

Social Exclusion of Aged Transgender in Pakistan: A Case Study of District Rawalpindi

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Abstract--- Ageism is known as discrimination and stereotyping against aged person. Transgender person is considered as neither male or female or a combination of both male and female. Transgender population being marginalized community in Pakistan have to face multiple problems (i.e. economic, psychological and health) with the increase in age. In this vein, the current study was conducted to explore the socio-economic and health conditions of aged transgender in the Rawalpindi district of Punjab province. Specifically, this study aimed to assess the extent of this population's access to basic human rights such as health, food, shelter, cloth and sanitation. Least research has been done in Pakistan in this regard. Therefore, Case studies method was used for data collection. A sample of 9 aged transgender with age above 50 years was selected through snowball sampling technique. The result indicates that usually aged transgenders were living extreme alarming situation. Finding indicates that most of the older transgender profession was beggary and 55.6% (n=5) of the transgender fall into the category of low income. Most of the transgender health status was unpleasant due to lack of devotion. Likewise, 89.9 % (n=8) transgender lived in rented house and paid double fair because people stigmatized them questionable profession like dancing and sex work. The study has also shown that all aged transgender have imbalance diet, poor condition of seasonal clothes and sanitation system because they lived in the side areas of the city due to gender non-conforming. The study suggests further work on aged transgender people and mainstreaming them in the sociological, anthropological and human rights context.

Keywords--- Aging, Transgender, Basic Rights, Profession, Health, Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of ageism is associated with aged people who remain vulnerable in aged life. On the basis of their age, aged people are discriminated and deserted in the society. It is insidious practice which has negative effect on the older adults' socioeconomic conditions. Normally, aged people remain marginalized and excluded in the society. While talking about the aged transgender in society is a distinctive viewpoint because due to their gender non-conforming parents, community and friends left them at an early age and they become socially excluded from society. There are number of evidences and literature elaborate that transgender are stigmatized group and suffer verbal abuse to physical violence which has negative consequences on their life (Jaspal 2012; Jones and King 2014; Jami and Kamal 2015; de Lind van Wijngaarden et al. 2013).

Researchers are interested to demonstrate particularly the life pattern of the older transgenders as in the younger

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age their source of income is sex work, begging, dancing and other questionable professions (Khan 2009; Chettiar 2015). With the passage of time they become aged like 50 above people don't like them for dancing and sexual orientation. Even, they have no family bonding or kinship system like a normal human being due to gender ambiguity. This isolation covers all area from family, neighbors, peer group, community and other social relationship.

However, gap identified by the researcher "age and transgender" with respect to their age increased. Conversely, they faced problems to attain healthy socioeconomic status and to basic needs in everyday life. Therefore, present study fills the literary gap by exploring among aged transgender in Pakistani Society. Age is a significant factor to contribute in social and economic life. For aged transgender "ageism" is an everyday challenge for employment, health, and other social and economic services (WHO, 2018).

Aged Transgender in Pakistan

Transgender people gained their legal identity in 2017 as a third-gender. According to Transgender Persons Protection Rights Act (2017) transgender person is known as who neither male nor female or a combination of both female and male. Pakistan is a religious country having predominant Muslim majority which provoked the dichotomous gender male and female. The third gender has no place in the religious, social and cultural structure (Saeed et al. 2018). It has been observed that transgender people are rejected or disowned by the family at younger stage because of gender non-confirming (de Lind van Wijngaarden et al. 2013). However, talking about the aged transgender in such society is pointless because they have been isolated from the blood relatives and had invisible identity. There is no policy in Pakistan to mainstreaming the older transgender and they spent their life in bleak condition. They could not perform their socially tagged duties as dancing, sexual orientation or other occupation at the older stage for earning. It is utmost important to highlight this issue by the sociologists and anthropologists.

Research Questions:

1. What is the socio-economic status of the aged transgender with respect to their age?
2. What is situation of Aged transgender in district Rawalpindi, Pakistan?
3. How the aged transgender do fulfill their basic needs of life and spend their life in daily routine?

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Researcher was interested to explore the life style of aged transgender and highlight their problems. An exploratory research is adopted to collect new information in to matter at hand (Jaeger and Halliday 1998). It was observed by the researcher that aged transgenders are socially excluded and their community is less research area in Pakistan. Researcher conducted the case studies by using the un-structured questionnaire that was comprised of different themes. They remain invisible. Therefore, it was very difficult to approach them. Snowball sampling technique was used to access the representative sample in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Sample size of nine transgender was engaged from the Rawalpindi tehsil. The criteria of selection of the respondents were above 50 years age. An age criterion was also limitation of the study. Ethical research considerations were sustained by the researcher during the interview. It was informed to the respondents about the purpose of the study and time required and other

privacy of the data. Consent of respondents was assured before the interview and in return they were paid PKR 500 for the interview. It was essential because most of the respondents were busy in their duty. Their time was costly and after getting paid, they agreed for the interview. Thematic analysis was carried out to describe the information collected from the aged transgender. In qualitative research, thematic analysis is common analysis technique to represent the qualitative data in the meaningful pattern.

Limitations of the Study

Age was limitation of the study, above fifty years of age were selected for the study.

Their identity (name, caste and racial identity) remained hidden

III. RESULTS

Socio-Economic Status

According to statistical data 66.7 (n=6) percent respondents were male transgender and 33.3 (n=3) percent respondents were female transgender. Male transgender and female transgender categorized were on the basis of physical representation. Statistical distribution represents the education status of transgender people that 44.5 (n=4) percent respondents were illiterate. They never visited school. Data represent that 33.3 (n=3) percent respondents had primary education, 11.1 (n=1) percent respondents had middle and (n=1) had matric qualification. Statistical data represent the occupational status of the respondents. According to the distribution of data depicts that 55.7 (n=5) percent respondents profession were “Beggary”. Moreover, data depicts that 22.2 (n=2) percent respondent’s profession were Guru and 11.1 (n=1) percent respondents’ profession were Guru Dada and service provider. It is worth mentioning that 66.7 (n=6) percent of the transgender fall into the category of low income (under the poverty line earning less than two dollar a day) and their earning falls between Rs 1000 to Rs 5000 per month, while 22.2 (n=2) percent of transgender earn above Rs 5000 up to Rs 10,000 per month. Only 11.1(n=1) of the transgender fall into category of high income above Rs 10,000 to Rs 20000 per month.

Assessment of Basic Needs of Transgender People

Health Status of Aged Transgender

Health plays a significant role in the human life. The current study aims to extend the literature on health condition of aged transgender by using empirical method. The following indicators were discussed by the researcher to explore the health status of the aged transgender and consideration of the reader. Doctors’ behavior, community response, financial assistance and caring of aged transgender during the illness duration. The findings of the research are given below explicitly on the basis of these indicators in the following lines:

Doctors’ Behavior

While talking about the transgender health issues the result indicates that all the respondents answered that doctors’ behavior remained inadequate with us. The problem is that they are confused whether to go to male doctor or female doctor. Male doctors refer to female doctors and vice-versa.

Community Response

The result indicates that community people have no concern with the transgender people. They did not visit and care during the illness period. Moreover, they impede to their children to visit the transgender home due to sexual stigmatization. People avoid them because disease can transfer to them and their children. Sometimes aged people of the local community visit their homes, ask about the health and help them.

Financial Assistance

Aged transgender faced the financial problem during the elder age. They answered that we don't have sufficient money for the medication and other medical assistance. They could not earn money in this age. However, their chellas' bear all the expenditure of medication. Sometimes they are unable to take costly medicine. Ultimately, they could not attain the proper medication and health care due to lack of money.

Caring

Caring is important factor during the aged and vulnerable conditions. They don't have blood relatives for the caring. However, their chellas role plays like their offspring and relatives. They take care of them in inadequate situation. They said, our Guru is like our parents and it's our duty to serve them.

Shelter

Shelter is a secure place for survival to violence and other risk elements in the society. The current study aims to know the shelter status of the aged transgender which is included in the basic need of an individual. The following indicators were discussed to explore the accommodation status; Residential status (own or rented), community behavior, settlement issues, housing expenses and owner behavior (if rented).

Residential Status

Residential status was asked by the researcher of the aged transgender. The result indicates that only 11.1 percent respondents have their own homes and the other 88.9 percent respondents live in the rented house. They don't have sufficient money to buy the own house. They face social exclusion from their families and relatives. Moreover, their family did not provide the property rights due to gender ambiguity.

Settlements Issues

Transgender people also face the settlement issues. Local people do not allow them to live in the community due to stigmatization. Sex work and dancing profession is socially constructed with the queer people. However, it became difficult to convince the owner of the house for residence. In return they have to double fair for the accommodation. There are three or four transgenders living in one room. Individually, it became difficult to pay the rent of house and other expenses.

House Expenditure

The result depicts that 55.6 percent respondents' profession was beggary and they live below poverty line. Hardly, they bear the house expenses. Other 44.6 percent respondents depend on their chellas' earning. Their chellas attend the parties and marriage functions to earn money for them. All the transgenders that live in the same building

contribute for the electricity bill, rent, water bill and other maintenance.

Community Behavior

The response demonstrates that community behavior regarding settlement or accommodation remained not good. Local people objected that our children or young people can involve in negative activities in their company. Ultimately, they live in the suburb areas and invisible places. Some transgender said: we became habitual of the people bullying behavior, so we don't care about them. Certain aged transgender said aged people of the community are well aware of us and give respect to us rather the younger people do not.

Owner Behavior

It been resulted that most of the respondents are living in the rented house. So it was asked by the researcher to the respondents that how behaved the owners of the house were? Seventy percent respondents answered that owner behavior remains good with us and give relaxation to pay the rent in stipulated time. Thirty percent respondents answer was not positive about their owner of house.

Food

Food is basic necessity for everybody. It provides energy and other required ingredients. Body remains active and productive by food. However, to know the status of aged transgender access to food in daily routine following indicators were asked by the researcher for the readers' understanding, Food pyramids, quality of food, food expenditure and community or neighborhood help.

Food Pyramid

Food pyramid means how many times they eat food in a day. The answer was that they have no proper timing for the taking meal. 70 percent respondents respond that we eat two times i.e., breakfast and dinner while have tea twice or thrice a day. 20 percent respondents said that we get proper food because our chellas care about us. We also attend the parties and enjoyed delicious meals with our chellas. 10 percent aged transgender fulfill the food needs from the shrine "langer". They live near the shrine and take meal from the langer two or three times a day. All the aged transgender replied that we get fruits once or twice a month.

Quality of Food

Quality of food means food consciousness regarding Hygiene and taste. When the researcher asked form the respondents, are they conscious about their food? 65 percent respondents respond that they are very conscious regarding food cleanliness and taste. However, they gave preference to own cooking at home. 35 percent respondents answered that they thanks to God and eat from the langer, or other hotels people offered during the begging.

Food Expenditure

Researcher asked from the respondents how they bear food expenditure. 80 percent respondents bear food expenditure self-based. They earn the money from beggary. Moreover, they visit the newly born child house and collect the food form there. They jointly make food at the home and share the expenditure. 20 percent respondents

responded that our chellas earn money from the parties and other ways for us. They maintain our food expenditure and other needs.

Community Aid

All the transgender responded that local people also facilitate to the adult transgender regarding food provision. Sometime if we need anything on urgent base from our neighborhood, they provide us at one call. Their behavior remains good with us. On the specific events like Eid-ul-Adha, Eid-ul-Fitr and other Islamic and cultural events, they send us delicious food and in return they request for prays.

Clothes

Clothes are important to protect the human body in different climate condition as well as social conditions. Seasonal clothes, festival clothes and clothes expenditures were asked by the researcher from the respondents.

Seasonal Clothes

Seasonal clothes means winter and summer clothes fulfillment. 80 percent responded that we attain clothes requirement from different ways, visit nearest cheap or landa bazar and get clothes on lowest rate. Sometime, newly born children' parents give us old or new clothes in their eve of happiness. In this way we accomplish our clothes needs. 20 percent transgender remained dependent on their chellas. They provide the clothes in different seasons.

Festival Clothes

All the people get new clothes and other garments for the celebrations. Similarly, transgender people also celebrate the festivals like Eid-ul-Adzha, Eid-ul—Fitr and birthday parties. On these occasions, all the transgenders receive gifts from the other transgender friends and chellas. In return they also offer gifts to the friends and chellas.

Sanitation

Sanitation system refers to public hygiene regarding drinking water and healthy environment. To know the sanitation and access to clean environment only two indicators were asked by the researcher, access to the clean drinking water and management of wastage material mechanism.

Provision of Drinking Water

Access to the clean drinking water 60 percent respondents get water from water plant which is located near their residence. 40 percent respondents use domestic water. They don't care about the clean water.

Wastage Material

70 percent respondents respond that they use the nearest wastebasket arranged by the government. 30 percent respondents don't have access to the dustbin and living in the slums. They don't have access to proper management of the waste materials.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

We have examined the socioeconomic status and assessment of basic needs/ rights including health, shelter, food, clothes and sanitation system of the aged (50-above) transgender through qualitative research method. The

result indicates that adult transgender had lowest socioeconomic status. We found 44.5 percent transgender were illiterate. Importantly, 55.6 percent respondent's occupation was beggary. Additionally, 66.7 percent transgender income was below poverty line.

With respect to basic needs including all types of indicators previously discussed, researcher have estimated about health issues. *Doctor behavior* Most of the transgender shared their experience that doctor behavior remained not adequate with us. Reporting in study (Tabassum and Jamil 2014) that transgender people cannot freely visit to a doctor as they hesitate to examine them due to their indistinct identity. *Community people response* according to majority of the transgender response, people avoid them due to transsexual. (Ahmed et al. 2014) explore that such people faced social exclusion from the family and society. They have often feared of transmission of the disease. Additionally, they found vulnerable and having lack of *final assistance* for the medication. Highest percentage of respondents faced lack of *caring* during the illness period from the blood relatives as well as (Bilgehan Ozturk 2011) stated that their family members feel embarrassed because of their transsexualism.

The findings of the current study about shelter status of the aged transgender indicate that 88.9 percent respondents lived in the rented house. They don't have own residence. However, they confronted a lot of settlement issues like local people don't allow to live in the own geographical area. We found, adult transgender paid double rent to the owner due to lack of social acceptance.

We assessed access to the food 70 percent respondents ate food twice in a day very difficult. Moreover, 10 percent respondents have faith in God and ate from the langer. All the respondents try to maintain the quality of food. Most of the respondents bear food expenditure on self-based. They collect food from the newly born child household and begging profession from the shopkeeper and local people. A study was conducted by the PLHA in Argentina, reveals that 90 percent transgender people don't reach the recommended feeding level. Eventually, they faced adherence in the treatment.

Access to clothes and sanitation of the adult transgender, the current study reveals that aged transgenders get clothes from the local people home during beggary visits or landa bazar. On the specific occasion they also received gifts from the other transgender people. Regarding sanitation system, the study depicts that there no proper system for the safe drinking water for the transgender and also for the wastage material.

In a net shell, aged transgender lived in bleak condition and deprived from the basic rights in Pakistan. Approximately, 2 percent respondents were happy with their life and access to the basic rights. In sum, the study represents that adult transgender people are marginalized people in the society.

The current study has had some limitations. First, convenience sample was used because there was less economic feasibility of obtaining random sample method. Additionally, the findings of the study were based on the basic rights of the individual according to the operational definition. Finally, researchers' selection criterions of the respondents were above 50 years.

The finding of the current study identified that there is need for further research on the adult transgender people. Studies should be designed on their physical, mental and social health. It is important to explore research on theses

population in every society about their rights and social inclusion.

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