



Education of Transgender Individuals: A Case of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Dr. Rukhshanda, AP, Univeristy of Wah, Punjab, Pakistan, rukshandamushtaq@gmail.com

Dr. Wajiha Kanwal AP, University Wah Cantt, Punjab, Pakistan. Dr.wajihakanwal@uow.edu.pk

Tahira Roohi, PhD Scholar, Sarhad University of Science & Information Technology Peshawar, Pakistan. Tahiraroohi@hotmail.com

Dr. Abdul Shakoor, Lecturer, Sarhad University of Science @ Information Technology Peshawar, Pakistan. abdulshakoor333@gmail.com

Abstract- All those individuals who are not coming in the two categories of male and female are known as transgender individuals. They are described as a Male-to female (MTF), female-to-male (FTM), intersex, cross dressers, transsexual individuals, and gender queer etc. acquiring education is the key of live a comfortable life. To highlight the educational opportunities available for the transgender in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan and problems faced by transgender in their educations were the main objectives of the study. This study based on grounded theories analysis of interviews with transgender-identified people from different regions of the KP, Pakistan. The data were mainly collected from secondary source such as policies and research articles, and interviews were used for primary data collection. It was revealed from the finding that policies regarding the education of transgender were not implemented. Furthermore, educational institutions are not willing to give admissions to them and no equal educational opportunities are available for transgender which resulted, they are far away to live a normal independent life in society. It was suggested in the study that government penalize those who are not given admissions to transgender individuals and humiliating them at educational institutions, especially, on regular basis initiated an awareness program on media to remove negative attitude of family and society. Along with it, initiate educational and employment opportunities and fix quota for transgender in all sectors.

Keywords: transgender, transgender educations, educational problems faced by transgender

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In sub-continent the Mughal era (1526 to1857) were considered the transgender as a splendid and they teach the prince, princess and serve kings and queens as an advisor. Unfortunately, at the time of British rulers they withdraw all inheritance and other rights in society (Jaffrey 1996; Hoda 2010 and Nazir and Yasir 2016; Saddique, et.al; 2017).

II. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

For more than four thousand years the subcontinent (presently Pakistan, Bangladesh and India) region has a history of the existence of transgender (Karnataka, 2003). Transgender is a term used for the individuals who are not coming in the umbrella gender, the gender is only limited to two categories male and female (Spagna, 2013). According to GREEN, E.R. & MAURER, L.M. (2015) Transgender: An adjective used to describe a person whose gender identity is incongruent with (or does not “match”) the biological sex they were assigned at birth. “Transgender” serves an umbrella term to refer to the full range and diversity of identities within transgender communities because it is currently the most widely used and recognized term. However, the words transgender includes Male-to female (MTF), female-to-male (FTM), intersex, cross dressers, transsexual individuals, and gender queer etc. (Davidson, 2007) apart from it in a Pakistan various name like as Khawaja Sara, Hijra, Khusra or Murat, and many more are given to them. From the day of their birth, they are facing discrimination at family level, in schools and in places where they live. Along with discrimination people pass comment on them, even their school mates due to which they quit their education and in return doors honorable job closed them.

III. INTRODUCTION

Al-Quran says, “To Allah belong the dominion of the heavens and earth; He creates what he wills. He gives to whom He wills female, and He gives to whom He wills males. Or He makes them [both] males and females, and He renders whom He wills barren. Indeed, He knows and Competent” (Al-Quran, Surat I-Shura, Chap-23, Verses 49-50). Saddique, et.al, (2017) quoted that Islam stress equal right for all. It was concluded that

in spite of Pakistan is an Islamic state, but transgender are not given their right of education, jobs, health care etc., beside this no right as a human.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan in 2011 ruled that according to the Constitution of Pakistan transgender have equal rights as all citizens of Pakistan. The court directed both the federal and provincial governments given them rights in all fields of life including education, employment and inheritance. The other initiative is that, this community was only allowed to vote in federal elections in 2011 (Baloch, 2018; Asad, 2012). To follow the court decision "Pakistan' first school for transgender students opens" located in Lahore city in Punjab province, the Gender Guardians School – Pakistan 'first school for transgender people – recorded 25 enrollments on its opening day, and has been hailed by human rights activists, lawyers, teachers and students as an unprecedented initiative to mainstream the marginalized community. Transgender people face various challenges in conservative Pakistan, where they are often harassed and sidelined by society (Baloch and Shehzad, 2018). The main challenge in accessing transgender is lacking of their population data. Exact numbers are not available and no official records, but roughly there are about 1.5 million transgender in Pakistan. The barrier which government faced in developing and implementing policies are that accurate numbers regarding the population of transgender (Jami, 2005; Asad, 2012).

Due to reason of social discrimination and detestation these individuals are embittered in educational institutions, yet, very few acquired education. Though there is no discrete literacy ratio found regarding their education (Rehman, 2009).

Saddique, et.al, (2017), highlighted the problems faced by Transgender individuals in their daily life as "they are below living standards, having low literacy rate, face humiliation and contracts their ability to continue education and get suitable jobs due to discrimination in Pakistan". Discussing the issues regarding the transgender education, Tabassum and Jamil (2014) shared their research experiences as the transgender individuals want to acquire education, but they are not allowed in educational institutions at any cost. Furthermore, no appropriate pledged were taken by the government for their education. The study suggested that policies developed by government and implemented by the government and non-government organizations for these individual education from national to local level.

Nazir and Yasir (2016) enhanced that mostly transgender individuals are uneducated. Presently, they are engaged in such professions which are not socially considered as honorable. Their choice of acceptance of other professions is interesting, but they need government support to adopt the professions of their choice. The present study will uncover striking patterns in how transgender identity in different groups within the transgender community (Beemyn and Rankin, 2011).

IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The term transgender has developed and come in political use, Institutional work to approximation of transgender population, their socioeconomic conditions and rights are gaining importance in 21st century, for example; National Centre for Transgender Equality, The William Institute, University of California, USA, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, and many other educational research based institutions. Countries like Pakistan, no nationwide comprehensive single study was conducted. Except all, at some extend individual work are carried out which serve as a part in foundation stone and facilitates in developing effective and workable policy for the rights of the transgender (Nazir, & Yasir, 2016).

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study were

- i. To know the educational opportunities available for the transgender in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- ii. To pinpoint the problems faced by transgender in their educations in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- iii. To present workable suggestion for the transgender in their educations

VI. METHODOLOGY

The study was descriptive qualitative and exploratory in nature. The primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews as used for data collection. As well as, research articles, journals, newspaper, magazines serve as secondary source data. The sample was selected through snowball and convenient sample technique. 10 individuals were selected as a sample of the study.

The interview questions were asked from the respondents' mother tongue. The interviews were recorded, coded, themes, interpreted and transcripts were written. Along with interviewing, observation method was used to derive correct information about the respondents.

VII. PROCEDURE

The researchers personally collected all the data. The samples were identified and approached, with the help of informants. The respondents were informed about the aim and objectives of the study and taken consent from respondents. The identify respondents were kept hidden as an ethical consideration.

Results and discussion

Problems faced by transgender in their education

Education institutions serve as a place for the overall development of an individual while the situation is different and grey for transgender individuals, as well as, no provision of equal opportunities for them. Transgender population keeps on moving from one place to another (Davidson, 2007). The results showed that the respondents had a weak educational background because, the family feels shy of their presence at home besides this admissions in any educational institutions.

Perception of transgender on education

Acquiring Education is very important for every individual, especially for transgender individuals too.

... Look at me, I am earning money as well as get know how through education and live peaceful and good as compared to others like me.

Analysis

The Majority of the transgender stressed on the importance and acquiring education that it is the need of the day and lives a respectable life.

Education means better life.

Education is a mediator and changes the entire life of an individual.

Looking Through my life I honestly having faith and recommended it to other my fellows that acquire education it can take you to betterment.

Analysis

Most of the respondents stressed on the acquiring of education as it helps and lead the transgender to sound life.

Religion know how

The Majority of the respondents are educated in district Peshawar as compare to other district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Some of the respondents had acquired an education till primary level and only one went to secondary level. Only a few of the respondents and their few fellows got a religious education where they acquire basic theological education.

"I use to go to my masjid with my elder brother and learn ALF, BAI para, pela and dusra para and Namaz But, other children laugh when I enter masjid and they didn't sit with me...."

Analysis

The respondents acquire religious education (only a recitation of Holy Quran and Namaz) at home or at a local mosque. But, there they face verbal abuses and discriminatory attitudes. Rehman (2009) study results showed that 79% of the surveyed population transgender in Pakistan are uneducated as they never went to any school and madrassas in their life.

Reason of joining transgender community

Because of, the parents and society Low literacy level results that parents of transgender children send them to faraway places and to eunuch community. There they are brought up by Guru and engaged these individuals into dishonorable professions and lifestyle in society (Tufail, 2006).

.... When day and night bullying in my school than at college, I at last take a degree and you know I got a job too but in work place I was bulling every time and then I was terminated ... it hurts a lot and now what I do(respondents).

Analysis

In the educational institutions, there is a most discriminated condition. No favor given these children either by teachers or by administration beside this anything happening in classrooms and school.

" my mother wanted that I go to school ... father bite and abuse me and my mother, but she still sends me to school and she want that I also learn like my other brother...."

Analysis

Very few of the transgender individuals are able to acquire higher education and after that get some job, but there they were targeted to people negative attitudes and hatred.

Reason of leaving school

Most of the parents did not send their transgender children to school, although some parents try hard to send their child to school but these children left school due to the negative attitude of the people.

... I ran away from school because in school and on my way to school people pass comments to me and curse me my ammi, abba and my sibling feel embarrassed due to me (respondent)

Analysis

Some of the parents send their transgender children, but because of people abhorrence and humiliation behavior these children didn't just leave their schools but also home too. concluded "Drop out and truancy from schools are common among all transgender, one of the reason of it is that they are beaten by their teachers (Nazir and Yasir, 2016).

No seat quota in educational institution

Min, Lee, and Park (2012) described that in China, they initiated quota in educational institutions where transgender individuals were taught by officials nonetheless they are not allowed to continue education after age 35 whereas in Pakistan, there is no quota system in educational institutions. According to Gallup Pakistan (2016) survey report of urban and rural areas, the 55% are agreed of giving quota in all education institutions.

VIII. DISCUSSION

In Pakistan specifically in KP there are schools for disabled people, orphans and minority groups but there is no institute for transgender people. Most transgender people in Pakistan are disowned by their families and are forced to fend for themselves (Baloch and Shehzad, 2018).

Most of the respondents agreed that no support and provision of education were given to them by family, community and government. The required care and education are not provided to transgender individuals who help them to become independent individuals in society (Ashraf, 2010).

Majority of the respondents replied that it is through education which facilitates and open doors of respected job for them in some sectors, but no encouraging and implementing response from the side. Hence, the government only emphasis on desk works no partial implementation on the ground (UNESCO, 2012).

IX. CONCLUSION

- i. As transgender, they need not only family support, but society and government support and facilitation as well. Along with it, it is liable for all the educational institutions for the provision of assessable education and support.
- ii. The negative attitudes of the family and society towards the transgender and their education are due to lack of awareness and stereotypes of people.
- iii. Society is made up of different institutions like family, educational institutions, etc. and is the pillars of all society. But whenever, these institutions give core importance to gender discrimination and no equal opportunities provided to any of the group (especially, transgender) then the entire system of society greatly affected.
- iv. Lacking appropriate legislation development regarding transgender education by the government if legislation and law developed at some extend but they are not fully implemented at any level.
- v. There are low educational opportunities available for transgender individuals at all levels of education at the provincial and national level.
- vi. Due to lack of educational opportunities these are facing financial barriers and family are not supported them and are hatred by society.
- vii. Problem of transgender education will be remained till the quota fixed in all public and private institutions by the governments.

X. SUGGESTION

- i. Urgently needed the Development of policies, law and legislation by government and practically implemented regarding transgender education and wellbeing of transgender.
- ii. Regular awareness programs should initiate to remove the negative perception of people towards them.
- iii. Initiate special topic in the curriculum at grass root compulsory, special subjects and introduce gender studies as a discipline at higher levels to eliminate the misconception about transgender individuals and their education.

iv. There are strict laws may develop and implement to prohibit and penalize those who are making fun of transgender at educational and professional institutes.

REFERENCES

1. Al-Quran, Chapter 42, Surat I-Shura, Verse 49-50
2. Asad, M. (2012). SC rules: Eunuchs have equal rights. The Dawn Newspaper, September 26, 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.dawn.com>
3. Ashraf, G. (2010, January 18). Debating the Third Gender. Retrieved from <http://www.susans.org>
4. Baloch, S. M., & Shahzad, (2018). Pakistan' first school for transgender students opens. Lahore. Deutsche Welle. www.dw.com
5. Beemyn and Rankin, 2011. The Lives of Transgender People. Columbia University Press New York.
6. Davidson, M. (2007). Seeking refuge under the umbrella: Inclusion, exclusion, and organizing within the category transgender. Sexuality Research & Social Policy, 4 (4), 60-80.
7. Hoda, A. (2010). Accepting the Third Gender: Wordpress.
8. Jaffery, Z. (1996). The Invisibles: A Tale of the Eunuchs of India: New York.
9. Jami, H. (2005). Condition and Status of Hijras (Trandgender, Transvestities etc.) in Pakistan. National Institute of Psychology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Published thesis
10. Karnataka, I. (2003). Human Rights Violations against the Transgender Community. Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties. Retrieved from <http://ai.eecs.umich.edu> on February, 9 2018.
11. Nazir, N. & Yasir, A. (2016) Education, Employability and Shift of Occupation of Transgender in Pakistan: A Case Study of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Dialogue 11 (2), 158-176.
12. Rehman, R., S. (2009) Darmiyan. Lahore: Nigarshat publishers.
13. Green, E.R. & Maurer, L.M. (2015). THE TEACHING TRANSGENDER TOOLKIT: A FACILITATOR'S GUIDE TO INCREASING KNOWLEDGE, DECREASING PREJUDICE & BUILDING SKILLS. ITHACA NY: PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF THE SOUTHERN FINGER LAKES: OUT FOR HEALTH. ISBN: 978-0-9966783-0-8 Available at www.teachingtransgender.com
14. Saddique, K., Gang, C., Mirbehar, S., & Ahmad, I. (2017). Transgender Issues in Pakistani Community. European Academic Research, 4(10), 9048-9057.
15. Spagna, K M. (2013). The Experiences of Transgender Students in Massachusetts Colleges and Universities. Bridgewater State University.
16. Tabassum, S. & Jamil, S. (2014). Plight of Marginalized: Educational Issues of Transgender Community in Pakistan. American Research Institute for Policy Development, 3 (1), 107-119
17. Tufail, S. (2006). Third Gender and Their Status in Pakistan. Retrieved from <http://www.chowrangi.com>
18. UNESCO. (2012). Education Sector Responses to Homophobic Bullying. Paris: UNESCO.