Social exclusion is a hoarding of convergent processes arising from the heart of economy, politics and society.¹⁷ Social exclusion is a process that prevents specific individuals or groups from full participation in social, economic and political activities, thus not qualifying for their rights.

Despite the fact that transgenders are prone to many restrictions and disparities in developing countries, still judiciary systems of some of the developing countries advocated their rights e.g. Supreme Court of Pakistan in 2009 ruled in favor of civil rights of transgender citizens. In 2018, Government of Pakistan formally recognized the transgender community and passed The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act. However, despite the enactment of the transgender Act, still the progress made so far regarding protection of transgender people in the country especially in terms of their health, education and employment, remained unsatisfactory.

It may be hypothesized that lack of educational and employment opportunities have driven transgender youth towards substance abuse and sex work in the country.^{2, 18, 19} These are some of the factors that can be associated with an increased suicidal ideation and suicidal attempts among transgender youth.²⁰ Moreover, it has been reported that rejection by immediate families of transgender remained one of the other causes of suicidal attempts in transgender youth.²

Previous researcher have pointed out that when transgender youth

are rejected by their families, they tend to join transgender group headed by a 'Guru' (elder of the transgender group) in the vicinity of their homes.^{21, 22} The 'gurus' are least bothered about education of these transgenders and mainly focus on teaching skills like dancing and begging to their newly adopted transgender youth. These are some of the skills which are helping them to earn a livelihood for them and for their 'gurus'. Apart from these skills, transgender youth involve themselves in sex work that brings extra money to live a life. Involvement in sex work make transgender youth vulnerable, thus face physical violence and sexual abuse that leads to emotional instability.^{18, 22} It is pertinent to mention that such activities are not allowed by the country law which make these transgenders prone to violate law of the land.

One of the most important issues faced by the community included is gender identity. Gender identity is a state of mind that reflects one's sense of being male and female. It is based on culturally defined set of attributes and behavior that is associated with the public declaration of masculinity and femininity.²⁴ From early childhood, behaviors and attitudes are associated with each gender. As child grows, she/he comes to know what is appropriate and what is not according to one's natal sex. The person who deviates from these described behaviors of gender is termed as transgender.²⁵

Transgender are socially excluded from the main stream society. Basically, social exclusion is a self-explanatory term, which refers to the people being evaded off the society, from performing the normal social activities and roles.² Social exclusion is a hoarding of convergent processes arising from the heart of economy, politics and society. It is such a process and method that prevents specific individuals or groups from full participation in social, economic and political activities and from performing their rights. It is assumed from exclusionary relationships based on power and rights that sometimes minorities, such as transgender, are excluded from the society.¹⁷

In early childhood, if a boy shows girlish way of walking and talking, keeps soft nature attitude like girls, doing household chores, are initially not opposed by the family, however, they are mocked by family members while doing these things which are not regarded fit for their gender. But if it continues at adolescence age, the boy (transgender) faces offensive attitude of the family and friends. Resultantly, transgender adolescent encounter huge humiliation, negligence and sometimes abuse in their daily lives.¹⁷ Society's oppressive and violent behavior continues when it comes to transgender's education and employment. They are unable to complete their education, and hence cannot compete in the society.²⁰

In Pakistan, researchers explored that transgender do not have any explicit roles to perform due to their undefined gender.² They cannot do household chores as they are not categorized as women and they cannot do outside chores of the household as a man due to undefined category of man. These ambiguities of societal norms of only binary division of gender leave them with the emotional disturbance.

In Pakistan, a quite number of transgenders were raped and tortured to death by some of the police officials in 2009. After these incidents, Supreme Court of Pakistan gave a landmark

decision to the transgender community the right of identity.²⁶ This included issuance of identity cards (IDs) issued by National Database and Registration Authority. This includes the type of transgender i.e. male transgender, female transgender or the intersex. This was the first step towards the recognition of this community into society.²⁷ After gaining the legal status in Pakistan, the transgender community casted votes in the elections of 2013 for the first time in Pakistan's history.²⁶ However, despite having legal right of identity, there are issues which transgender faced in Pakistan as reported by the media including social media where many videos have been shared where transgender youth face brutal treatment from the society.

A transgender was shot when she was unable to provide smaller currency of 1000 rupees note that was showered on her while performing dance in a wedding. It was considered as the 4th murder in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa till 2018 and 57th since 2015.²⁸ Transgender had gruesome amount of attacks in KPK and these brutal cases continue to increase even after the Transgender Protection Bill (discussed in the coming section). One of the other incidents showed the insensitivity of the medical department when a transgender body was brought to them murdered and beheaded; they refused to take the body claim as it will create a mess in their freezer. Her body was then left in the back of the pickup truck.²⁸ Despite the fact that transgender community remained vulnerable, still, the government of Pakistan brought many constitutional changes to protect rights of this community. One of such efforts is passing 'transgender protection bill 2018'. This bill was passed by the parliament of Pakistan in 2018 to protect transgender against the discrimination they faced for the last 70 years. The aim of this bill was 'to solve the problems of transgender which they faced in their daily lives generally'. Gender identity, education, employment and the medical problems were highlighted in the Bill specifically. The Bill stated that trans community could not be discriminated or unfairly treated on the grounds of their gender identity as far as education, employment and medical treatment is concerned. No one can be deprived of the service or the public good on the basis of their different gender orientation. The government is in the process of formulating non-discriminatory schemes and programs for transgender community. The government has taken necessary steps to rescue and rehabilitate transgender. Forced begging or any kind of labor, or restricting transgenders to visit any public place, or forced leaving homes or village or any community, threatening to life attitude by any person or involving them in any activity of sexual, physical or verbal abuse are considered as the punishable offense and a person committing these crimes are liable to be imprisoned for a minimum six months in the country now.²⁹ Research studies have shown that the identity-based victimization and discriminatory attitudes trigger the suicidal ideation among transgender community.^{23, 24} However, in Pakistan, majority of the studies have been carried out in terms of health issues faced by transgender community in general and little is discussed about the transgender youth and their suicidal ideation and self-harm due to social exclusion. Thus, the present study's main objectives were to explore the transgender identity and its association with suicidal ideation. The second objective was to find out the reasons of self-harm among transgender community and its association with social exclusion concept.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is underpinned by the theory of Suicide by Emile Durkheim. Durkheim proposed that a person can commit suicide due to multiple reasons and these reasons were segregated on the basis on connection between an individual and society (termed as social integration) and the degree of a society which can influence an individual (termed as social regulation). These two dimensions were further divided into four terms. When a person commits suicide due to lack of support by his social group is termed as Egoistic Suicide. Sometimes a person is greatly involved in some kind of group and all they care about achieving the goals and working for the benefit of that particular group and in return, they can even take their lives for the cause of the groups. This type of suicide is termed as Altruistic Suicide. Another type of suicide is Anomic Suicide which is when a person has low social regulation due to sudden shock or changes, then the person commit suicide as the life become hard for them to handle so they get rid of their miseries by ending their lives. The kind of suicide which is done by those people who have been under the tight control and regulations by the society is termed as Fatalistic Suicide. They have been under continuous threat of achieving the goals and following the rules and regulations that they totally lost their self and commit suicide.

This research is supported by Durkheim's 'Anomic Suicide' such a type in which the person cannot handle the sudden change in their life. It includes those people who were isolated from the society including sudden changes in family or the employment issues. The individuals no longer been able to participate in the society.³⁰ Anomic Suicide is related with anger emotion. It involves the sudden loss of social status, if a person recognizes himself for bringing a shame to the family, an implicit behavior of threat to social bond or the fear of isolation or exclusion due to embarrassment.²⁵ Durkheim portray that the stigma attached to the transgender people mostly due to hopelessness and unbearable pain and self-awareness i.e. transphobia made them vulnerable to think about suicide.³¹

MATERIAL & METHODS

The present study is based on 'Interpretivist Phenomenological' research. This paradigm allows the researchers to see the world through the lens of reality based on the experiences and perceptions of the participants.³² Thus, exploration of factors requires data to be gathered through qualitative techniques rather than quantitative techniques. Therefore, interpretivist paradigm is most suitable to have an in-depth information and knowledge about the transgender person and the factors causing suicidal ideation and self-harm in this community.

This study explored different factors of suicidal ideation and self-harm among transgender. For this purpose, the transgender community within the vicinity of Rawalpindi (Pakistan) was targeted. Saddar, Fazal Town and Commercial Market were the main areas where semi-structured interviews were conducted. In addition to interviews, a focus group discussion and analysis of the document (Protection of Rights Bill 2018) were used to generate data for this research. Semi-Structured Interview (SSI) consists of 20 open ended questions was the tool to collect data from this group. In total, twenty (20) interviews were conducted. Out these interviews, 17 interviews were done with transgender and 3 with 'gurus' - elder of transgender community. Purposive sampling was

the selection method in which the process was guided by the purpose of study.³³

For this study, one focus group discussion was also conducted. Focus group discussion is a grouped activity or a discussion on a particular topic. The composition of this discussion needs the great care while practicing to get the best discussion out of it from the different people involved in the process.³⁴ A focus group discussion, containing 6 transgender who were inhabitant of Rawalpindi city, was done to get an in-depth understanding of their lived experiences. The transgender for the purpose of focus group discussion was gathered from Fazal Town. This study was completed in six months from February to July, 2018. Data analysis was done by developing codes of transcription, sorting of the data and then themes were generated.³²

Demographic detail of participants

The current research interviewed twenty transgender living in Rawalpindi city. Another group of 6 transgender participated in the focus group discussion. All the transgender interviewed were doing two types of job in Rawalpindi either working as beggars or as dancers at the wedding functions. The transgenders were earning by these ways for many years because in this society they were not left with many options. Due to the sacred month of Ramadan (the time when data was collected), they were begging on the roads; as at this time of the year, no wedding functions were available, hence they were left with the sole option of begging.

Table 1: Demographic details of Interviewed Transgender

| Code | Location of job | Nature of job | Yrs. in profession | Age | Education |
|-----------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------|-----------------------|
| R1 | Saddar, Rawalpindi | Begging | 14yrs. (wedd. function) 10yrs(begging) | 35 yrs. | Quranic education |
| R2 | Saddar, Rawalpindi | Begging | 31-years | 47 | matric |
| R3 | Saddar, Rawalpindi | Wedding functions and begging | 13-years | 29 | 8th |
| R4 | Saddar, Rawalpindi | Begging | 9-years | 24 yrs. | 5 th class |
| R5 | Saddar, Rawalpindi | Begging | 23-years | 35 yrs. | 5 th class |
| R6 | Saddar, Rawalpindi | Wedding function and begging | 11-years | 26 yrs. | F. A |
| R7 | Fazal town, chaklala | Wedding functions | 7-years | 22 yrs. | illiterate |
| R8 | Fazal town, chaklala | Wedding Function | 4/5-years | 18 yrs. | 8 th class |
| R9 | Fifth road, commercial (Rwp) | Begging | 38 years | 56 yrs. | F. A |
| R10 | Fifth road, commercial (Rwp) | Begging | 6/7-years | 22 yrs. | Matric |
| R11 | Fifth road, commercial (Rwp) | Wedding functions and begging | 18-years | 31 yrs. | 8 th class |
| R12 | Fifth road, commercial (Rwp) | Begging and Wedding functions | 14-years | 26 yrs. | 8 th class |
| R13 | Fifth road, commercial (Rwp) | Begging and Wedding function | 23-years | 35 yrs. | 7 th class |
| R14 | Fifth road, commercial (Rwp) | Wedding function | 1-year | 18 yrs. | Hafiz e Quran and 7th |
| R15(Guru) | Fifth road, commercial (Rwp) | Begging | 33-years | 43 yrs. | 3 rd class |
| R16 | Fifth road, commercial (Rwp) | Begging & wedding function | 9-years | 21 yrs. | 2 nd class |
| R17(Guru) | Rabi center, commercial | Begging | 50-years | 65 yrs. | illiterate |
| R18 | Rabi center, commercial | Begging & wedding function | 20-years | 30 yrs. | matric |
| R19 | Rabi center, commercial | Begging | 24-years | 34 yrs. | illiterate |
| R20(Guru) | Rabi center, commercial | Begging | 22-years | 34 yrs. | 5 th class |

Table 2: Demographic details of focus group discussions' participants

| Code | Location of job | Nature of jobs | Yrs. in profession | Age | Education |
|----------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| R21(FGD) | Fazal town, Chaklala | Wedding functions | 10-years | 23 yrs. | 8th |
| R22(FGD) | Fazal town, Chaklala | Wedding functions | 8-years | 20 yrs. | matric |
| R23(FGD) | Fazal town, Chaklala | Wedding functions | 11-years | 20 yrs. | matric |
| R24(FGD) | Fazal town, Chaklala | Wedding functions | 14-years | 24 yrs. | 4th |
| R25(FGD) | Fazal town, Chaklala | Wedding functions | 9-years | 20 yrs. | 9th |
| R26(FGD) | Fazal town, Chaklala | Wedding functions | 18-years | 27 yrs. | illiterate |

The age of the transgender interviewed for the purpose of this study ranges from 18-65 years. That includes three gurus who were aged between 34 to 65 years. These all were not well educated. Most of them have completed their primary or middle education. Those transgenders who were selected for focus group-discussions were aged between 20-27 with the maximum qualification of matric (high grade schooling completed). Most of the studied transgender left their education due to unwelcoming and harsh behavior at the school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the data analysis - through coding, sorting, re-coding-themes were generated from the data. Following are the themes presented in this discussion give us an in-depth understanding of their daily lives and how they cope with the harsh realities of life and which keeps them motivated.

Realization of the Gender Ambiguity

Contrary to the mythical view about the marginalized community of transgender that guru demands the custody of the child born with ambiguous genitalia, our study findings showed that most of the studied transgenders had spent early childhood with their families till they start to show the behavior against the set norms of the society (indecorous). At the point when unusual and unaccepted behaviors were shown by the transgender child in the family, they faced harsh behavior from family members, especially the male family members. The most important factor that was revealed during the interviews was the "realization of the gender ambiguity" by the family. Male members of the family target transgender the most as they were of the view that girlish attitudes and activities of the transgender will bring shame to the family. The families were strongly conforming to the set societal norms, attitudes and behavior for girls and boys. The key informants shared that showing different feelings and behaviors were coming from their inside, as they felt a strong difference of their body and soul, and there was an urge that could not be stopped, and this was beyond their control to express themselves.

The findings of this research show that transgenders, having the discomfort with their true identity, were intimidated by the family and society; who elucidated that they were somewhat different from their siblings due to their deviant behavior. Due to restrictions and pressure imposed by family, friends and society on transgender, the transgender children searched for the outlets, where they find solace. In this search, they ultimately reached to the transgender community, who lives in different pockets of the city. In this community, they were accepted as they were and could do what they want to do. In the conservative country like Pakistan, where the family is the source of social training for a child, and is a shelter in the time of crisis, the transgenders have no place in the family. Thus, leaving no other option than to join transgender community.

The argument which we want to present here that if a family wants to support a child (though reluctantly), who is transgender – they cannot provide the necessary shield to the child. Because they face shame, guilt, and stigmatization due to their transgender child. In addition to this, absence of professional assistance and guidance at the local level, parents cannot support their different gender identified child.

Neighborhood plays another important role in the realization of gender ambiguity as reported by key informants of this research.

Neighbors question about the different gender identified child. In return, family gets offended and treats their child badly. Neighbors bigotry behavior against the transgender children made them realize their difference of gender identity. Such uncomfortable encounter on the daily basis had a really bad impact on their minds at a younger age, where they were unable to understand the set norms and stereotypical roles defined for males and females. It is also to argue that at times, transgender adolescents become attracted and influenced by peers with whom they hang around. Due to the influence of the company, they gain interest in the transgender community and adopt the life style of transgender to earn their living. Although, frequent repulsions and continuous discrimination faced by the society, made transgenders vulnerable economically and they live with poor financial conditions. Other social issues were part of their lives, in addition to their financial issues.

Suicidal Ideation

The term suicide attempt is a nonfatal, self-directed, injurious behavior that a person performed with intent to die, even if the behavior does not result in injury. In addition to this, suicidal ideation is defined as thinking about, considering, or planning suicide.⁹ It is researched out those diseases like hopelessness, depression, alcohol abuse are associated with increased risk of suicidal thoughts in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.³⁵ The factors studied in this research were having gender dysphoria, anger in transgender community due to years of rejection, prejudice and discrimination in their daily lives on regular basis. Thus, an elevated rate of anxiety, depression and worst of all has suicidal thoughts prevalence in transgender community. Another factor among transgender for suicidal ideation is the 'gender identity'. Their identities of being a transgender lead them to such an extreme like suicidal ideation. Inability to live a normal life in the society makes them feel that they are incomplete and they need to hide their identity. Neighbors and society made them realize that their siblings are normal, and they are the ones who have problem. When they compared themselves with their siblings, they had suicidal ideation. Hopper elaborates the same findings and shows that among transgender people, suicidal ideation was common due to rejection of their identity and being segregated from the mainstream society.³⁶

In connection with the research done in other countries, our study also found that being "lonely" is the primary cause of suicidal ideation in some of the transgender. It is explained in this way that "when we were ill and had no one around us to take care of, at that time we thought about the suicide." It is also explained by the key informants that loneliness is a social pain that makes a person feel alone and outcast from the society, thus leads them to have suicidal thoughts.

Transgender live in groups within their transgender community in a place known as "dera". Each group comprises of ten to twenty-five members which is led by a head or mentor. The supervisor of the dera is called 'guru' or 'dada'. The guru of the guru is called as 'maha-guru'. The kinship between master-disciple or guru-chaila is the significant of all. It is respected as mother-child relation.³⁷ One of the main reasons of suicidal ideation among transgender was 'Guru's attitude'. Sometimes bad attitude shown by guru push them towards suicidal ideation. For example, one of the key informants quoted that "my guru beat me because I broke a cup". Another informant said that "my guru didn't allow me to go to the

funeral of my mother to pay her last respects". It can be concluded that exclusion from the family and continues oppression from guru, leads to drastic effects in the life of transgender. The transcriptions provided by the 'Durkheim theory' that articulated different assumptions about suicide provides the basic foundations for the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender experiences of exclusion from the mainstream society. They are socially isolated due to their sexual orientation that engages them in suicidal ideation or non-fatal attempted suicide.

Interpersonal conflict and relationship breakdowns are other reasons of suicidal thought among those people who face social exclusion.³⁸ In our research, we came across different experiences of exclusion which had led to suicidal ideation among transgender who shared their experiences with us. One of the key respondents shared that "I want to have my own family and want to live a happy life. However, due to my gender identity, no woman loves me. No one is ready to have a relationship with me. In absence of a love relationship, I feel alone as I cannot live with my own family due to unacceptable behavior. The absence of love in my life made me to think about suicide. Why I have to live, if there is no love for me."

Self-Harm

Suicide is defined as 'the behavior of self-directed injury that cause death'⁹ which includes fatal and non-fatal attempts. The non-fatal attempts are termed as self-harm.³⁹ Transgender have the high tendency for self-harm. Scholars elaborates that victimization increases the risk of psychological distress, suicidal behavior and self-harm in different sexually identified minorities including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.³⁵ Victimization has a variety of forms that are associated with self-harm and suicidal behavior such as witnessing parental violence, sexual abuse, violent partners and sexual assault. These factors of victimization usually cause the suicidal behavior and self-harm.³⁵

There are multiple factors shared by transgender in our research. Transgender considered their 'love-life' as the most difficult situation to cope with, as they know that their relations will never last long. Transgenders have relationships with male (straight) people. They have long-term and short-term relations; relationship lasts for 5-6 years and sometimes lasts only for 3-4 months respectively. Upon asking, transgenders explained that by having such love relationships, they feel like that they are like complete humans; women in most of the cases. In the beginning of the relationship, both parties feel good but transgenders know it clearly that relationship will not be for a long time. This inconsistency of relationship disrupts their lives; however, they still believe in love and continue making such relations. The making and breaking of love relationship gives them a feeling as if they are normal human beings and can live a routinized normal life. Many transgenders shared their suicides' attempts at the time when their partners left them. Some of the transgenders who had long-term relationships shared that when they broke up; they could not accept it and tried to commit suicide to get rid of their lives' miseries.

Male dominance at the household level plays another important role in pushing transgender towards self-harm. When male family members taunt them, insult them and beat them for their different gender identity or behaviors - which are not synchronized with their natal sex. This dissimilar behavior was not accepted by male

family members and caused rift between the relationship and family ties as well. Transgender urged to be accepted as a female family member in the family, but it was not possible for male family members to accept them, thus force them to leave the houses. This leads to self-harm ultimately.

The key informants frequently complained about the attitude of the police. On daily basis, the police demand shares in their earnings. Transgender shared that they earn a little amount of money through lots of hardship such as begging and dancing at weddings etc. And at the end of the day, when they get money, police ask for shares in that money. "Imprudent behavior" of the police is another problem which they face in their daily lives. If a transgender gets arrested due to any reason, police detained them in the male section of the jail, this create stress and depression among transgender community. According to our key informants, they are reluctant to go to male prison as they are mistreated by the men such as bullying, sexual assault and rape. Transgender, many times demanded from the police, that they should be sent to women's jails or in separate jails, however, police show insensitive and bigotry behavior and send them to man's jails. The police never respect their demands of changing the cell. The violence against transgender often goes unreported due to the lack of support from any institution including police. Transgender community does not trust police due to above mentioned reasons. Therefore, they try to harm themselves or try to commit suicide as they are unable to find any other way to avoid these problems.

CONCLUSION

The biggest reason among transgender for suicidal ideation is their gender identity having the concept of 'incomplete life'. The ambiguous gender identity of studied transgender has more suicidal ideation in them than their normal counterparts. Family attitude and behavior, lack of male family members' support, questioning of neighborhood and relatives make transgenders lives difficult and make them to think about self-harm and suicidal ideation. In addition to this, police a public institution also plays a major role in defining their self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

LIMITATIONS

The present study is limited in some respects.

- The study was limited due to time and cost constraints. To gather information through qualitative techniques requires time. This study was completed within a time frame of 5 months, which is too short to gather all kinds of information. In addition, cost factor is also one of the hindrances in data generation, as the cost was borne by the researchers. Therefore, data was only gathered from Rawalpindi city.
- There is a possibility that the researcher might have failed to cover some aspects of the life of transgender people because observation is a time-consuming process and researchers were not given enough time by the informants as they were approached during the time of their work i.e. begging.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that transgender should be aware of the recent trends and changes that are happening in Pakistan related to transgender community.
- It is suggested that there is a need to reform educational institutions to cater the need of getting education of third gender in Pakistan as per Constitutional right.
- It is also recommended that family should be aware about the problems and difficulties which a transgender has to face in their daily lives.
- It is also important for the policy makers and the NGOs to aware parents about the gender ambiguity. Proper counseling sessions should be arranged for parents and for gender ambiguous children that may help parents and children to overcome the problems in their day to day dealings.
- If the parents were reluctant to own a transgender, then there should be **proper institutions for transgender** like “old-age homes” or “orphanages.” These institutions will be responsible to take care of transgender’s brought up and all other human rights. These institutions will help them to gain different skill that can help them to earn through respectable means. Rehabilitation centers should be made to cater the issues of transgender people to lessen suicidal ideation and self-harm. These kinds of centers or sessions should be handled by trained personnel who understand

the sensitivity of these issues.

- This research analyses that transgender people frequently been mistreated by the police official. They need to be protected against the oppression of police and the transgender should be aware of the penalty one has to face if they harm transgender. In this scenario, they can raise their voice against these kinds of offenders through media or NGOs working for the well-being of transgender

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

To gather knowledge and information on such a diverse, complicated and sensitive topic, it is suggested that future researchers should expand the research to other cities of Pakistan. This will provide an in-depth understanding regarding transgender community living in different regions and their issues. This will help to get an idea that how are the transgender been treated in different provinces of Pakistan. The study used qualitative approaches with purposive sampling technique. It is suggested that future research should be conducted using a mixed method approach, which can yield better result over larger population. This study focused on the transgender working as beggars and dancers. It is suggested that future research should consider the transgender working as professionals, for example, in different institutions and also sex-workers and investigate suicidal ideation and self-harm in them due to their occupations.

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