



خواجہ سیراء سوسائٹی
Khawaja Sira Society (KSS)

**Research Report of a Study on “Gender
based violence against TG Community in
Punjab, Pakistan”**

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Table of Contents

1: Introduction

2: Methods and Material

2.1. Objectives of the study

2.2. Instruments of Study

2.3. Focused Group Discussion

2.4. Geographical Coverage

3. Results

3.1. Awareness about violence

3.2. Victims of violence

3.3. Impact of violence

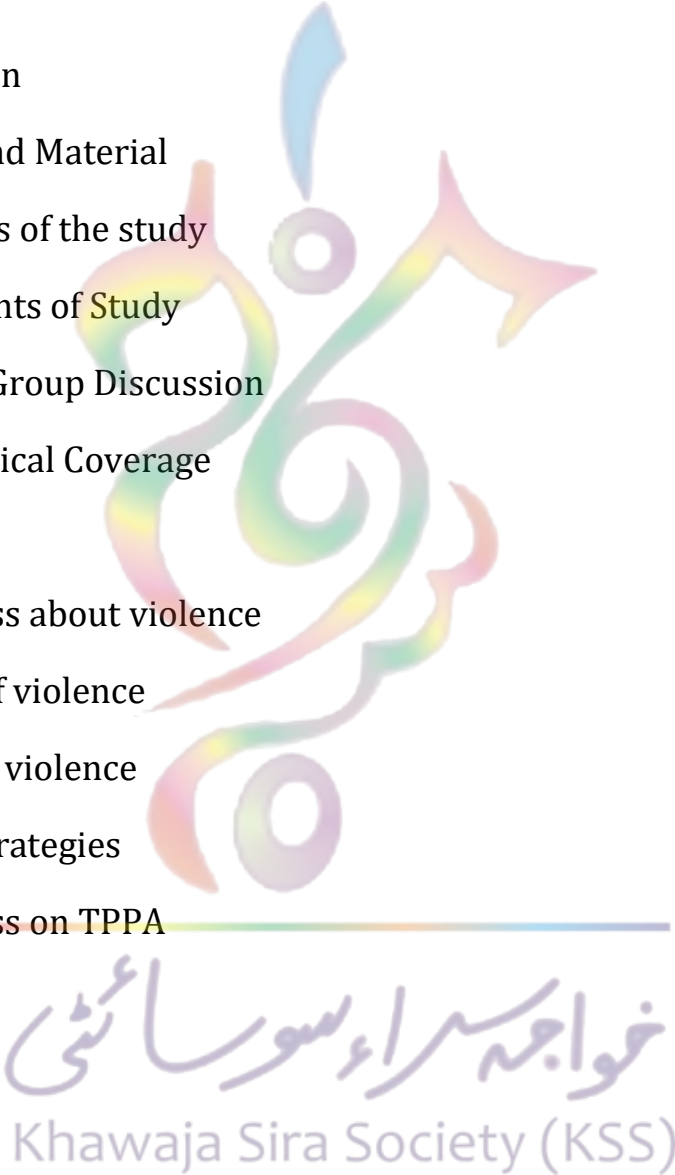
3.4. Coping strategies

3.5. Awareness on TPPA

4. Discussion

5. Conclusion

6. References



Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CJ	Chief Justice
CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GE	Gender Equity
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSW	Hijra Sex Worker
HRCP	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
KSS	Khawaja Sira Society
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
MTF	Male to Female (Trans woman)
SC	Supreme Court
TG	Transgender
TPPA	Trans person protection act

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Glossary

Cross-Dresser: Someone who dresses in the clothing opposite of the gender they were assigned at birth

Discrimination: A difference in treatment based on age, sex, ethnicity, religion or other factors, rather than on individual merit

Gender: The differences between women and men within the same household and within and between cultures that are socially and culturally constructed and change over time.

Gender Dysphoria: Unhappiness with one's physical/anatomical gender, also dissatisfaction with one's gender socialization

Gender Identity: An individual's internal sense of being male, female or anything else, since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.

Gender Expression: How a person represents or expresses one's gender identity to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, and voice or body characteristics.

Gender Non-conforming: A term for individuals whose gender expression is different from societal expectations related to gender

Khawaja Sira Society (KSS)

Guru: Guru is a teacher in the hijra system, under whose apprenticeship a chela (student) learns the principles of the hijra subculture and through whom a chela is identified. Guru is the counterpart of a "patriarch" in the hijra system.

Chela: Chela is a student of the guru in the hijra system.

Hijra: Member of the hijra subculture in South-Asia born as males but identifying as third-gender, two-spirit, bi-gender, or transgender women. The hijra sub-culture has its own indigenous language known as faarsi kalaam, and their norms and traditions.

Hijra dera: House where khawajasiras/moorats/hijras live together in a community

Khawajasira: Respectful Urdu term for hijras, transgender women and eunuchs

Khusra: Derogatory term, aimed at emasculating, for someone without male sexual organs, transgender women, hijras, gay men and effeminate men.

MTF: A person who transitions from “male-to-female,” meaning a person who was assigned male at birth, but identifies and lives as a female, also known as a “transgender woman.”

Moorat: Polite term for hijras and khawajasiras

Sex: The biological characteristics of being male or female those are genetically determined

Khawaja Sira Society (KSS)

Sex Reassignment Surgery: Surgical procedures that change one’s body to better reflect a person’s gender identity. This may include different procedures, including those sometimes also referred to as “top surgery” (breast augmentation or removal) or “bottom surgery” (altering genitals). Contrary to popular belief, there is not one surgery; in fact there are many different surgeries. These surgeries

are medically necessary for some people, however not all people want, need, or can have surgery as part of their transition. “Sex change surgery” is considered a derogatory term by many.

Sexual Orientation: A term describing a person’s attraction to members of the same sex and/or a different sex, usually defined as lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, or asexual.

Transphobia: is prejudice or discrimination against trans people. This can include harassment, violence and the restriction of medical, legal and civil rights.

Transgender Man: A term for a transgender individual who currently identifies as a man (see also “FTM”).

Transgender Woman: A term for a transgender individual who currently identifies as a woman (see also “MTF”).

Transsexual: An older term for people whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex at birth who seeks to transition from male to female or female to male. Many do not prefer this term because it is thought to sound overly clinical.

Two-Spirit: A contemporary term that refers to the historical and current First Nations people whose individuals spirits were a blend of male and female spirits. This term has been reclaimed by some in Native American LGBT communities in order to honor their heritage and provide an alternative to the Western labels of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.

Zenana: A term used by hijras for effeminate men who has sex with men. They occupy a sub-category within the hijra culture, and wear men’s clothes.

1. Introduction

The present study focused on Gender based violence against TG Community in Punjab, Pakistan. The objective of the study was to find out community's understanding about violence and how they tackle violence cases. The research was conducted by using Two Focus Group Discussions in Community based organization "Khawaja Sira Society" Peco Road Lahore.

The sample size for the collection of the information was 20 participants. Keeping in view the differences between challenges faced by the community, the group members were from different areas of Punjab and it included all kind of TGs like, hijras, zanas, sex workers, dera based, beggars, firqa wearing and kotki TGs.

The overall findings of the study showed that the community had to face violence on daily basis; even it had become a routine of their lives.

The findings further revealed that community was reluctant to report violence cases because they think that every violence case has to end at compromise.

The paper focused to find out the problems to report such cases and the awareness of community on their rights mentioned in TPPA.

Contrary to popular belief, one's sense of gender and one's anatomical sex are two distinct elements: each developing at different times in different parts of the body (Vitale,1997).

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Transgender (Hijra) has been acknowledged in ancient Hindu scriptures. In India, hijras are viewed as an institutionalized "third sex" that has always existed. They are particularly associated with the worship of Bahuchara Mata, a version of the Mother Goddess, for whose sake they undergo maculation. In return, the Goddess gives them the power to bless people with fertility

(Nanda,1999). Transgender are found in every part of the world, they are accepted and part of Muslim's societies. During Mughal times in the sub-continent, transgender (kwajasaras) or eunuchs guarded the ladies of the harem. While working in the field among the transgender (Hijra) of Hyderabad, Jaffrey (1996) discovered that during the Mughal era (1526to 1857) when Hyderabad was a prince lustrate, hijras were employed to oversee the harem, as servants in the homes of the nobility, often becoming key advisors.

It was in the modern time period thatthey are completely excluded from the mainstream society (Hoda, 2010). After 1870, British morality laws such as the Criminal Tribes Act,1871and the Dramatic Performance Act,1876restricted the activities of hijra and their inheritance and other rights, tarring themes "sodomites." The British rulers in colonial Indian protected the hijras of the laws that granted them the security they received under Mughals and regarded them as a menace to society (CSSforum, 2010).

At present, the situation of the community is worse because they are left ignored, isolated without the survival facilities, healthcare, education, employment opportunities, identity crisis or even the conformity from the dominant social class. They are living more sever condition than other marginalized communities. Pakistani cities have sizable hijras communities, divided into clans, living mostly in ghettos and managed by a leader or guru. These communities are generally known as Chellas. Hijras, in past, earned their living by dancing at carnivals, weddings and births.

However, with the outgrowth of novel means of celebrations, sex work and begging remain the only available occupational choices for the TG community

Chief Justice of Pakistan has ordered to provide the transgender community the identity as citizens of Pakistan in December (2009) and it was also suggested that transgender/Hijras be hired for debt recovery but the community continues to face the scorn and neglect by the society.

Considering the entire situation in mind, their situation regarding being victims of violence and their stance to handle such issues was desired to find out in this study.

2. Method and material

2.1 Objective of the Study

This study investigated the vulnerabilities and challenges regarding violence that the transgender community in Punjab, Pakistan is exposed to, and identified their understanding about violence, their coping strategies and their awareness on TPPA.

2.2. Instruments of study

The instruments employed for the study were two focused group discussions (FGD) from the population under study.

Data collection was possible with the help of a community based organization KSS Lahore.

2.3 Focused Group Discussions

Focused group discussions were organized in Lahore. The venue used to be a safe space, like a community drop-in center of KSS. The participants were sampled using snowball methodology. The minimum age for all participants was set at 18 years. A minimum of 10 participants took part in each FGD. The discussion was moderated by a moderator, while a second researcher

Volunteer recorded the discussion and took notes where necessary. The discussion was guided by the major themes of mainly focused on gender based violence against TG community in Punjab, Pakistan.

Informed consent was taken by all participants prior to initiating the discussion.

2.4 Geographical coverage

FGDs have been conducted in Lahore Punjab.

3. Results

3.1. Awareness about violence

All the participants under study were unaware about the definition of violence and its types. When they were asked about their understanding about violence, they were not clear that what the actual meaning of the word violence was. They used different words to explain their perception like zulm, ziadti, Harassment, beating, mentally torture, najaiz kaam and jealousy.

3.2. Victims of violence

Participants in this study are currently living with their communities, families, giryas or independently. On asking about being the victim of violence, all of them said that all of them had to face violence either by the families or society.

Nisha said that she was kidnapped by a group of men. They physically tortured her and threw acid on her face. She tried to protect her face with hands and in that struggle; her hands were burnt with acid.

Zakia said that she was threatened by a group of men. They demanded her to have sex with them.

Niko said that once she was going back to her house after finishing a

dance function. She was forced to have sex with three men at a time.

Gia said that she was beaten bitterly by men just because she refused them to have sex with them.

There was not even a single participant who had not faced the violence in her life.

3.3. Impact of violence

Impact of violence on each community member was severe and difficult to handle. When this question was asked, they replied that they could not find any solution of the torture on their bodies as well as on their mind. Sometimes, they blamed themselves to be a victim of violence. Sometimes they suffer from severe depression and sometimes they harm themselves because they could not take revenge. All of them replied that sometimes it took months to recover from that situation and to start normal life again.

3.4. Coping strategies.

A vast majority of the community was reluctant to contact police or other relevant departments for seeking justice against violence. They think that the end result of every dispute was only adjustment with the abuser, sometimes by taking money or sometimes by forgiving the abuser.

All of the participants replied that first of all they contact their gurus and act accordingly and after that they share with close friends to get catharsis and support. There was not concept of reporting the case legally.

3.5. Awareness on TPPA

Only two community members (12%) were aware of TPPA, but they were not aware of each section of the act. They just knew that there was an act that was passed in their favor.

A large number of community members were still unaware of the act. When they were asked about the act, they neither knew about it, nor had any interest to know because they thought that their guru could solve such cases and they didn't have to report to police.