



RESEARCH PAPER

**Addressing Workplace Violence Against Transgender Individuals
Ensuring Inclusive And Safe Environments**

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates workplace violence against transgender people in Pakistan through an extensive literature review and large-scale empirical study. The background outlines the discrimination and marginalization transgender individuals face in society and employment. Workplaces are rife with bullying, harassment, and assault which negatively impacts job performance, satisfaction, and mental health. Barriers to justice include police mistreatment and lack of legal protections for transgender victims. A survey of 250 transgender respondents reveals shockingly high rates of unchecked sexual (70%), physical (60%), and psychological (80%) abuse over the past year. Most victims do not report violence due to indifference and harassment from authorities. Abuse causes severe depression, anxiety, trauma, and suicidal ideation. The data shows differences in violence rates by region, age, and socioeconomic status. There is an urgent need for legal reform to prohibit discrimination, increased police training and accountability, government-funded mental health services, coalitions between advocacy groups, and public education campaigns to address this systemic human rights crisis. The paper provides concrete policy recommendations based on the data to alleviate suffering and ensure transgender individuals in Pakistan have their basic rights upheld.

Keywords: Bullying Harassment, Discrimination, Inclusive Environments, Marginalization, Safe Workplaces, Transgender Individuals, Workplace Violence

Introduction

Human rights groups, academics, and officials in Pakistan have begun to pay more attention in recent years to the struggles of transgender people there (Jain, & DasGupta, 2021). Many transgender persons experience prejudice, social marginalisation, and sometimes physical violence because of the negative stereotypes attached to their community. Workplace violence stands out as one of the most critical problems in need of urgent attention and thorough remedies. The purpose of this research is to examine methods of creating secure and welcoming workplaces for transgender people in Pakistan and to shed light on the extent and type of violence against them there.

There is a sizeable transgender population in Pakistan, a country known for its cultural richness and historical depth (Ahmad et al., 2023). Transgender people, known as "Hijras" in South Asia, have traditionally filled a variety of cultural and religious positions in the region. However, transgender individuals in Pakistan continue to face societal biases, legal ambiguities, and institutional impediments that limit their access to basic rights and opportunities despite their long history of existence in the country.

According to the 2022 Human Rights Practises Reports from across the world, transgender people in Pakistan face a plethora of discriminatory and hostile environments,

including the workplace, where rules are still unclear and punishments are lax compared to other types of abuse. Since perpetrators of violence are rarely held accountable due to loose legislation and weak punishments, transgender workers are at risk of abuse and exploitation (Nawaz & Safdar 2023).

Human Rights Watch's World Report 2023 provides fresh evidence of the pervasiveness of violence against transgender persons in Pakistan, noting that women, religious minorities, and transgender people continue to endure violence and discrimination in the workplace, among other places. Persistent acts of violence against transgender people highlight the critical need for focused interventions and regulatory reforms to protect their rights and well-being in the workplace (Maciotti et al., 2023).

A study published in the NCBI found that transgender people in Pakistan face social marginalisation in addition to physical and verbal assault, which drives many of them into commercial sex work. Economic marginalisation, restricted access to education and healthcare, and social stigma all contribute to transgender people's experiences of social exclusion (Bano et al., 2023). Because of this discrimination, they are less likely to find gainful employment and are more likely to be victims of workplace abuse and exploitation.

In order to address the underlying causes of workplace violence against transgender people, it is crucial to empower transgender youth and promote an inclusive culture. Violence and traumatization, according to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), can discourage young transgender individuals in Pakistan from coming out as themselves. To establish a more inclusive and fair society, it is essential to provide transgender adolescents with safe spaces where they can freely express their identities and find support (Campen, 2021).

A multipronged strategy involving legislative changes, public education, and institutional strengthening is required to combat transgender victims of workplace abuse. In order to establish responsibility and guarantee justice for victims, it is crucial to strengthen legislative frameworks to explicitly prohibit discrimination and violence based on gender identity. Transgender people's rights and achievements should be highlighted to dispel myths and prejudice and pave the way for wider social acceptance and participation.

Additionally, transgender people's employability and financial autonomy can be improved through capacity-building projects that teach them marketable skills. Such efforts can help make transgender people less susceptible to workplace violence and exploitation by encouraging economic independence and self-sufficiency.

In conclusion, the introductory section has laid the groundwork for a thorough investigation into transgender victims of workplace violence in Pakistan. In this article, we'll look more closely at the many facets of this problem, including how the law, society, and economy all play a role in making transgender people particularly vulnerable in the workplace. The purpose of this study is to provide transgender people in Pakistan with concrete ideas for creating safe and welcoming workplaces by critically analysing relevant literature, case studies, and policy frameworks. The ultimate objective is to make a meaningful contribution to the continuing conversation about transgender rights and to promote a more just and peaceful world for all people.

Literature Review

Creating inclusive and safe spaces for transgender people to work is an urgent matter in Pakistan that needs to be addressed. According to multiple sources (Abdullah et al., 2012; "Social Exclusion and Mental Health Issues of Transgender Community in Lahore City", 2023; Asghar & Shahzad, 2018; Rashid & Umar, 2022; Abbas, 2021; Malik et al., 2022; Cheema & Jamal, 2022; Butt, 2021; Alam, 2019), transgender people in Pakistan experience

discrimination. Asghar and Shahzad (2018), Rashid and Umar (2022), Abbas (2021), Malik and colleagues (2022), Cheema and Jamal (2022), Butt (2021), and Alam (2019) all point to a lack of knowledge and acceptance of transgender people as a cause of discrimination and violence in Pakistan.

As previously discussed (Rasool et al., 2020; "Diversity and Inclusion Experience of Trans Workers: The Missing Link of Trans-Friendly Environment in Organisations", 2022; Noor et al., 2016; Shaheen et al., 2023) workplace violence and harassment against transgender individuals have a negative effect on their work performance and general well-being. As previously discussed (Rasool et al., 2020; "Diversity and Inclusion Experience of Trans Workers: The Missing Link of Trans-Friendly Environment in Organisations", 2022; Noor et al., 2016; Shaheen et al., 2023), transgender people frequently face bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace, which can lead to decreased job satisfaction, lower work motivation, and reduced work efficiency. Transgender people may be less likely to talk about their problems at work because to the fear of discrimination and stigma, which can have an even more detrimental effect on their productivity at work (Rasool et al., 2020).

Employers must take proactive steps and implement rules to make their workplaces welcoming and safe for transgender employees. Several authors (Shah et al., 2023; Rashid & Umar, 2022; Ali et al., 2021; Redding, 2019; Malik et al., 2022) agree that Pakistan's Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, passed in 2018, is a major step forwards in protecting the rights of transgender people in the country. However, the success of these regulations and rules depends on how well they are carried out and enforced (Rashid & Umar, 2022; Redding, 2019). Employers, employees, and the general public all benefit from learning more about transgender issues, rights, and the value of an inclusive work environment ("Diversity and Inclusion Experience of Trans Workers: The Missing Link of Trans-Friendly Environment in Organisations", 2022; Asghar & Shahzad, 2018; Ali et al., 2021; Cheema & Jamal, 2022; Butt 2021).

Transparency is one example of a job portal specifically designed for transgender people that can help increase work prospects and decrease economic exclusion (Afzal et al., 2021). Transgender people can benefit from these sites by finding employment and advancing their financial security through access to resources, support, and networking possibilities (Afzal et al., 2021).

Workplace violence against transgender people requires a multi-stakeholder response, not only legal and policy changes. Comprehensive policies and programmes cannot be created or implemented without cooperation between government agencies, civil society organisations, employers, and transgender advocacy groups (Yousaf & Schmiede, 2016; Rashid & Umar, 2022; Ali et al., 2021; Malik et al., 2022). Yousaf and Schmiede (2016), Rashid and Umar (2022), Ali et al. (2021), and Malik and colleagues (2022) all stress the need of workplace anti-discrimination measures that are effectively enforced.

Moreover, it is essential to address the underlying cultural attitudes and norms that sustain transgender-specific prejudice and violence. Asghar & Shahzad (2018), Rashid & Umar (2022), Abbas (2021), and Butt (2022) all point to the importance of education, media campaigns, and community involvement activities in combating prejudice and fostering a more inclusive society.

In conclusion, preventing transphobia and promoting inclusive and safe workplaces in Pakistan calls for a multifaceted and thorough strategy. Creating a workplace culture that celebrates diversity, respects the rights of transgender individuals, promotes inclusivity, and ensures safety requires legal safeguards, awareness campaigns, education and training, supportive measures, and collaboration between stakeholders.

Material and Methods

A careful mixed-methods approach was used to learn more about transgender victims of workplace violence in Pakistan. This approach combined qualitative and quantitative research methods to evaluate the efficacy of current policies and interventions and gain insight into the scale, causes, and consequences of workplace violence against transgender people.

Structured Surveys

Structured surveys, which were given to a random sample of 200 transgender workers in Pakistan. In order to analyse the prevalence and patterns of violence statistically, these surveys were carefully constructed to collect data on experiences with discrimination, harassment, and assault.

Analysis of Existing Records

An detailed examination of previously collected data on cases of anti-transgender workplace violence was carried. Quantitative insights into the issue and objective estimates of the occurrence, trends, and results of such instances were made possible by data collected from a wide range of sources, including organisations, law enforcement authorities, and human rights groups.

Economic Modeling

Costs related to transgender victims of workplace violence were estimated using economic modelling tools. To demonstrate the real-world effects of such violence, researchers examined things like lost productivity, attrition, healthcare costs, and missed opportunities for both individuals and businesses.

In-depth Interviews

Two qualitative methods were employed to collect data on transgender workers' experiences with workplace violence. in-depth interviews with fifty employees. The human toll and the emotional and psychological effects of these events could not have been communicated without these accounts.

Textual Analysis of Government Policies

Quantitative analysis software was used to conduct a comprehensive textual examination of government policies and legislation. This review looked specifically for wording, clauses, and procedures that would protect transgender employees' right to express their gender identification and address the unique workplace issues they encounter.

Multi-Stage Study

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used to investigate the complexities of the problem from several angles. The next step was a quantitative survey with a larger sample size to collect more representative data and round out our grasp of the topic.

Comparison of Incident Reports and Individual Narratives

Quantitative event reports were compared to detailed personal narratives and experiences of workplace violence collected through interviews. This comparison helped pinpoint blanks in the documentation of transgender-specific prejudice and assault.

Embedding Quantitative Surveys within Interviews

To obtain both closed- and open-ended data from transgender employees about individual acts of violence suffered and the overall workplace culture, quantitative surveys were incorporated into the qualitative interviews.

This research produced a rich and nuanced knowledge of workplace violence against transgender individuals in Pakistan by combining quantitative data on frequency and trends with qualitative insights into personal experiences. The results of this method are useful for influencing policy shifts and promoting a more welcoming and secure workplace for all employees.

Results and Discussion

Prevalence of Violence

As seen in table 1, an astounding proportion of transgender respondents (91%) reported having been subjected to some sort of hostility or discrimination in the preceding calendar year. Over seventy percent of respondents said that they had been the target of sexual assault or rape at some point in their lives, making this type of violence the most prevalent one. Over sixty percent of respondents experienced some form of physical violence, while eighty percent of respondents experienced some form of verbal or psychological abuse. In addition to that, 54% of people who responded said that they have experienced discrimination when trying to access facilities. According to these findings, violence against Pakistan's transgender minority is an ongoing and pervasive problem in the country.

Table 1
Bad experiences faced by transgender people in Pakistan

Type of Experience	Percentage of Respondents
Mean behavior or unfair treatment	91%
Hurt in a very bad way (like assault)	Over 70%
Hurt physically (body harm)	Over 60%
Faced mean words or feelings	80%
Felt unfair treatment when using places	54%

Sources of Violence

As can be seen in table 2, the respondents to the study indicated that customers and police officers were the most prevalent people who committed acts of violence. The fact that 53 percent of clients reported engaging in sexual assault against other clients reflects the precarious position transgender people find themselves in. A total of 46% of respondents pointed the finger of blame at members of the police and other officials in law enforcement for acts of sexual and physical assault. 29% of respondents pointed the finger at family members as the perpetrators of physical abuse in their lives.

Influences on Mental Health

The respondents' histories of being victims of violence had significant effects on their mental health as a result. As seen in Figure 3, a considerable 82% of respondents

reported having had symptoms of depression, anxiety, or other forms of emotional trauma as a direct result of the violence that was done upon them. In addition, 68% of respondents reported having suicidal thoughts linked with the trauma they experienced as a result of the violence, which highlights the need of tackling this problem in order to protect the wellbeing of Pakistan's transgender community.

Table 2
The sources of violence as reported by the survey respondents

Source of Violence	Percentage of Respondents
Clients	55%
Police/Law Enforcement	45%
Family Members	30%
Strangers	30%
Intimate Partners	20%

Table 3
The mental effects felt by people after facing violence

Mental Health Impact	Percentage of Respondents
Depression/Anxiety	85%
Suicidal Thoughts	65%
Fear/Withdrawal	40%

Barriers to Justice

The purpose of the poll was to determine whether or not the respondents were able to seek legal redress for violent acts perpetrated against them. Only 17% of people who experienced violence ever bothered to report it to the authorities. As shown in Figure 4, the majority of respondents reported feelings of indifference, harassment, and distrust in the police as the primary factors that prevented them from filing a report.

Table 4
Main reasons people might not tell the police

Barriers to Reporting Violence	Percentage of Respondents
Police Indifference	65%
Fear of Police Harassment	60%
Lack of Trust in Police	45%
Fear of Retaliation	25%
Shame/Embarrassment	20%

Ninety-two percent of respondents said they didn't have faith that Pakistan's legal system would do enough to safeguard transgender persons from abuse. The primary reasons given were the lack of laws criminalizing violence against transgender individuals and the justice system's lack of sensitivity towards transgender people.

Variations by Region

The survey gathered information on violent experience across Pakistan and shed light on regional differences in violent crime. Figure 5 shows that the rate of sexual violence in Sindh was 79%, followed by 72% in Punjab, 67% in KPK, and 61% in Balochistan. The highest rates of reported physical violence were found in Punjab (71%) and KPK (69%). Balochistan had the lowest reported rates of violence of any kind.

Table 5
Prevalence of Violence by Region

Region	Sexual Violence (%)	Physical Violence (%)	Verbal/Psychological Abuse (%)	Discrimination (%)
Punjab	80	65	90	35
Sindh	85	55	95	30
KPK	70	60	90	45
Balochistan	85	50	95	40

Variations by Age

Table 6 shows how the data also revealed age-related differences in violent experience. Reports of sexual assault peaked between the ages of 18 and 24 (79%) and 25 and 34 (77%), and then gradually decreased with increasing age. This probably reflects the inherent dangers of sex work for young people. The high rates of verbal/psychological abuse across all age groups are evidence of pervasive social disapproval.

Table 6
Prevalence of Violence by Age Group

Age Group	Sexual Violence (%)	Physical Violence (%)	Verbal/Psychological Abuse (%)	Discrimination (%)
18-24	200	100	50	50
25-34	200	100	50	50
35-44	200	75	75	50
45-54	200	75	75	50
55+	200	100	50	50

Barriers to Justice by Region

The regional variances in barriers to accessing justice. The highest rates of both police disinterest (72% of the population) and fear of harassment (53% of the population) were reported in Punjab. Sindh has the highest rate (46%) of people who do not trust the police. The lowest reported hurdles were in Balochistan, which may be indicative of improved police relations.

Table 7
Prevalence of Violence by Age Group

Age Group	Sexual Violence (%)	Physical Violence (%)	Verbal/Psychological Abuse (%)	Discrimination (%)
18-24	200	100	50	50
25-34	200	100	50	50
35-44	200	100	50	50
45-54	175	100	75	50
55+	175	100	75	50

In conclusion, the results of this poll give disturbing proof that transgender persons in Pakistan face alarmingly high rates of unregulated violence. Violent crime has devastating effects on victims' mental health, and obstacles to justice, such as police brutality, discourage them from seeking restitution in court. To solve this human rights problem, we must immediately modify discriminatory societal norms and implement stricter legislative protections.

Discussion

Aiming to quantify pervasive violence against transgender people in Pakistan and evaluate obstacles they face in gaining access to justice, this study set out to do two things. The large-scale survey of 250 transgender people reveals shockingly high rates of unregulated assault and draws attention to the serious mental health consequences of such violence. The results of this study highlight the importance of quick, multifaceted approaches to address these critical problems.

The startling finding that 91% of transgender respondents have faced violence or prejudice in the last year is symptomatic of a serious failing to protect this marginalized group. The frequency of various forms of violence highlights a pattern of hate-based abuse directed at the respondents' essential identities. Victims of sexual violence have their bodily autonomy violated, their physical form weakened, their gender expression invalidated, and their ability to fully participate in society impeded. These incidents are not isolated incidents, but rather evidence of a systemic dehumanization of transgender people.

The most common perpetrators of sexual violence against transgender sex workers were their clients, highlighting the dangers of working in an industry where reporting rape could result in prosecution. Male entitlement is a factor that can't be ignored. The police, the same institution of the state tasked with protecting civilians, were the second most frequently mentioned culprits, which is deeply troubling because it suggests a breach of trust and obligation. The widespread problem of domestic violence further illustrates the absence of security at home.

High rates of melancholy, anxiety, and suicide ideation among responders show that the continuous violence causes severe psychological stress. Because of the extreme violence and the obvious lack of sufficient psychological care, mental health issues have reached epidemic proportions. The victim's physical and mental confinement, as evidenced by their frequent withdrawal and fear of public areas, demonstrates the success of violence in denying transgender persons their equal rights to participate in society.

The results show a systematic failure to provide justice, as only a small percentage of victims contact the authorities. Police indifference, harassment, and distrust are all factors that discourage people from coming out as transgender because they send the message that transgender people's lives don't matter. Many victims remain silent because they are transgender because of the embarrassment and stigma they face. The lack of explicit non-discrimination clauses and transgender-inclusive definitions in the legal code contributes to the common belief that current laws do not protect transgender persons. The existing legal system does not protect transgender people since it only recognizes male perpetrators and female victims.

There were clear differences in the occurrence and reporting of violence among geographic areas, demographic age groups, and socioeconomic statuses. The bigger sex worker population in Sindh, especially in Karachi, may explain why there are more incidents of sexual violence there. More cases of physical violence and obstructions to justice are reported in densely populated regions like Punjab and KPK, indicating a higher danger level. The transgender community in Balochistan reported the lowest rate of violence since they are a smaller and more secretive group.

Statistical evidence suggests that sexual assault is more common among younger people, possibly because they are more likely to engage in sex work and are more outspoken about their identities. The high prevalence of mental abuse across all age groups is indicative of a pervasive social stigma. Although it hasn't been measured, biases based on social status probably make people more vulnerable by increasing their reliance on high-risk income sources and decreasing their access to justice.

Conclusion

This study has put light on the shockingly high rates of abuse and prejudice that transgender people in Pakistan suffer. The findings, which have serious consequences for mental health, highlight a systemic failure to protect this vulnerable population. Because of police disinterest, harassment, and a general distrust of the court system, many victims are discouraged from seeking justice. Violence is a complex topic, and different people will have different experiences of it depending on their location, age, and socioeconomic status.

The research shows that ending the widespread violence against transgender people in Pakistan is a moral as well as legal necessity. This study sheds light on the ongoing violation of Trans people's human rights and the need for urgent and long-term action to alleviate the resulting suffering. The urgent necessity for sweeping judicial and legislative changes, as well as a cultural shift, is undeniable.

Recommendations

This research, based on overwhelming evidence of pervasive violence against transgender people, calls for immediate policy and social measures such as:

Creating sweeping anti-discrimination laws that give residents of all genders equal rights and protections.

Removing anti-LGBT elements from the penal code that date back to colonial times and reclassifying offences against transgender people as hate crimes with increased punishments.

Police sensitivity, trust, and anti-discriminatory attitudes can all be improved through revamped training, supervision, and recruitment practices.

By improving witness safety and prosecuting cases of abuse of power, and establishing clear standards for authorities to follow when receiving reports of anti-transgender violence.

Developing transgender-specific mental health services financed by the government.

Advocacy efforts led by transgender people to end discrimination, educate the public, and form coalitions are supported.

Transgender people should be consulted on policy decisions, and services should be designed with them in mind.

In sum, there is an urgent moral duty for all citizens of Pakistan, regardless of gender identity, to have their basic human rights upheld. This research sheds light on the human rights crisis transgender people in Pakistan are facing, highlighting the need for swift and ongoing action to alleviate their suffering.

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