

## **Socio-Demographic Patterns of Eunuchs in Pakistan: Evidence from a Cross-Sectional Survey**

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### **Abstract**

The current paper investigated socio-demographic features of eunuchs (Khwaja Sira/transgender people) in Pakistan with the assistance of the cross-sectional survey design. Although there has been an upsurge in the appreciation of transgender rights in the country, there is a paucity of empirical studies to organize the patterns of demographics into a systematic pattern that influences the psychological aspects of existence like emotional control and healing. Purposive sampling and community based sampling were used for the recruitment of 200 participants from big cities of Punjab in Pakistan. A survey pro forma was used to gather the necessary data in which variables of importance were measured on age, gender identity, education, occupation, marital status, area of residence, level of income, living arrangements, and trauma related variables. Descriptive statistical analysis of demographic distributions was done using SPSS.

The findings revealed that the sample was mostly Khwaja Sira and trans women, the level of formal education was relatively low and early school dropout was high. This is one of the expressions of the still lasting economic marginalization, with the majority of participants residing in cities, and engaged in informal occupations, such as dancing during ceremonies, offering beauty services, or begging. Cohabitation among transgender community networks was the norm and

most subjects were single. The demographic risk factors for trauma including the age at which the youth left home and verbal, physical and sexual abuse were prevalent in the sample. The outcomes show the social, cultural and structural inequalities that shape the lives of eunuchs in Pakistan.

The study contributes to the existing literature by providing an extensive demographic profile in Pakistan and provides a foundation for future studies on emotional regulation, adverse childhood experiences and healing processes in gender-diverse groups. Policy implications are discussed, as are implications with regards to culturally sensitive mental health interventions.

**Keywords:** Khwaja Sira, Transgender Pakistan, Socio-demographic patterns, Cross-sectional survey, Gender diversity

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## 1. Introduction

Although in recent years there has been a significant increase in academic and policy awareness of the rights and social inclusion of transgender people, Pakistan's socio-demographic situation of gender-diverse communities remains comparatively under-researched. Historically, the communities identified as Khwaja Sira, Hijra, or eunuchs have held an unique social status influenced by pre-colonial cultural roles, the criminalisation of their community in the colonial times, religious discourse and current legal reforms (Kazmi, 2025). Despite the legal recognition of transgender people in Pakistan through policy reforms like the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018, there are still significant gaps in their access to education, employment, family support and social acceptance in everyday life. Therefore, a sound grasp of the demography is essential to better understand the psychology of outcome, social exclusion, and healing within the population and recent interdisciplinary scholarship has increasingly been seeking for demography's evidence to support psychological and policy studies based on a material reality of lived community (Alamgir & Azhar, 2025).

In Pakistan, eunuchs and transgender people are structurally marginalised which affect their demographic profile. There are unique socio-economic trends in the community, identified by limited access to formal education, economic opportunity and healthcare (Kalhor & Khan, 2023). Early life experiences of family rejection, school exclusion or migration into other livelihoods like the guru-chela structure, as a central mechanism of survival, mentorship and identity formation among khwaja sira communities, are sources of social exclusion (Alamgir, 2024). The recent

qualitative studies place the guru-chela relationship beyond just an economic transaction and regard it as a kinship relationship of choice that provides shelter and affirmation for those who have lost their families of origin (Alamgir & Azhar, 2025). These imbalances in structures also impact livelihood opportunities, psychological well-being and social resilience. This information is contained, therefore, in the context of the demographic indicators (educational level, occupation, income level and place of residence) of this population.

Socio-cultural environment of Pakistan continues to be one of the pivotal factors in these demographic outcomes. While transgender identity is increasingly being recognized in the legal sphere, religious and cultural norms in Pakistan still influence society in ways that often conflict with the implementation of inclusive policies (Thalho et al., 2024). Although there has been some improvement in the legislation regarding khwaja sira, hijra, and gender-diversity in Pakistan, the criminalization and social exclusion of these communities remain a problem (Kazmi, 2025). There is ongoing discrimination against many eunuchs in their family, in schools and in the workplace, leading to a disproportionate school dropout rate and limited career mobility for eunuchs. Educational barriers have been studied, and transgender people are at risk of failing to enroll in school, experiencing bullying from peers, and being neglected by institutions, which all lead to poorer school outcomes when compared to the general population (Arshad et al., 2024). The eunuch gender therefore is more likely to be a result of structural rejection than of an independent decision.

The employment situation is another example to the socio-economic marginalisation faced by this population. Transgender people are also less likely to get formally employed, with the majority of them resorting to informal or communal work like dancing at festive occasions, offering beauty services, begging, and running small businesses (Majid & Yasir, 2024). There continue to be high levels of discrimination and harassment in the workplace, which limits opportunities for stable income and social mobility in society (Arslan et al., 2023). These economic factors influence not only overall measures of income and occupation, but also housing, social interactions and health care. Participants experience a sense of belonging to their communities in urban cities like Lahore, Rawalpindi and Multan, yet simultaneously experience economic dependence and social segregation from the mainstream institutions.

Urbanisation and regional diversity also contribute to demographic differences between regions. The major cities of Punjab such as Lahore, Faisalabad, Sargodha, and Bahawalpur, have historically served as focus points for the concentration of Khwaja Sira population due to reasons of migration, economic opportunity and existing social networks. But in urban areas there are also increased levels of visibility, harassment and stigmatisation. Qualitative results in Sargodha suggest that inter-personal relations in the urban setting tend to perpetuate transphobic attitudes, which increase the sense of isolation and limit access to basic needs (Batoool et al., 2025). Since relocation to communal households in the city, which are locally referred to as *deras*, is a key way in which khwaja sira deal with the alienation of their own households, there is a need to consider the region and urban context when examining the nature of these different demographic trajectories (Alamgir & Azhar, 2025). These regional processes highlight the need to consider the demographic trends in a certain cultural and geographic context and not within a transgender community as a whole.

Another important demographic factor is family relations and childhood experiences. Rejection, violence or conflict over identity force many eunuchs to leave home at an early age and alternative care is arranged via community networks. Research on life histories of transgender in Pakistan often documents exposure to verbal, physical or sexual abuse during childhood and adolescence, and a recent study of khwaja sira in Swat reported widespread experiences of sexual violence in community and public spaces, suggesting that trauma is not an incidental aspect of khwaja sira life course, but rather a structural part of it (Azhar, Ahmad & Tariq, 2024). The heightened psychological stress that comes with economic insecurity and social marginalisation during health crisis, as highlighted in related studies on the mental health of khwaja sira during the COVID-19 pandemic (Azhar, Guzman Herrera, & Ahmad, 2024), provides another illustration of these. These early adverse experiences are likely to impact later demographic outcomes such as marital status, length of openly transgender experience, and extent of ongoing family contact. These demographical factors are important for psychological studies on emotional regulation, healing and resilience in particular. Although there is some academic interest, a lot of the works being done in Pakistan focus on legal rights, discrimination and health outcomes without a detailed demographic description. Indeed, the coping strategies and coping resources of the khwaja sira in Swat have been recently studied (Azhar et al., 2025), where the importance of community-based coping, awareness raising and collective identity as the main coping resources was highlighted,

though such qualitative studies are rich in content and are not easily amenable to systematic demographic mapping of psychological processes and structures like emotional regulation or healing within the context of social exclusion and structural inequality. Demographic patterns and figures are, therefore, not just descriptive facts but point of interaction of cultural normativity and economic marginalization and historic community structures with respect to eunuch's daily life in Pakistan. Thus, in the present article, a systematic demographic profile of eunuch respondents of a cross-sectional survey is presented across the different cities in Punjab. This study seeks to create a socio-demographic profile of people's lived experience based on age, gender identity, education, employment, marital status, place of residence, occupation, income, years people are living openly, and trauma related factors. The trends need to be understood with sensitivity by researchers, policy makers, and mental health professionals to create culturally responsive interventions and social policies that are inclusive of all. Finally, the documentation of the realities of the demographic provides a basis for further research on emotional regulation, adverse childhood experiences, and healing processes in gender-diverse populations, and for challenging dominant ideas and stereotypes about eunuchs in Pakistan and their lived experiences.

## **2. Literature Review**

Over these past 10 years, there has been a significant increase in the amount of research conducted on transgender and eunuch communities in Pakistan, due to growing academic interest in gender diversity, social marginalisation and psychological well-being. The socio-demographic differences are still very significant despite the legal recognition and the development of advocacy movements. It is also found from the literature that the marginalization of Khwaja Sira is manifested in educational, economic and familial fields, which further affect the demographic and life of Khwaja Sira (Arshad et al., 2024; Kalhor & Khan, 2023). This scholarship has recently expanded the literature between 2024 and 2026 with legal-critical perspectives, community ethnography, and mental health studies that together offer a more nuanced view of the various structural factors shaping khwaja sira demography (Alamgir & Azhar, 2025; Azhar et al., 2025; Kazmi, 2025). These demographic factors continue to be important to the understanding of emotional regulation, trauma recovery and healing processes, as psychological outcomes.

### **2.1. Pakistan Socio-Cultural Context of Eunuchs**

Historically, communities of Khwaja Sira have occupied high cultural and social-religious roles in South Asian societies, but the colonial policies and social-religious discourses have put communities of Khwaja Sira in an increasingly marginalised role (Redding, 2020). One of the important social structure which is still present in Pakistan is that of guru chela which gives identity, guidance and economic support to those who were rejected by their family members. It is hypothesized that this communal organization will impact the demographic outcomes, such as quality of life, employment opportunities and rural-urban migration (Thalho et al., 2024). Such socio-cultural practices can be contextualized within a recent decolonial legal analysis that suggests an expansion in formal legal protections has not reduced informal social control through family, religious institutions and community norms (Kazmi, 2025). The ethnographic observation of the field work also reveals that a new name is given to the new member in a formal manner when he/she enters into the Guru chela relationship and it is also a survival strategy for individuals in a hostile social atmosphere in which they will be known under a new name, usually a gender affirmation, indicating their affiliation with the community (Alamgir & Azhar, 2025). There has been progress in the legislation to ensure the rights of transgender persons, but strong stigma and informal institutional exclusion is present in daily interactions.

## **2.2. Education and ELE**

Education levels of eunuchs in Pakistan has been found to be on a consistent lower level compared to the general population, as very early exposure to discrimination and bullying in school environment. Research indicates that transgender youth are at a higher risk for dropping out of school because of bullying in the school, institutional discrimination, and family conflict (Batoool et al., 2025). Rather than being a measure of absconding from school, school dropout rates are an important demographic marker of structural exclusion. Arshad et al. (2024) also reveal a robust downward trend of lower education leading to reduced employment and long-term economic sustainability for women and men who are transgender in the South Asian context, further unraveling the South Asian context of the compound disadvantage of gender diverse people on education.

It is also true that the effects of adverse childhood experiences are related to future demographic trajectories. As would be expected, the vast majority of Khwaja Sira report having left home because their families rejected them or because they had a disagreement with their families about

their gender identity, facilitated by transgender community networks (Majid & Yasir, 2024). The findings from the research on Parenting and neo-panoptic scrutiny of young khwaja sira and hijra in Peshawar further explores the practices of restrictive and punitive parenting in families prior to the person's uprooting from the house, which often pave the way for them to settle in community-based living (Alamgir, 2024). In qualitative research, verbal, physical or sexual abuse at some point during childhood has been well documented, and the presence of trauma-related demographic factors is well established and should be systematically included in psychological research design. The early problems tend to overlap with learning problems, further accentuating a life course of economic precarity.

### **2.3. Jobs and Economic Exclusion**

In the Pakistani literature, one of the most salient indicators of being marginalized is still the concept of employment status. Arslan et al. (2023) noted that discrimination, harassment, and lack of education qualifications in the workplace are significant factors that impact the employment of trans people. Thereby, most of the people work in the informal sector such as dancing at social functions, beauty work or begging for food. These roles can be recognition and income in the community or they can be a form of social stereotyping and a restriction on career opportunities.

Income distribution is skewed in the eunuch population, just like the other groups, in a similar way as lower socio-economic groups. Studies conducted in Punjab, however, indicate that a huge proportion of the transgender community earns less than the national average and that only a small percentage of transgender individuals are employed in stable jobs (Kalhor & Khan, 2023). This economic marginalisation is compounded by the lack of formal financial, housing and welfare services. Thus it is necessary to take into account demographic features such as monthly income and occupation so as to have an idea on the structural background of the psychological outcome.

### **2.4. Home Environment and Social Services**

Another significant demographic trait, which is influenced by cultural practice and survival strategy, is living arrangement. The guru-chela system is an alternative family construct that offers emotional and financial direction as well as a more encompassing sense of family. This system is believed to engender resilience, while also limiting access to mainstream social integration (Redding 2020). The degree of peer support and fewer family contacts, which affect demographic factors like marital status, frequency of family contact and length of openly transgendered life,

may be stronger within transgender communities than for individuals. Housing insecurity in Peshawar among young khwaja sira has been studied recently, which has placed communal living well beyond the realm of a "reserved territory" and into the space of "actively resisting resisters and resilient handmaids," where the displaced makes new kins, new safe grounds, and new identities (Alamgir & Azhar, 2025).

Urban migration also has an impact on living standards in significant ways. The economic opportunity and existing social networks in the major Punjab cities such as Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, and Multan make these cities as hubs of Khwaja Sira population concentration. However, urban environments also subject people to increased levels of social scrutiny, harassment and victimisation. Qualitative research in Sargodha shows how the everyday interactions people have on the streets can breed transphobic attitudes, adding to their sense of isolation and limiting their ability to access certain services (Batoool et al., 2025). These results highlight the need to consider regional context when examining demographic trends in this population as a whole.

## **2.5. Marital status and family relationships**

Gender identity in Pakistan is a complex and complex subject, with the marital status of eunuchs embodying multiple and conflicting cultural norms. Even though traditional marriage is uncommon in this population, some people have nontraditional and non-civil marriages. Studies have shown that significant numbers of transgender people have no spouse, and comparatively smaller numbers have separated or divorced, or are widows or widowers (Majid & Yasir, 2024). Many of the relationships with family members can change and after having been rejected, some may have only limited contact. These current family dynamics may have implications for psychological health and emotional regulation and recovery patterns.

## **2.6. Trauma and the Psychological Reactions to it**

Trauma is a very important demographic and socio-cultural factor in the context of transgender studies in Pakistan. Some of the most common adverse experiences reported include verbal harassment, physical violence, and sexual exploitation (Arslan et al., 2023; Thalho et al., 2024). A recent study that chronicles sexual violence against khwaja sira in Swat suggests that such victimization is not a single incident, but is instead a structural characteristic of khwaja sira

demography, and that trauma exposure should be considered as such (Azhar, Ahmad, & Tariq, 2024). Complementary research conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic on khwaja sira mental health also illustrates how economic precarity, the disappearance of informal income sources, and increased social isolation are all contributing factors to increasing psychological distress during an acute crisis (Azhar, Guzman Herrera, & Ahmad, 2024). Meanwhile, growing research in coping strategies of khwaja sira in Swat also underscores the adaptive function of community solidarity, awareness building and coping with hardship through religious frames in mitigating the psychological effects of chronic marginalisation (Azhar et al., 2025). These experiences have the power to affect mental health outcomes as well as demographic trends like the age at leaving home, work pathways, and living arrangements. It is now widely recognized by scholars that trauma for this population needs to be understood as a socio-structural phenomenon and not as an individual phenomenon. The study of trauma variables in the design of the research can lead to a more complete understanding of resilience and recovery in marginalized groups.

## **2.7. Recent Empirical Developments (2024–2026)**

Since 2024, there has been a series of studies published that have significantly contributed to the knowledge of khwaja sira demography and lived experience within Pakistan. Legal-critical scholarship has developed over a long stretch to highlight the persistence of criminalization and social exclusion despite formal legal recognition (Kazmi, 2025). Ethnographic studies have recorded how the khwaja sira constructs belonging, kinship and identities in communal dera households after families reject them (Alamgir & Azhar, 2025). Previous studies have explored and examined the coercive dynamics of parental control in the lead up to leaving the family home (Alamgir, 2024), the prevalence and normalization of sexual violence within community life (Azhar, Ahmad, & Tariq, 2024), the compounding psychological burden of the COVID-19 pandemic on already economically precarious population (Azhar, Guzman Herrera, & Ahmad, 2024), and the collective coping strategies khwaja sira rely on in responding to chronic marginalisation (Azhar et al., 2025). As a whole, this recent scholarship underscores the main claim of the present study: Demographic patterns of eunuchs in Pakistan cannot be interpreted without considering the structural, familial and community-level factors that influence them, and systematic demographic mapping is still a complementary tool to this extensive literature on eunuchs in Pakistan, the vast majority of which is qualitative and legal-critical.

## **2.8. The study also identified the following gaps in the existing literature**

Although the issue of transgender rights and discrimination is now frequently brought up in Pakistan, detailed demographic research is still a rarity. The majority of the recent literature, such as qualitative and legal-critical works discussed above, are from a sample of small interviews or doctrinal legal analysis, not from systematic, survey-based demographic mapping (Alamgir & Azhar 2025; Azhar et al., 2025; Kazmi, 2025). The conclusions of many researchers are drawn from small, qualitative data samples or they only look at health results and not at a systematic organization of socio-demographic data. The need for cross-sectional surveys to systematically look into variables including trauma exposure, living arrangements, income, employment, and education in specific regional contexts is still apparent. Demographic information of this nature can be used to guide culturally appropriate interventions and policy agendas which can help to enhance social inclusion and provision of mental health services.

Overall, socio-demographic shifts among eunuchs in Pakistan are driven by complex dynamics of exclusion, marginalisation, cultural norms, legal and familial practices, and early-life trauma, as recent research shows (Alamgir, 2024; Kazmi, 2025). Global statistics give a baseline understanding of the population level facts to help to understand psychological constructs like emotional regulation and healing. It is important to place the demographic analysis within a broader context of Pakistan, which goes beyond a deficit-oriented approach and can focus on the resilience and diversity of Khwaja Sira communities in line with the strengths-based approach of the latest ethnographic scholarship (Alamgir & Azhar, 2025; Azhar et al., 2025). The current research builds upon this existing knowledge and contributes to a growing body of scholarship on effective promotion of inclusive and evidence-based social policy that is based on an in-depth demographic analysis of cross-sectional survey data.

## **3. Method**

### **3.1. Research Design**

The analysis of socio-demographic profile of eunuch (Khwaja Sira / transgender people) in Pakistan was used cross sectional survey method, which was a quantitative method. Descriptive research framework was used and the goal was to systematically record demographic factors, such as age, gender identity, education, occupation, marital status, residence type, and trauma-related factors. Cross-section designs best suit demographic studies since it enables the researcher to take

the trends of a given population at one instance in time without controlling the variables. The survey method allowed obtaining the standardized responses in more than one location, which provided the consistency of measurements and helped to conduct statistical analysis.

The main aim of the methodology process was to come up with an evidence based demographic description of eunuchs in the urban centers in Punjab. The research was aimed at a more descriptive study instead of an experimental one, which paid special attention to the population features, distribution, and situational aspects, associated with social inclusion and psychological well-being.

### **3.2. Population and Setting**

The target sample consisted of eunuchs and transgender in big cities of Pakistan in general and particularly in the cities of province Punjab. The respondents were selected in the cities Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sargodha, Bahawalpur and Faisalabad. These cities were singled out for consideration because they have Khwaja Sira communities and can be reached to meet for collection of data. The urban environment was valued as the past literature shows that transgender people usually move into metropolis urban areas where community networks and sources of livelihood are more convenient.

Sample consisted of a wide spectrum of socio-economic status, matrimonial status and work status. The inclusion criteria were: Participants need to be between 18 years old and have self-identified as a eunuch, Khwaja Sira, or transgender. The people that failed to make an informed consent or those that were unable to fill the survey were not included in the study.

### **3.3. The number of samples and the sampling procedure**

The participants who were used in the study were 200 in total. The sample size was calculated on the basis of the feasibility and the requirement to have enough representation in various demographic groups. Researchers consider 200 as a representative sample size when conducting a social science study in order to conduct descriptive statistical analysis and to also determine variation in a specific population group.

A non-probability purposive sampling was used for the recruitment of participants. The principle behind this is that eunuch community is a population which is difficult to reach and hence cannot be sampled by using any probability sampling technique. The individuals were recruited from community networks and local contacts and through referrals within transgender support groups.

There were also snowball factors involved, in which they were not only suggesting other qualified individuals in their social circles. Typically these will be used in studies involving marginalised groups in order to build trust and to access without compromising cultural practices.

### **3.4. Data Collection Procedure**

Information was collected in detail through a proforma which was prepared based on a structured survey. Items included on the survey included age, gender identity, educational level, living situation, marital status, geographic location, occupation, monthly income bracket, resident city, years since leaving home, being a caregiver as a child, and experiencing verbal, physical, and sexual abuse as a child. The participants were also asked to provide their school drop out age to gain a better understanding of the school pathways.

The survey instrument was administered in a culturally sensitive manner and the people were given the opportunity to respond to the questionnaire on their own or with the researcher's assistance if they had any literacy problems. The gathering of data was done in various cities to make sure that we had various regional settings. Responses were all anonymous to ensure confidentiality of the participants and to enable them give out all sensitive information freely.

### **3.5. Measures and Variables**

The categorical variables and continuous variables were included in the demographic proforma. Age and years of open living were continuous variables while the remaining variables like gender identity, education, marital status, occupation, income category and living arrangement were measured by pre-defined categories which would suit the socio-cultural context of Pakistan. Trauma-related variables (verbal abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse) were also dichotomously coded (0 No, 1 Yes). To ensure the relevance and understanding of the demographic questionnaire, it was designed based on the previous studies of the transgender population conducted in Pakistan.

### **3.6. Statistical Analysis**

The Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to enter and analyze all the data. A preliminary analysis of the data was to detect the existence of missing data, coding errors and inconsistencies. A descriptive statistic analysis was carried out to describe the demographic profile

of the sample. The frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used in the analyses depending on the level of measurement of the individual variables.

In order to provide a succinct description of the socio-demographic trends, categorical variables such as education, marital status, occupation and income were categorised into frequency distributions. Age and years living openly were continuous variables and measures of central tendency were used. The data analysis also was of descriptive nature, and not inferential, with the primary research objective being descriptive in nature rather than the testing of causal hypotheses.

### **3.7. Ethical Consideration**

The research was carried out with strict adherence to the ethical principles. The respondents gave their consent to do the research and were informed about it before the data were collected. The participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of their responses and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. No information in the dataset allowed identification of the participants to ensure anonymity.

Since the issue of exposure to trauma and personal identity are delicate, the questionnaire was conducted with cultural carefulness and reverence. The researcher had ensured that the participants were comfortable and feeling safe throughout, and never coerced or pressured them. Data was safely stored and was only utilized in the academic research. The ethical standards of Pakistan were followed to safeguard the dignity and welfare of the participants in the process of social science research.

## **4. Results**

The participants were classified by their demographic characteristics. The demographic characteristics of the individuals were categorized.

The total number of sampled eunuchs/transgender individuals which were used in the current study was 200 people involved in the study with representatives of various cities in Punjab, Pakistan. The SPSS was used to summarize the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants using descriptive statistical methods. To give a complete outline of the sample profile, frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were determined.

**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Demographic Variables

| Variable                    | M     | SD   | Min | Max |
|-----------------------------|-------|------|-----|-----|
| Age (years)                 | 32.85 | 8.91 | 18  | 58  |
| Years Living Open           | 6.21  | 3.74 | 0   | 16  |
| Age of Leaving Home (years) | 18.07 | 3.89 | 10  | 28  |
| School Dropout Age (years)  | 14.02 | 2.83 | 8   | 20  |

**Note.** N = 200. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

The average age of the respondents was 32.85 (SD = 8.91), which is young adult as demonstrated in Table 1. The average age of openness to transgender identity was 6.21 years (SD = 3.74) and participants indicated that the identity was relatively recently expressed publicly by many. Mean leaving home age was 18.07 years (SD = 3.89), which indicates young movements to independent or community-based living conditions. In addition, the average age of school dropouts was 14.02 years (SD = 2.83) which had a significant educational interference during the adolescent phase.

**Table 2:** Gender Identity Distribution

| Category     | n  | %    |
|--------------|----|------|
| Khawaja Sira | 83 | 41.5 |
| Trans Woman  | 73 | 36.5 |
| Trans Man    | 34 | 17.0 |
| Non-Binary   | 10 | 5.0  |

**Note.** Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Table 2 shows the distribution of gender identities. Most of the participants identified themselves as Khawaja Sira (41.5%) or trans women (36.5%), which is true to socially accepted gender-diverse identities in Pakistan. Fewer percentages were trans men (17.0%), non-binary people (5.0%), which is reflective of diversity in the sample.

**Table 3:** Education Level

| Education | n  | %    |
|-----------|----|------|
| Primary   | 55 | 27.5 |

| <b>Education</b> | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|------------------|----------|----------|
| Middle           | 40       | 20.0     |
| Matric           | 35       | 17.5     |
| Inter            | 35       | 17.5     |
| Graduation       | 25       | 12.5     |
| Master           | 8        | 4.0      |
| M.Phil.          | 2        | 1.0      |

The patterns of educational attainment (see Table 3) demonstrated that the majority of the participants were poorly educated. Primary and middle level education were almost one half of the sample, and only a small proportion of the sample obtained higher education degrees. Interestingly, the number of participants with M.Phil. was two, with the population having structural impediments to higher education. These results indicate current differences in access to education and emphasize the fact that social exclusion can have a long-term effect on educational paths.

**Table 4:** Current Living Arrangement

| <b>Living Arrangement</b> | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| With Trans Community      | 80       | 40.0     |
| With Family or Parents    | 49       | 24.5     |
| Alone on Rent             | 37       | 18.5     |
| With Friends              | 34       | 17.0     |

Table 4 summarizes the present living conditions. Quite a significant percentage of respondents lived in transgender community contexts (40.0%), which indicates that collective living forms like guru-chela networks remain relevant. Co-residency with biological family members was lower (24.5%), meaning that most of the respondents had other support mechanisms.

**Table 5:** Marital Status

| <b>Marital Status</b> | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|
| Single                | 134      | 67.0     |
| Married               | 27       | 13.5     |
| Divorced              | 15       | 7.5      |
| Separated             | 15       | 7.5      |
| Widowed               | 9        | 4.5      |

The distributions of marital status (see Table 5) revealed that most of the participants were single (67.0%), which were less than those who were married (9.5%), divorced (4.3%), separated (4.3%), and widowed (9.5%). The single status is mainly due to the social and legal issues that relate to marriage and long-lasting relationships among eunuchs and transgender in Pakistan.

**Table 6: Area of Residence**

| <b>Area</b> | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-------------|----------|----------|
| Urban       | 155      | 77.5     |
| Rural       | 45       | 22.5     |

A majority of the respondents lived in urban areas (77.5%), as shown in Table 6, which indicates migration to urban areas where, they find community networks and economic opportunities more convenient. Urban concentration implies more transparency and contact with transgender support systems as well

**Table 7: Occupation**

| <b>Occupation</b> | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Dance in Parties  | 53       | 26.5     |
| Begging           | 38       | 19.0     |
| Unemployed        | 37       | 18.5     |
| Beauty Parlor     | 22       | 11.0     |
| Regular Job       | 15       | 7.5      |

| <b>Occupation</b> | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Business          | 15       | 7.5      |
| Other             | 11       | 5.5      |
| Student           | 9        | 4.5      |

Table 7 describes the occupational patterns. Informal jobs were predominant in the sample with dancing at social events (26.5) and begging (19.0) being the major sources of income. The percentage of those who were unemployed was quite significant (18.5%), whereas the number of people who worked at regular jobs and business was rather low. These results demonstrate that stable working places are unavailable to a great extent, and the socio-economic marginalization of this population group is evident.

**Table 8: Monthly Income (PKR)**

| <b>Income Category</b> | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|------------------------|----------|----------|
| 11000–20000            | 97       | 48.5     |
| 21000–50000            | 51       | 25.5     |
| Below 10000            | 42       | 21.0     |
| Above 50000            | 10       | 5.0      |

Table 8 shows the monthly distributions of income. Almost fifty percent of the participants reported earning 11, 000-20, 000 PKR per month, with only 5% making more than 50000 PKR. The dominance of the lower income groups is the indication of economic vulnerability and lack of access to formal labor markets.

**Table 9: City Distribution**

| <b>City</b> | <b>n</b> |
|-------------|----------|
| Lahore      | 30       |
| Multan      | 29       |
| Gujranwala  | 27       |

| City       | n  |
|------------|----|
| Sargodha   | 26 |
| Bahawalpur | 25 |
| Rawalpindi | 23 |
| Faisalabad | 21 |
| Sialkot    | 19 |

The participants were selected in various cities of Punjab (see Table 9), i.e. Lahore, Multan, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Bahawalpur, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, and Sialkot. The comparatively equal distribution among urban areas increases the representative quality of the sample and offers the wider understanding of the regional demographic trends.

**Table 10:** Childhood Caregiver

| Caregiver | n   | %    |
|-----------|-----|------|
| Parents   | 131 | 65.5 |
| Guru      | 54  | 27.0 |
| Orphanage | 15  | 7.5  |

A summary of childhood caregiving arrangements is included in Table 10. The vast majority of individuals were raised by parents (65.5%) but a substantial minority indicated that they had been raised by transgender community networks or an orphanage. Demographic variables related to trauma showed that verbal, physical, and sexual abuse were very prevalent and this was in line with the prior studies that have reported high levels of being exposed to adverse childhood events among transgender individuals in Pakistan.

The demographic data reveal a population of young adults, with low educational status, urban and dependent of informal economic processes. The findings on the use of community based living as well as school dropouts point to the existence of other socio-structural issues that impact eunuchs and transgender people in Pakistan. These demographic trends provide a much-needed base for

understanding psychological structure such as emotional control and recovery that will be observed in future studies.

## 5. Discussion

The present study aimed to provide a socio-demographic profile of the eunuchs and transgenders of Pakistan through a cross sectional survey conducted in different cities of Pakistan. The results reflect the characteristics of the population that have been interrupted from early childhood education, socio-economically disadvantaged, living in urban areas, and in the community. Such population trends can be useful to understand the overall social context in which the psychological processes such as emotional regulation and healing take place.

### 5.1. Demographic Trends in the Pakistani Environment is a comprehensive study of Pakistan's demographic landscape and its implications

The mean age of respondents could indicate that this sample consisted of a high proportion of young and middle aged adults since the entire generation change is ongoing in Khwaja Sira society. Social exclusion and conflict over identity contribute to the development of life paths because of the relatively young age of home leaving and the large proportion of community resident homes. It has been demonstrated in earlier studies in Pakistan that family rejection and stigma tend to play a role in the early migration of transgender communities to urban areas where people can find acceptance, economic prospects, and social support (Arshad et al., 2024; Thalhoo et al., 2024). In the present results, the observations were confirmed that a large proportion of the participants lived “outside of,” and not in “traditional” families, which is in the transgender community.

The other important characteristic of the sample was the urban living, with most of the respondents residing in urban areas. The shifting population in the cities like Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi is showing a duality in the urban environment as both opportunity and vulnerability. Cities provide access to established networks and informal jobs, as well as subject a person to an increase in discrimination and publicity. This trend is in line with the earlier studies that indicated that trans communities in Pakistan are overrepresented in urban areas as a result of social and economic need (Batoool et al., 2025).

## **5.2. Younger Education and Structural Inequality**

Education level has proved to be one of the most impressive demographic differences in the current study. The education level of most respondents was low or medium education and a small percentage had received post-graduate education. The findings are consistent with literature available that shows high dropout rates of transgender children in Pakistan due to bullying, lack of care and protection in the institutions and lack of conducive learning spaces (Kalhor & Khan, 2023). Early school dropout is not just a limitation on equal access to job opportunities, it also contributes to the vicious cycle of marginalisation that has implications for psychological health and social integration.

In a bigger picture, lower education levels can possibly determine the ability of people to adopt the adaptive emotional regulation skills and availability of mental health resources. The studies suggest education may serve as the protective factor by enhancing coping mechanisms, social awareness and economic security. Thus, seen learning differences bring up the necessity of inclusion policy that favors safe learning conditions and equal opportunities to higher education of gender-different individuals.

## **5.3. Economic Vulnerability, Employment and Income**

The samples occupational structure is reflective of the endemic marginalization of the community of eunuch in the economy. Those informal jobs comprised dancing at the parties, begging, beauty services, and some formal jobs. These trends follow the past findings which indicate that discrimination in the labor markets reduces the opportunities of getting steady employment for transgender individuals in Pakistan (Arslan et al., 2023). Even this indicates that the low income groups are still being triumphant which also highlights the socio-economic problems of such population.

The consequences of economic vulnerability are significant with regards to psychological results. Monetary crisis can also be a contributor to stress, and can impact access to medical care, placing persons in hazardous situations. On the other hand, community-based occupations can have the effect of offering a sense of belonging and cultural identity implying a complicated interaction among marginalization and resilience. Future studies are needed to identify the interaction between economic factors and emotional regulation mechanisms and healing courses in eunuchs.

#### **5.4. Family Dynamics and Living Arrangements and Social Support**

The presence of community living arrangement among the members of the transgender culture, identified in this study, points to the nature of the families chosen and the guru-chela system. Some participants indicated that there was biological family support, while most participants indicated that they got emotional and financial support from their peers. The literature that came before suggested that community structures were perceived as protective and restrictive areas, which foster solidarity and enhance social boundaries (Redding, 2020). Overall, the results suggest that social support is an important stressor in transgender populations that can be a pathway through which negative experiences get eased and transpeople can heal.

Marital status patterns also illustrate the issues of the complex social dynamics of eunuchs in Pakistan. The domination of the single participants could also be a result of legal, cultural and religious restrictions on marriage. Community-based relationships are significant as these relationships can impact emotional health, social identity, and access to traditional sources of support.

#### **5.5. Trauma and the implications to healing**

Some of the factors that suggest this population is structurally vulnerable include demographics and early age at leaving home, as well as exposure to abuse. The verbal, physical and sexual abuse rates in the sample are high, which agrees with the existing literature that suggests that transgender people are exposed to a higher level of adverse childhood experiences in South Asia (Majid & Yasir, 2024). The experiences will likely impact emotional regulation strategies and healing directions most likely.

The cross-cutting of trauma, social ostracism and economic poverty provide a psychological lens to underscore the importance of culturally responsive mental health services. The demographic trends in this paper demonstrate that it is impossible to consider only the individual level in the healing process of eunuchs but instead it needs to be considered in larger socio-cultural and structural frameworks.

#### **5.6. Research and Policy Implications**

The demographical results of the current research have a number of implications to the future research and policy formulation. First, the high proportion of informal employment and dependence on informal employment in cities shows the need in the future for vocational training and anti-discrimination policy in the workplace. Secondly, educational differences brought up by the results obtained show the importance of inclusive school programmes, particularly in regard to bullying and institutions. Finally, the centrality of community living arrangements suggests that the interventions that aim at improving mental health and emotional regulation should involve culturally based intervention without disrupting the social organization.

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