



# Holistic Assessment of Safety & Care needs of Transgender people in Punjab - Pakistan

Analytical Report 2025



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## Executive Summary

The first group of people surveyed-cutting across early twenties to those well into their fifties-averaged just shy of twenty-five. That young mean number hints at the roster of fresh hopes and old obstacles so common among transgender and gender-diverse Pakistanis.

Most of the replies came straight out of Multan. A good spill also trickled in from Vehari, Sargodha, Lahore, and Bahawalpur, pinning the story to southern and central Punjab almost by accident.

Academically, plenty of voices stopped at Intermediate or Matric, yet a fair slice waved postgraduate certificates as proof the odds can be beaten. A few still confessed never sitting inside a classroom, proof that old educational walls have hardly cracked.

Many dwell with a guru or under the Dera canopy, the time-honored safety mesh for South Asian hijras. Some bunk at home with blood relatives, others pay rent and live solo, showing just how mixed acceptance is a norm.

## Demographic Overview

The participant profile assembled for this study sheds light on the day-to-day realities and hurdles faced by transgender and gender-diverse people in several parts of Pakistan. The 93 individuals who completed the questionnaire represent a lively mosaic that cuts across age, home district, educational background, and household arrangement.

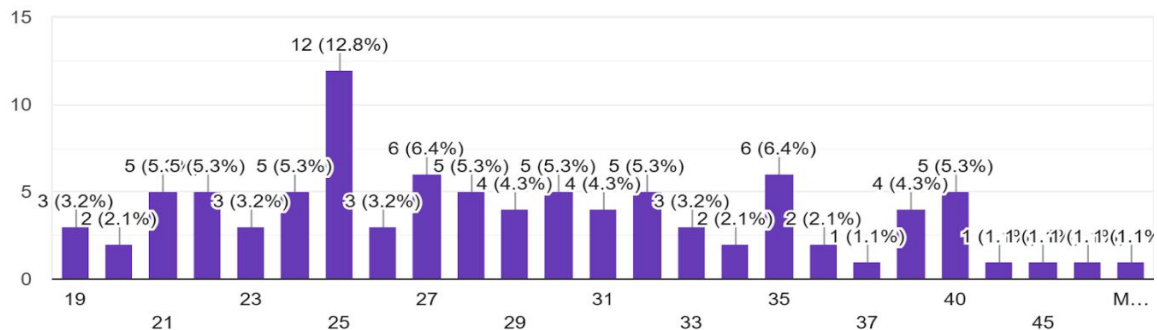
## Age Distribution

There are voices in their early twenties alongside those in their fifties and older, a reminder that gender-related questions touch people at many points along the lifespan. The median age hovers in the mid-twenties, signaling a window when schooling, job entry, mental wellness, and neighborhood safety all command urgent attention. Because that demographic is still trying to carve out a secure niche in society, programs aimed at young adults will need to stay front and center for the foreseeable future.



## Age

94 responses



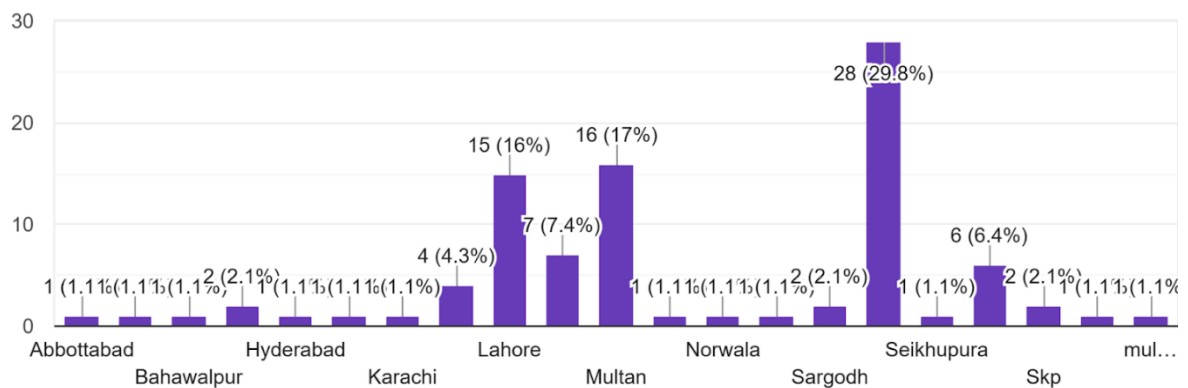
## Geographical Spread

A large share of the survey replies arrived from Sargodha; a Punjab's city steeped in conservative mores yet riddled with socio-political paradoxes. Close behind were respondents from Multan and Bahawalpur. Lahore, as the provinces bustling metropolitan hub, stands in sharp contrast to the smaller centers where community networks and public services tend to be thinner on the ground.

That the issues facing transgender residents cropped up in both Lahore and less famous towns alike underscores the need for policy makers to work out separate, place-sensitive solutions for urban enclaves and semi-rural districts.

## City

94 responses



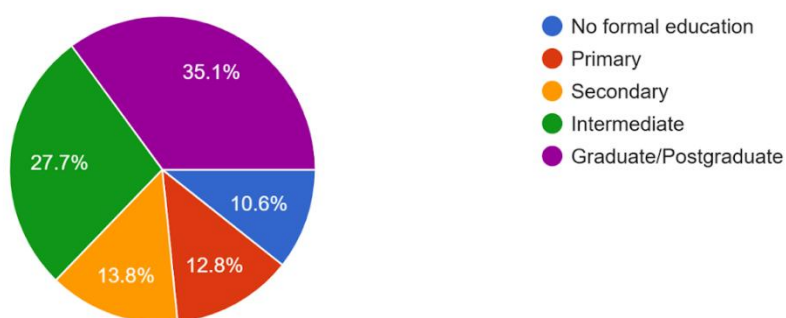


## Educational Attainment

The backgrounds of survey participants reveal a wide spectrum of schooling. A solid share placed their highest credential at the Intermediate or Matriculation level-roughly the 10th or 12th grade-by national standards. A surprising number still reported post-graduate degrees, testimony to the grit of those who navigate social bias while chasing advanced diplomas. In stark relief, some respondents admitted to no formal training at all, exposing a long-standing hole in enrolment and retention. That contrast demands policy-makers act, adding evening classes, adult-literacy campaigns, and trade courses that can level the playing field for trans and gender-diverse learners.

### Education Level:

94 responses



## Living arrangements

Decisions about residence often reveal deeper currents in gender identity and family life. Many survey participants reported sharing quarters with a guru or residing in a dera-a time-honored shelter for South Asian hijra communities. Such a setup can supply not only lodging but also informal guardianship and street-smart advice. At the same time, leaning on the dera system hints at a hard reality: most respondents described being cut off from birth families and the larger social world. A smaller number claimed to stay under the same roof as biological relatives, and while that sounds hopeful, it rarely guarantees real acceptance. Some people rent their own rooms or crash with friends, a choice that signals either hard-won independence or a shaky existence on the periphery. Whichever arrangement prevails; the daily grind usually locks individuals into cycles of money dependence, loneliness, or enduring personal safety worries.

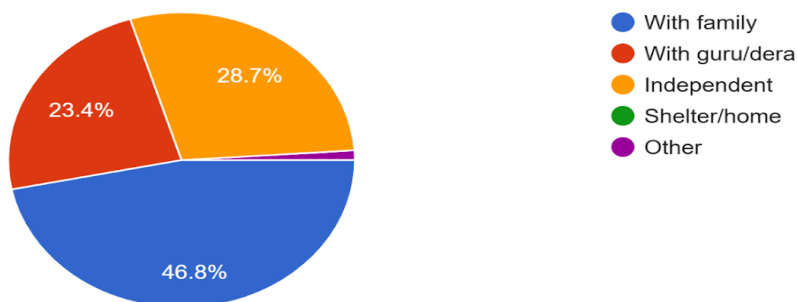
The transgender community now under review is ethnically mixed, frequently migratory, and noticeably adept at coping with long-standing economic and institutional obstacles. Families range from newcomers in temporary housing to pensioners who have lived here for decades, and their uneven levels of schooling and financial stability demand sharpened public programs.



A census snapshot like this does more than fill a table; it sets the stage for the larger conversation about crime rates, clinic shortage, therapy deserts, civil rights literacy, and neighbor-to-neighbor connection that the report examines next.

### Living Arrangement:

94 responses



## Safety & Security

Several recent surveys point to a disturbing streak of insecurity that transgender and gender-diverse people navigate every single day. A large fraction of those who answered the questions said they had been physically assaulted solely because their gender presentation did not conform to prevailing norms, underscoring the immediate danger that can accompany simply living in one's own skin. The episodes of brutality are not flukes scattered here and there but settle into a wider climate of menace and exclusion. Given that violence is mirrored by persistent intimidation, many of the individuals interviewed stated they almost never feel safe even in the neighborhoods they call home-neighborhoods that ought to offer refuge and a sense of belonging.

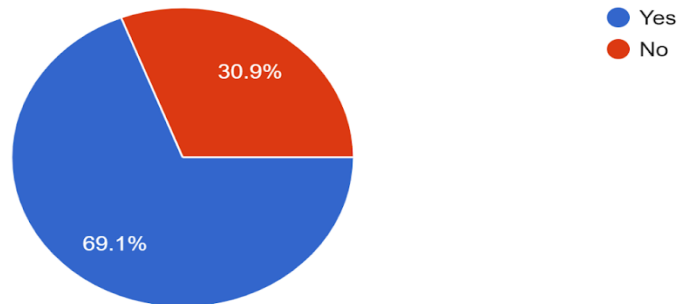
### Many faced physical violence due to gender identity

A disturbing number of people report having been punched, shoved, or kicked simply because someone guessed the wrong thing about their gender. The assaults range from quick street confrontations to organized beatings inside their own communities. Children are not spared; young people hear slurs on the playground and a few days later find themselves barred from a bus or forced out of a restaurant. Those same patterns keep reappearing in adulthood, turning the discrimination into a life-long chore rather than an occasional setback. Police officers and clinic staff often shrug off these cases, so victims learn not to mention them at all. After a while the constant threat chips away at sleep, at confidence, at the small courage it takes to walk down the block.



Have you ever experienced physical violence due to your gender identity?

94 responses

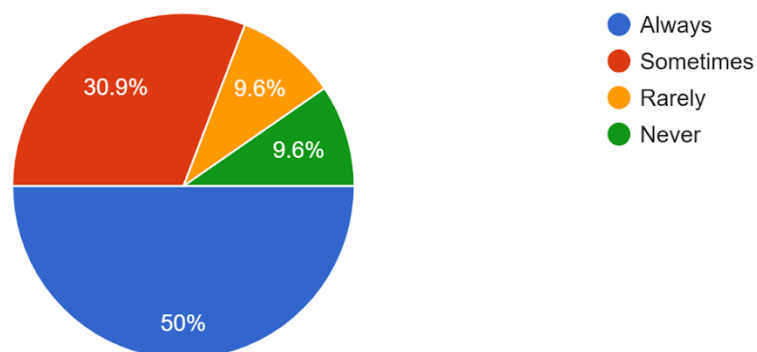


#### Persistent sense of in-security in neighborhood and transit corridors

Although outright physical assault is never far from anyone underground mind, the more insidious worry is simply not belonging where one ought to belong. Areas that ought to double as home turf-flats galleries, corner shops, the sidewalk-plus should feel versatile, forgiving. More than a few voices mentioned being eyeballed, jostled, or outright followed during the errand run that doubles as an evening stroll.

In the last 12 months, have you felt safe in your community?

94 responses

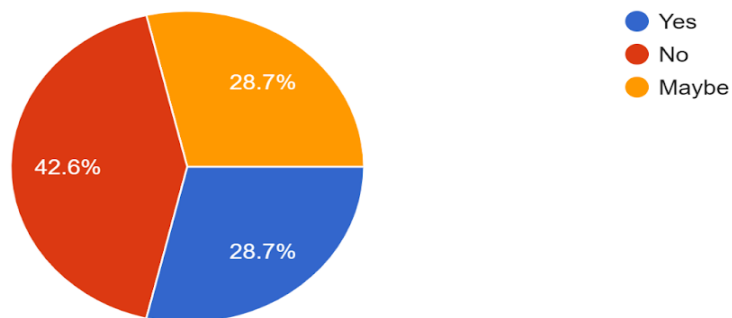




Buses and trams amplify the problem: sliding doors shut quickly, but unease never quite clears the threshold. Harsh glances, missing gender-neutral seating, and casual jeers sprinkle routine commutes with judgment. When movement itself weighs that heavily, choosing whether to chase a job posting, a lecture hall, or an open clinic desk becomes a math problem nobody wants to solve. The drift toward isolation then inches closer to permanent, and the spiral tightens on people already outside the ring.

### Do you feel safe while commuting or using public transportation?

94 responses



### Most know where to report threats, yet insecurity is common

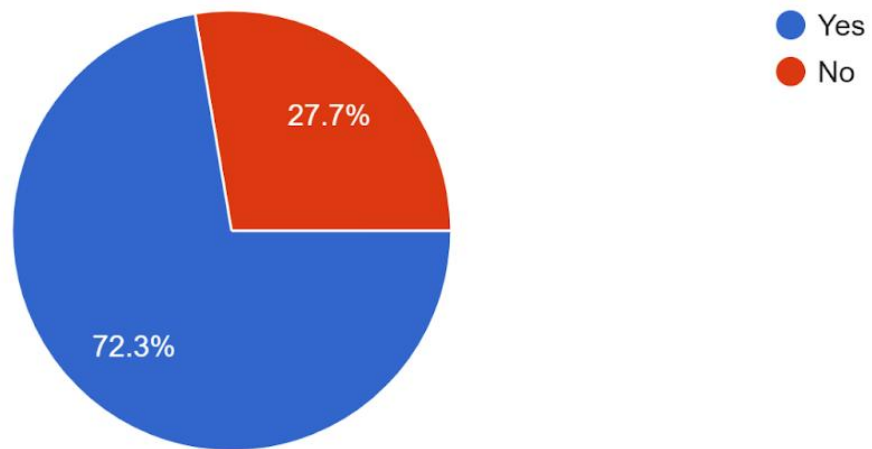
This survey of residents shows that a solid majority can recite the hotline numbers and office addresses where threats can be filed. Even so, the act of stepping forward often stalls at the level of intention. Many participants spoke of lingering insecurity that simply will not lift, no matter how clear the reporting procedures appear on paper. Awareness feels almost like a cruel consolation prize when trust in the system is weak. Several interviewees mentioned a fear of ridicule, of officers asking them why they let things reach that point, or of silence settling over their statements once the door closes.

Others worried that the very act of filing might invite retaliation from the person they name. Because of those anxieties, complaints drift onto social media threads or are confided to relatives over dinner, leaving official logs nearly empty while fear remains palpable.



## Do you know where to report safety threats or violence?

94 responses



### Mental Health

Mental health surfaced almost immediately as the single most urgent issue for transgender and gender-diverse people in the survey. Respondents described living with constant psychological pressure from social rejection, violence, and everyday marginalization. Although psychologists regard emotional well-being as fundamental to good health, cultural attitudes and institutional policies still overlook it for many whose gender identity stretches beyond the traditional binary. Nearly every participant mentioned an acute shortage of safe spaces where they could voice feelings without fear of judgment or reprisal. When they sought formal therapy, they often encountered long waitlists and, in some reported cases, outright discrimination from clinicians. The bullets below summarize the central patterns of distress that emerged from participants narratives.

### Emotional Affirmation Generally Absent

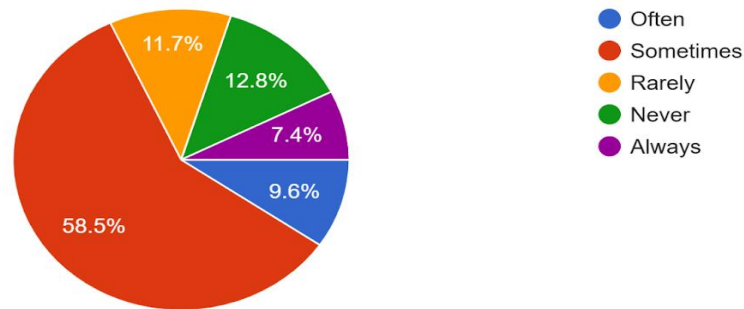
A significant share of survey participants reported that they seldom, if ever, receive the sort of emotional support one might expect from friends or coworkers. Transgender and gender-diverse people are hit hardest by this gap, since many already face dismissal or rejection from family circles and wider communities. For a good number, even the most private conversation is off-limits because the room simply isn't safe or affirming. In settings where talk about mental well-being carries a stigma, being transgender tacks on yet another layer of silence. The fallout shows up as chronic loneliness, growing internalized shame, and eroding reserves of resilience, all of which leave an individual exposed to the next round of stress or trauma and to grim mental-health statistics.





How often do you feel emotionally supported by others?

94 responses



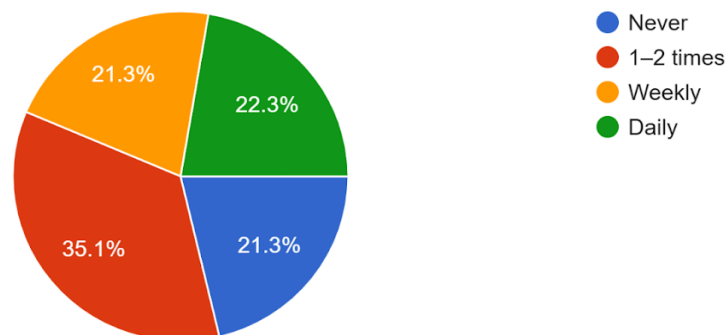
#### High rates of anxiety, depression, hopelessness

Anxiety, depression, and profound hopelessness recur in the testimonies collected from a diverse cohort. The respondents report that these feelings do not drift in and out; instead, they settle in and blur the line between work, home, and personal care. Long-standing discrimination, public shaming, and outright threats leave little room for peace, and steady exclusion from schools and jobs tightens the pressure.

Many of the same individuals lack simple outlets-counseling, trusted friends, or community groups-so the mental load stacks higher until it simply wears them out. Psychologists warn that hopelessness is more than a feeling; it is the warning light on the dashboard that flashes just before a crisis erupts, whether in self-harm, suicide, or both.

In the past month, how often have you felt anxious, depressed, or hopeless?

94 responses

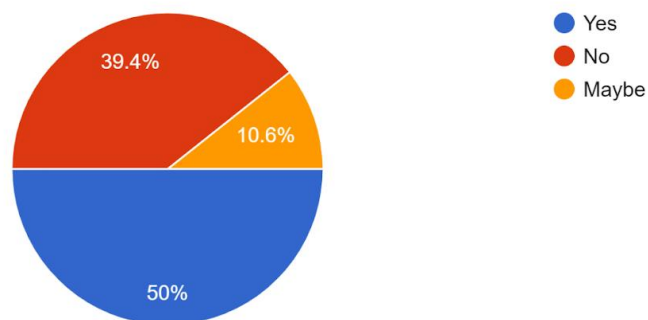




### Limited access to mental health services

Real barriers block transgender people from finding qualified therapy, even when they clearly need it. Many survey participants admit they simply cannot figure out where to start looking for a clinician. Others abandon the search because sliding-scale fees still consume money they do not have. Public clinics often promise low cost, yet the intake staff who greet clients may not recognize basic gender terminology. Social workers in those same settings might remain indifferent or even openly hostile. A shortage of specialists who know transition-related concerns compounds the problem; when education on gender identity is missing, trust evaporates. In this environment of scarcity and unease, most individuals either remain quiet about their struggles or vent to friends who lack formal credentials.

Do you have access to counseling or mental health support?  
94 responses



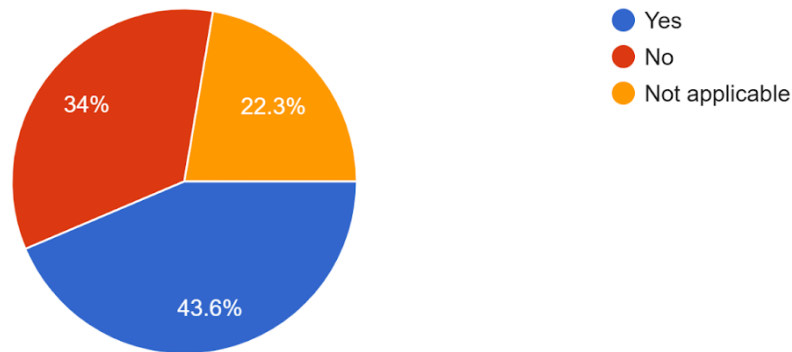
### Discrimination by providers

A troubling number of transgender patients still meet discrimination at the clinic door. Some patients who finally book a therapy hour describe being misgendered or dismissed, and a few even encounter outright hostility. Humiliation like that pulls the foundations out from under any talk-therapy progress. Many people who experience that brand of harm decide never to return, and the emotional toll can linger for decades. The pattern makes a strong case for gender-sensitivity workshops and fresh accountability standards across psychiatric practice.



Have you faced discrimination from mental health service providers?

94 responses



## Healthcare Access

Access to healthcare sits squarely within the list of rights most people assume are guaranteed, yet transgender and gender-diverse patients encounter hurdles that keep them outside the examination room. Surveys show the barriers are rarely physical alone; entire waiting rooms can feel emotionally hostile. Many respondents say the possibility of being misgendered-or worse, ridiculed-stops them from booking even routine check-ups. When shame trumps necessity, illnesses linger untreated and depression deepens, compounding the very distress people hoped to leave behind. Both institutional red tape and individual bias emerge again and again as culprits blocking smoother health journeys.

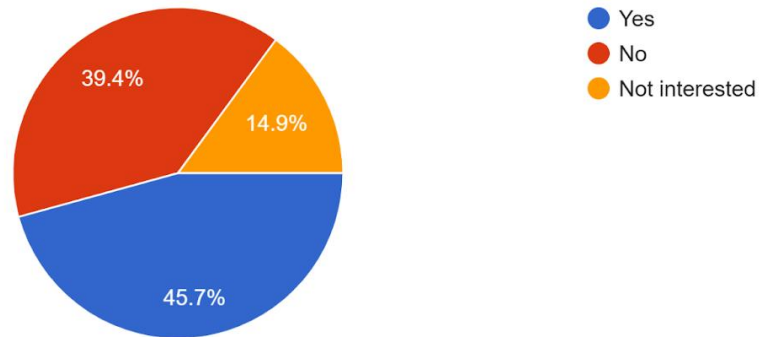
### Limited Access to Gender-Affirming Care

Several participants point out that life-changing services such as hormone prescriptions or gender-confirming surgery remain almost mythical in their home towns. A handful of surgeons may advertise in regional directories, yet their offices exist hundreds of miles-and several bus transfers-away. Costs multiply once travel, lodging, and time off work enter the equation. Even a simple consultation can land on a calendar six months out, by which time some patients have second-guessed their readiness. Misinformation spreads quickly in tight-knit communities, and that hearsay often dissuades people before they ever pick up the phone.



Are you able to access gender-affirming healthcare services (e.g., hormones, surgery)?

94 responses



The end result is that a sizable share of transgender individuals turns to unregulated or makeshift practices in an attempt to alter their bodies; those practices almost invariably carry grave, sometimes lethal, health consequences.

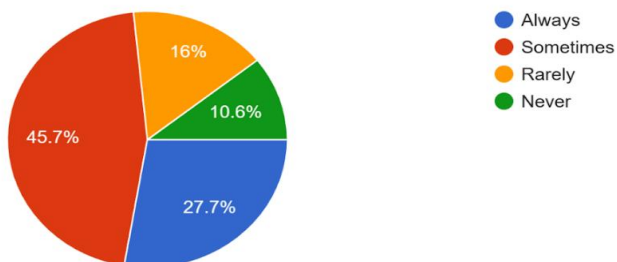
### Disrespect in clinics and denial of common care

The clinics intended to provide help often become sites of open disrespect. Participants recounted being intentionally misgendered, ridiculed, or outright ejected as soon as staff learned their gender identity; some were dismissed before basic treatment could begin. Even a single humiliating encounter can erode trust in the entire medical system.

That shattered trust, coupled with the immediate emotional injury, leaves many people reluctant to seek care for problems that later become emergencies.

Do you feel safe and respected when visiting hospitals/clinics?

94 responses

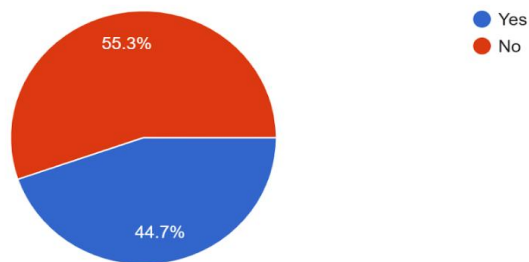




### Lack of CNICs with Correct Gender Markers

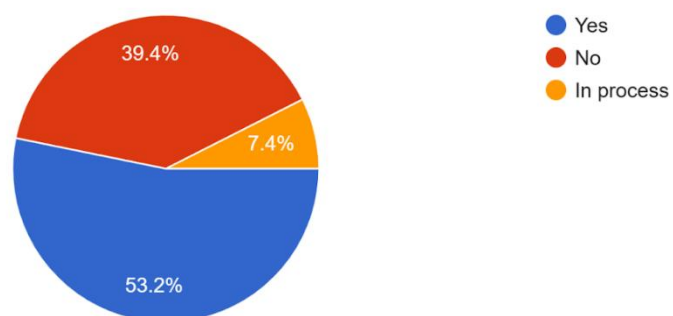
Interviews repeatedly reveal that a surprising share of the community still holds a CNIC that does not match their lived gender. In clinics where staff scan identity cards before treatment, that mismatch trips up the entire appointment. When the card says one thing and the person says another, misgendering often slips in, and some patients simply walk away reluctant to argue.

Have you ever been denied healthcare due to your gender identity?  
94 responses



Public programs that target a specific gender can stay just out of reach until the ID is fixed and the paperwork rarely looks easy from the outside. Even when the law allows a change, lines at the registry, rumor about who will see the file, and plain old embarrassment keep most people from stepping through the door to ask.

Do you have a CNIC with your correct gender marker?  
94 responses





## Legal Awareness

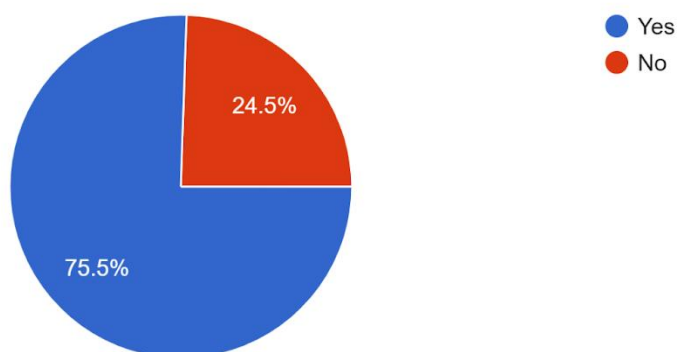
Legal safeguards undergird the dignity and equal treatment of marginalized communities, and few groups express that need more acutely than Pakistan's transgender and gender-diverse citizens. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018 stands as a milestone statute, granting the formal right to self-identify and opening doors to employment and public services. Yet no law can protect if its intended beneficiaries remain in the dark about its provisions or if officials tasked with enforcement ignore them. Interviews conducted for this review unearthed a nagging disconnection between Islamabad's legislative blueprint and the day-to-day lives of most transgender people. Respondents reported sporadic police assistance, daunting barriers to judicial redress, and, too often, blunt discrimination masquerading as custom or policy. The list that follows elaborates some of the recurring pain points.

### Awareness of the Trans Protection Act (2018)

A sizable share of participants expressed having heard of the Trans Protection Act but could recall only fragments of its text. Most flatly admitted they had never read the statute and even fewer knew where to locate a copy in Urdu or regional languages. That level of familiarity—there one minute, forgotten the next—underscores the unevenness of outreach efforts that were supposed to accompany the law's passage. Many interviewees live far beyond major urban centers and, by their own account, rarely encounter lawyers or activists with the time to explain their rights. Without baseline knowledge, they cannot challenge mistreatment or demand accountability from hospitals, schools, and government offices that still operate on outdated assumptions about gender identity.

### Are you aware of the Trans Protection Act (2018)?

94 responses



Even now, few people know the law exists, so its lofty promise of protection feels more like a headline than a lifeline.

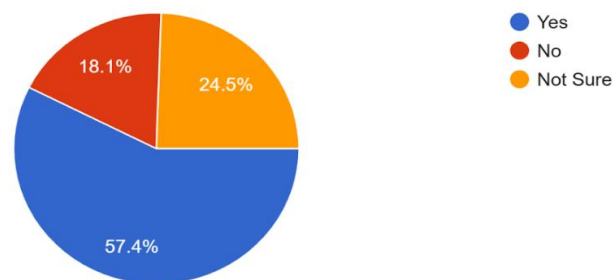


### Lack of trust in law enforcement

Many transgender people simply do not trust the police. Surveys keep showing that skepticism, and the trend holds even among those who can quote their own legal rights. When they call for help, they usually recall being brushed off, blamed, or outright ridiculed, sometimes with an officer joining in the mockery. Because of that history, uniforms that were meant to be reassuring often look like another source of danger. The end result is quiet: crimes go unreported, wounds go untreated, and justice slips away almost before it can be measured.

Do you believe law enforcement protects transgender individuals?

94 responses



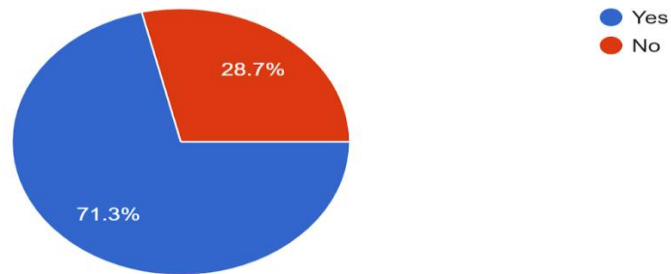
### Frequent Legal Discrimination

A striking number of survey participants indicated that bias followed them even into courthouses and police emblems. Some recounted court clerks sneering at their pronouns, while others reported having their complaints literally laughed out of a station house. Obtaining a basic ID card such as a CNIC often turns into a weeklong ordeal, because wrong working names or mismatched gender markers trigger red tape no one seems willing to waive. When courts do finally hear a violence claim, procedural delays stretch the calendar beyond memory, whispering to victims that their injuries matter last. That combination of snubs quietly locks transgender people out of the very legal shields meant to protect all citizens, leaving them unseen, unempowered, and still waiting for redress.



Have you experienced discrimination from police or legal institutions?

94 responses



## Employment & Financial Status

Transgender and gender-diverse people in Pakistan cite independence from outside support as one of their simplest yet hardest goals. Steady income, however, still flickers just beyond reach for most. This survey gathered voices rather than stock statistics, and the verdict is blunt: openings are rare, pay is tiny, and bias colors nearly every doorway. Poverty hangs around like a wet season, soaked into housing, clinics, banks, and classrooms alike. Economic pressure keeps many tangled in arrangements that feel safe only on paper.

### High Unemployment

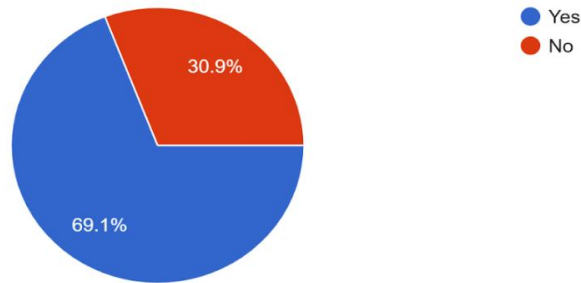
Almost half the people interviewed claimed outright unemployment, a number that barely shifts whether an applicant can quote an M.B.A. or a middle-school diploma. Formal recruiters dodge any name that hints at difference, while informal bosses slip back into cheaper, hassle-free hires. With no lasting contracts in sight, some hand out plastic bags at traffic lights, others turn mobile applications into gambling lanes, and a few barter safety for questionable nights. That juggling act drains self-worth, thins social ties, and prunes the rough edges of dignity until almost nothing remains.





Are you currently employed?

94 responses



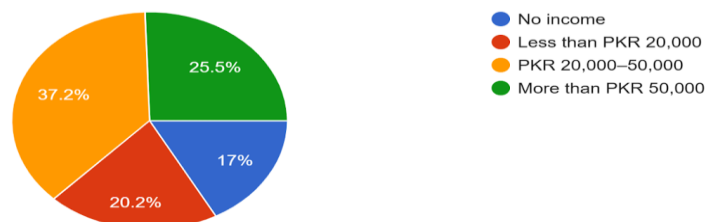
### Most earn below PKR 20,000

The bulk of survey participants who reported regular earnings live on less than PKR 20,000 a month, roughly USD 70 at current rates. Such paychecks tend to arrive irregularly and are frequently tied to seasonal work that offers no guarantees.

Even a steady stream of this income barely covers rent, transport, medicine, and the occasional emergency, let alone leave room for savings or skills training. Without a significant lift in wages, the downward pressure of poverty stays in place and keeps upward mobility at a distance.

Monthly income:

94 responses



### Financially dependence

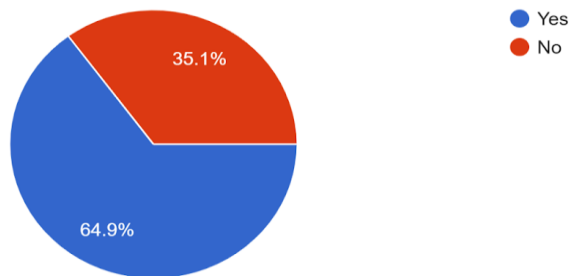
A large number of respondents described themselves as economically tethered to someone else-whether a guru, an extended family member, or a local credit circle. This reliance can strip away personal agency and, in some cases, expose the individual to patron-client dynamics that dictate life choices.

For residents of deras or followers of a guru, even small financial calls often require permission, crippling long-range planning. Part-timers already juggling erratic shifts find that they can barely stand alone, so dependency loops back around and reasserts itself.



Do you feel financially independent?

94 responses

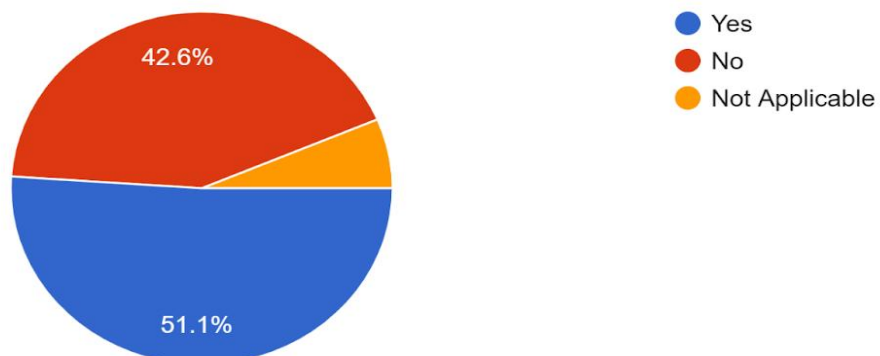


### Persistent biases on the job

Transgender workers still face entrenched bias the moment they step through a company's door. Focus groups were filled with accounts of being mocked, misgendered, or openly harassed by peers and, in some instances, by managers who should know better. A number of applicants said they were told the position had been filled the instant hiring staff learned their gender identity. Even those who survived the initial round were often shoved into roles far beneath their résumé and paid at the bottom end of the scale. Altogether, that narrow-minded culture pushes many qualified trans-people out of the labor market and drives others to scale back their career ambitions.

Have you faced workplace discrimination?

94 responses





## Community Support & Climate Impact

Transgender people frequently turn to friends, chosen families, and neighborhood collectives for basic safety and emotional validation when mainstream institutions fall short. These makeshift networks can be a lifeline, yet even they are set against a surprisingly brittle backdrop. Numerous contributors described feeling cut off because calm, welcoming places simply do not exist, and they still worry that schools, clinics, and police offices will not have their backs.

Extreme weather only deepens the problem. Rising tides, record heat, and burst storm drains lock some communities out of emergency aid and leave relief agencies wondering who is missing from their lists. The gap between social neglect and climate crisis, in other words, turns day-to-day living into a precarious balancing act.

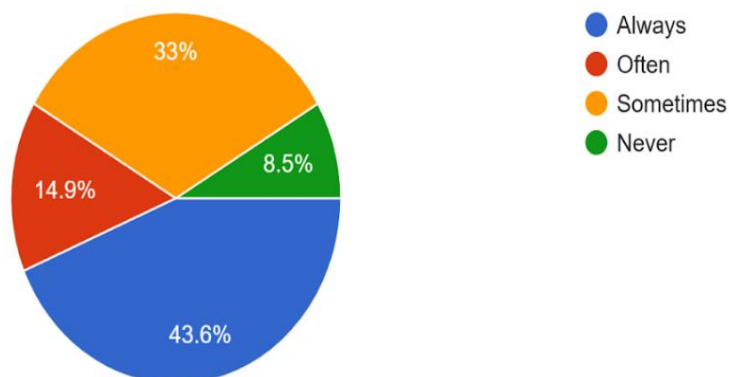
### A persistent lack of belonging and limited safe spaces.

Many respondents said they never quite fit in—either at home, in the office, or even on the block where they grew up. Neighbors sometimes stare, families draw sharp lines, and public services can look polite while basically ignoring their needs. Community centers, drop-in lounges, and nighttime shelters that welcome transgender patrons are thin on the ground or completely absent outside major cities. absence of such anchors constantly nudges individuals toward silence or secrecy, which in turn raises both mental health risks and physical danger.

The absence of a consistent safe space inevitably erodes mental resilience, restricts access to essential services, and robs communities of their collective strength.

Do you feel a sense of belonging within your community?

94 responses





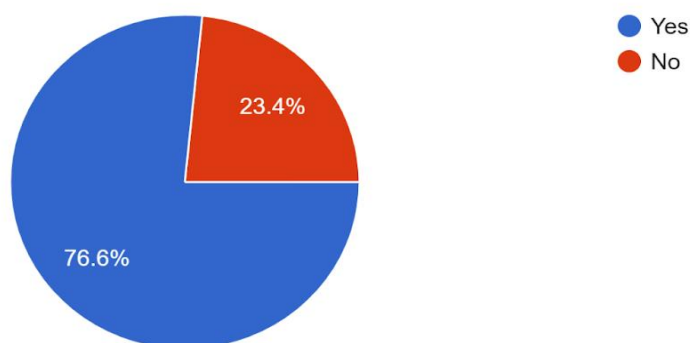
### Some participation in community programs

A handful of respondents mentioned attending neighborhood workshops, yet participation was anything but uniform. Urban neighborhoods usually host the only such events, and even those rely on shaky, short-term funding. Attendees value the pairing of skills training with informal networks of advice and encouragement.

For many would-be participants, however, social stigma, scant outreach, or the simple difficulty of getting there keep them on the sidelines. Transgender leaders themselves have repeatedly called for longer-term initiatives that put their voices front and center in design and day-to-day decision-making.

### Do you participate in any community-led programs?

94 responses



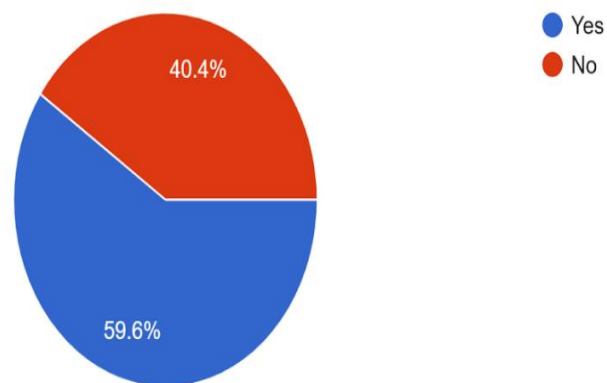
### Affected by climate events

Affected by climate events Many people spoke about losing roofs to flash floods, fleeing unbearable heat, or watching water tanks run dry. Those shocks interrupted rent payments, sliced through harvests, and left clinics short of supplies. For households already skirting the poverty line, one storm can tip the scale into homelessness and hunger. The extra toll of social marginalization and environmental disaster reveals an urgent need for preparedness plans that speak directly to gender-diverse communities.



Were you or your community affected by recent climate events (floods, heatwaves, etc.)?

94 responses

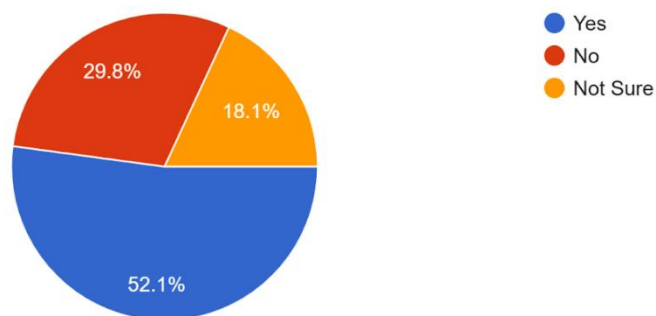


### Largely excluded from relief efforts

Largely excluded from relief efforts Transgender survivors told researchers that official aid often misses them entirely. Bureaucratic hurdles like mismatched ID cards and overt bias at distribution sites keep them shut out. Some camps refuse entry based on outdated eligibility lists or simply look the other way.

Do you believe transgender people are included in climate/disaster relief efforts?

94 responses

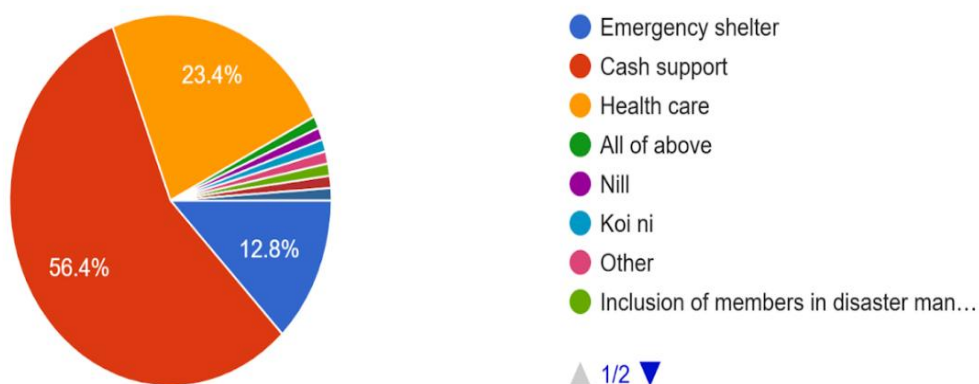


Being left behind in a crisis is both an oversight and a breach of basic rights. Policymakers must rewrite relief protocols so food, shelter, and recovery funds reach everyone, regardless of gender identity.



## What kind of climate support would help you feel safer?

94 responses



## Identified needs

This final section of the evaluation centers on what transgender and gender-diverse people across Pakistan say they want most right now. When survey participants listed their top three priorities, the same few themes cropped up again and again: safe housing, steady work, mental-health support, quality education, reliable healthcare, and protection from violence. Those priorities mirror the day-to-day exclusion, fear, and administrative indifference many in the community endure. What follows is a closer look at each of the needs respondents flagged.

### ▪ Safe Housing

Housing appeared first on nearly every shortlist. Countless transgender people drift through unstable rooms, crash with a guru, rent from a landlord who suddenly changes the terms, or find shelter in makeshift camps that lack even the simplest utilities. Without a door that locks and a landlord who is not hostile, accessing school, a stable job, or a clinic becomes a second-class chore. Many interviewees asked for gender-inclusive refuges, transitional spots, or long-term leases where eviction threats live outside the fine print.

### ▪ Employment

Gaining steady, decent work sits at the very top of nearly every wish list shared by focus-group participants. A stubborn combination of high unemployment and casual underemployment has pushed too many people into informal street markets, begging bowls, or sex work. Each respondent in the room pointed, sometimes with visible anger, to the need for vocational programs that welcome everyone, gender quotas that actually change hiring patterns, and workplaces that pay a living wage without subjecting employees to ridicule. For most, a regular paycheck stands as the clearest shortcut from raw survival to dignity, independence, and genuine social acceptance.



#### ■ **Mental health services**

Chronic anxiety, flashback-driven trauma, and low-grade depression swirl through the lives of participants until something breaks. Access to therapy that doesn't cost a month's rent and respects a person's chosen identity is still the exception, not the rule. People also mention community-based well-being workshops, peer-support circles, and simple emotional-first aid that friends can learn overnight. Tackling mental health care this way is not just good for the individual; it quietly stitches together stronger, more self-reliant neighborhoods.

#### ■ **Education**

Several of the people we spoke with had either never set foot in a classroom or had been pushed out by bullying, constant taunts, or the simple impossibility of paying tuition. A sizable number imagined a second chance in adult-literacy night classes or short workshops where they could pick up practical trades and re-enter the job market. When schools commit to treating every learner with fairness and dignity, the cycle of poverty and exclusion begins to weaken.

#### ■ **Healthcare**

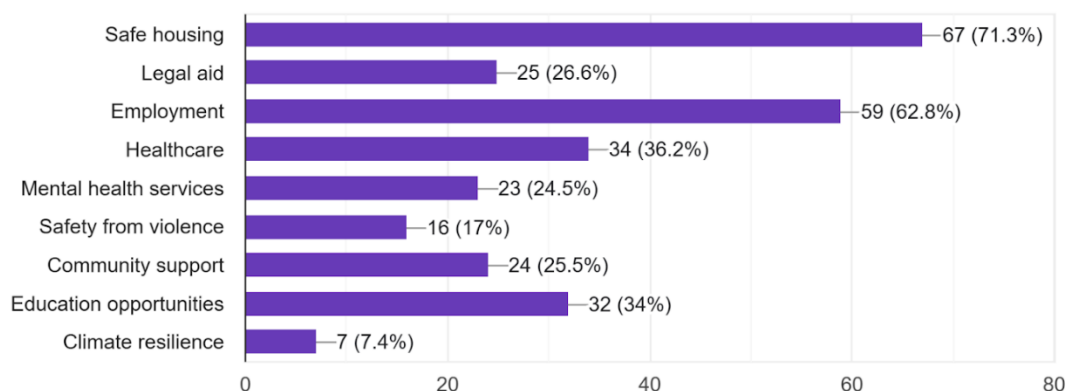
Almost everyone reported the same worry: clinics that feel safe, affordable, and genuinely respectful. Some spoke plainly about needing gender-affirming care, whether that means hormones, surgery, or just a receptionist who uses the right name. Too many stories mentioned a shrugging nurse, a front-desk bill they could not comprehend, or plain refusal once a medical form revealed a transgender status. Clearer training in basic cultural competence could prevent most of that.

#### ■ **Protection from violence**

On a raw, day-to-day level, fear for bodily safety ranked as the loudest demand of all. Family fists, sidewalk slurs, and in some cases uniformed officers met participants at every turn. Many insisted that the existing anti-violence laws be enforced, not shelved, and that officers as well as community leaders actually study those statutes. They want real places to file complaints; places they trust will not compound the harm.

What are your top 3 urgent needs? (Select 3 only)

94 responses





## Recommendations

Emerging from both the recent assessment and the candid feedback gathered from transgender and gender-diverse individuals, four interrelated domains beckon immediate action. The suggestions that follow are meant to offer policymakers, civil-society leaders, funding bodies, and field partners a roadmap for crafting responses that are genuinely rights-based, inclusive, and relevant to the lived experience of trans communities.

- **Expand mental-health support**

Community advocates insist that accessible, income-sensitive mental-health care must be one of the first investments a responsive program makes. That goal demands intensive training for therapists, nurses, and social workers in transgender-affirming techniques, as well as the creation of neighborhood counseling hubs where stigma fades. Funders should also consider peer-led recovery circles, informal emotional-first-aid workshops, and weekend support groups, since ordinary people often make the safest places for emotional healing. Prioritizing psychological resilience will not only protect individual well-being; it will lay the groundwork for wider community empowerment.

- **Improve healthcare and legal protections**

Healthcare systems are in urgent need of clear non-discrimination policies that cover every point of patient contact. Personnel training on cultural competence should be updated periodically so front-line staff learn the latest practices in gender-affirming care. On the legal side, compliance with the Trans Protection Act of 2018 can no longer be a paperwork exercise; it must be matched by public awareness campaigns and real accountability for agencies that fall short. Financial backing for legal-aid groups can help transgender people contest violations and demand that their voices shape reforms in the justice sector.

- **Create safe spaces and shelters**

Permanent safety begins with housing flexible enough to welcome individuals of any gender identity. Municipal governments, national agencies, and local charities can partner to open shelters that include private sleeping quarters, gender-neutral restrooms, and trauma-informed staff. Transitional units should also offer basic health screenings, job-readiness workshops, and referrals for legal assistance. Beyond residential programs, community centers can be refurbished to host support groups, skill shares, and drop-in resource hours where transgender people meet without fear.

- **Include transgender persons in climate and employment initiatives**

In the world of climate policy and job creation, transgender persons often appear as an afterthought. Formal employment, disaster relief, and training programs leave them out, multiplying their risk when storms or recessions hit. Authorities could change that by actively recruiting transgender participants and inviting their representatives to planning tables. Early warnings, supply deliveries, and post-crisis cash grants almost never reach the sidelined, yet doing so could spare thousands from deeper hardship.

- **Facilitate CNIC gender marker corrections and legal awareness**

Legal papers remain a stubborn bottleneck: many trans people cannot update the gender marker on their CNIC without facing lengthy delays or outright hostility. If ministries streamline forms, nudge office staff to drop the stigma, and budget for community-based legal aid, the logjam would ease. Awareness drives that explain how the small shift in identity cards powers access to jobs, polling booths, and healthcare would





reinforce that administrative fix. Recognition on paper is ordinary for most citizens; for marginalized communities it can be lifesaving.

## Conclusion

A recent holistic evaluation paints a stark picture of the hardships faced by transgender and gender-diverse people in Pakistan. Systemic exclusion, overt social stigma, and piecemeal institutional responses have combined to create an environment in which mere survival often feels like a daily victory. Although the 2018 Trans Protection Act offers a promising legal framework, the gap between what the statute guarantees and what officials deliver remains painfully wide. Survey data confirm that safe housing, stable employment, and non-discriminatory healthcare are still beyond the reach of most respondents. Mental health deteriorates under unrelenting stress, and public services often shut their doors even when climate emergencies strike. Respondents insist that the story does not end on a note of despair. They picture streets where they can walk home without fear, workplaces that honor their dignity, clinics that treat them as equals, and courts that enforce their rights. Realizing that vision depends on more than well-crafted policies; it calls for genuine funding, community participation, and a relentless commitment to uphold their humanity in every corner of public life. Coordinated action, sustained over time, could close the yawning chasm between legal promise and everyday reality.