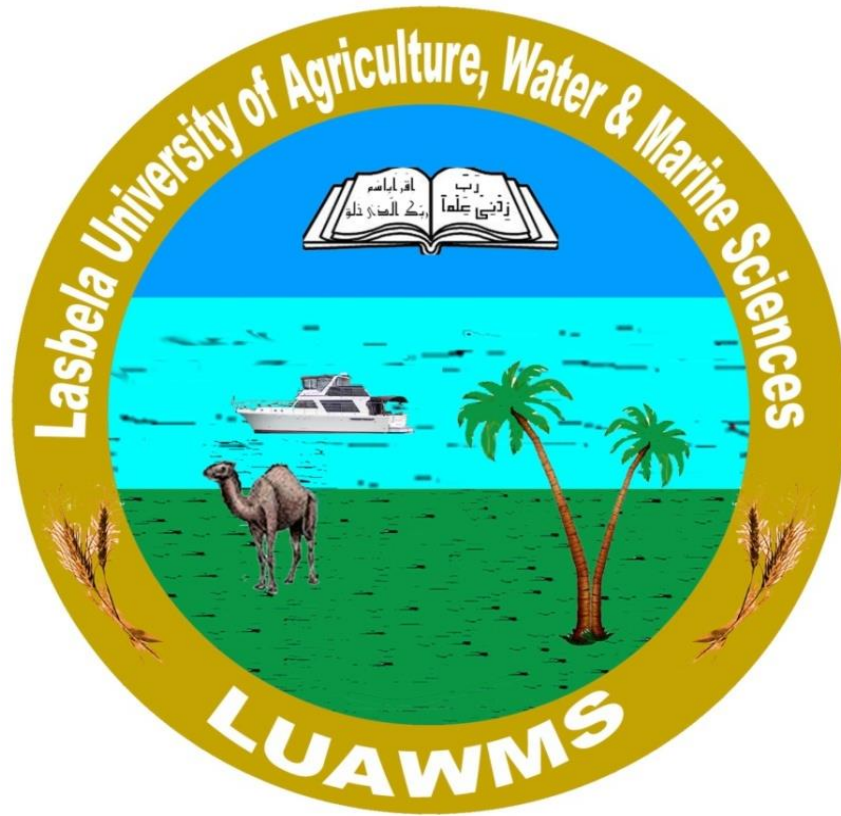


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Balochistan Journal of Linguistics is a journal published annually by the Department of English Language and Linguistics, Lasbela University, Uthal, Balochistan. It accepts papers for consideration on any aspect of theoretical and applied linguistics. The authors are requested to send their papers according to the following guidelines.

**I. All manuscripts in English should follow the following format:**

The first page should contain title; author(s)'s name(s), affiliation, E-mail address; and abstract of 150-350 words, followed by three to five key words, main text, acknowledgment, endnotes, and references in subsequent pages. Key words should be given in italics.

**II. Manuscripts in English should use the following style for headings and subheadings:**

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- 1.1
- 1.1.1
- 1.1.2
- 1.2
- 2

The main heading should be written bold in font size 14. All other headings should be written bold in font size 12. DONOT underline any headings at all.

**III. Tables, figures, and maps should have headings and be numbered consecutively and should be clearly presented. Notes and sources should be placed under each table and figure. Photo will be treated as figures.**

**Format**

Use Letter size paper with Times New Roman writing style font size 12 for the main text with line spacing 1.5 and 10 for the abstract with 1.15 line spacing. Left margin should be 3.5 but all other margins should be 2.5 mm. Tables and figures should not be split on two pages.

**Other requirements**

Give one paragraph introduction of all authors in five to seven sentences (for each author) describing their educational background and research achievements in a separate file. But do not use hyperlinks.

**Plagiarism**

Authors should submit similarity index along with the manuscripts of the papers. They are also required to submit an affidavit declaring that the material in the paper is their own and it has not already been published. Quotes should be properly acknowledged.

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- 1) Use APA style of referencing.

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**Maida Ashraf & Zahida Mansoor**

# Exploring Trans-Students Experiences in a Transgender School

Maida Ashraf & Zahida Mansoor

**ABSTRACT:** The study aims to explore trans-students' experiences in a transgender school. Although there was no bar on transgender admission into the educational institutions, however the transgender were not encouraged to enroll into the mainstream Pakistani schools. The current research used a quantitative design, as it attempted to examine the experiences of a particular group of people employing a case study approach, in order to create an understanding of the issue in its real-life setting. The purposively selected sample consisted of trans-students registered in the Transgender School. The data was collected through survey questionnaire about student experiences and analyzed statistically. The major findings indicate that the majority of trans students felt safe, physically and emotionally in the trans-school. Future research could be expanded to include school staff and authorities to gain more knowledge about trans educational aspect. The study concludes that the government and educational authorities should consider transgender's educational concerns and provide resources to facilitate the trans-students. Understanding of students' experiences is vital to developing policy to identify and resolve their problems, and without considering the gaps, we cannot make the school welcoming for trans-person.

**Keywords:** *Transgender School, trans-students, school experiences.*

## 1. Introduction

Gender is traditionally binary and restricted to the category of male and female while transgender is an umbrella term used for all those who do not lie in these two groups (Spagna, 2013). The transgender umbrella is described as *male-to-female, female-to-male, intersex, cross dressers, transsexual persons, and gender queer* (Davidson, 2007), *Khawaja sara, Hijra, Khusra, or Murat*, are different names given in Pakistan to third gender.

The golden era for third gender was during the time of the Mughal monarchs, where the transgenders were to guard their ladies in courts and palaces (Jami, 2005), with the end of the princely rulers their situation and position also deteriorated, broke them financially and turned them to begging. In Pakistan, transgenders are the most disrespected and marginalized community in society; overlooked in all aspects of life, including schooling, government jobs, health care, and even life protection (Saddique, 2017).

In 2013, Pakistan's Supreme Court ruled that the transgenders have equal rights as all citizens under Pakistan's constitution. The court ordered both the federal and provincial governments to grant them rights in all areas of life, including education, employment, and inheritance (Asad, 2012). Yet, despite all the constitutional rights, they are still denied their basic rights such as the right to personal freedom, the right to education, freedom of speech, equality and the right against discrimination and violence (Saeed et al., 2017).



Furthermore, several studies point out that transgenders are at risk of experiencing increased psychological distress due to the harassment and discrimination they face (Efrigg, Bieschke, & Locke, 2011). Common areas where discrimination is reported by transgender individuals are health care systems, government policies, housing, and educational institutions (Dispenza et al., 2012).

Studies on transgenders education also suggest that discrimination in schools is widespread. Transgender respondents more widely reported experiencing problems at school (Dugan et al., 2012). The study shows that trans people face similar problems to those they might experience in the workplace: participants ' felt isolated and had to stay ' in the closet, ' bullying by teachers and other students, prohibited to use or expelled to use the ' wrong ' toilet facilities, and their institution did not have a policy of trans-acceptance (McCann et al., 2019).

In addition, transgender students are also much more likely to engage in self-injurious behavior and attempted suicide due to the prevalence of bullying and depression (Efrigg, Bieschke, & Locke, 2011). One of the most common themes in studies on transgender students is that when they attend school they often feel isolated and out of place because they know few, if any, other transgender students and generally lack a sense of belonging anywhere on campus (Beemyn, 2012).

In Pakistani context, despite all constitutional rights, they are denied their basic right of education, the government educational institutions have never had a third-gender student in mainstream schools (Asad, 2012). Consequently, they are mostly uneducated because the society does not accept them and therefore are deprived of their basic rights to education. And even if they do get a chance to enroll, they are harassment and threatened on a daily basis and are asked to leave school or they drop out of their own.

In the recent times, the society has shown more tolerance and progressive attitude towards transgender persons. The first school intended specifically for the transgender opened in Lahore under the aegis of a non-governmental organization (NGO), with the goal of providing skill-based training and curriculum for the transgender community (Jalil, 2018).

The Supreme Court of Pakistan's ruling gave transgenders equal rights of access to education, ordering all educational institutions at government level to provide transgender persons equal enrolment opportunity without refusal (Asad, 2012). However, even though there is no bar on the enrolment of transgender persons, the government educational institutions have never had a third-gender student in the mainstream schools (Achakzai, 2018). For many transgenders, school was the first stage in the public arena where they experienced personal insecurity, harassment, and abuse (Abbas, 2014). This situation calls for investigating the experiences of trans-students in transgender School.

### **1.1 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of study was to investigate the experiences of trans-students in transgender School. The impetus for this study was the lack of literature on trans educational issues, particularly on trans-students' experiences at transgender school in Lahore, Pakistan.

### **1.2 Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework for the study is supported by the transgender theory. Several transgender theorists (Elliot, 2010) argued that neither feminist nor queer theories were suitable for trans-issue exploration. Transgender theory emerged as a tool for investigating and analysis from scholars who found feminist and queer theories insufficient or inadequate to explore trans people's lives (Nagoshi & Brzuzy, 2010). A major departure from the queer theory was that, the transgender theory takes both embodiment and lived experiences into consideration.

### **1.3 Significance**

In Pakistan, there is less research on transgenders and their educational issues, this study will help to fulfill the gap in the research to investigate the trans-students' experiences in transgender school. It will provide a connection between the marginalized group and the larger society. It will also assist government and educational authorities in adjusting their policies, procedures, and resources to better serve the trans-student population. In order to facilitate an atmosphere in which transgender students feel included, it is necessary to investigate the experiences of trans-students in transgender school, since having support and a sense of belonging makes an individual more self-worthy and increases the likelihood of the individual staying in school (Bizumic, Reynolds, & Meyers, 2012).

## **2. Literature Review**

The transgenders derive their cultural heritage from the Mughal era's *Khawja Sara*. *Khawja Saras* have been appointed as caretakers of their harems by Mughal rulers. They played important roles in the royal courts; held considerable sway in state affairs and served as their master's confidants. With the end of the princely rulers their state and rank also worsened, broke them financially and more often than not turned them to begging (Talwar, 1999).

### **2.2. Transgender Rights**

In all official documents, the Supreme Court's decision to grant rights and privileges to *khwaja siras* in a series of rulings passed between 2009 and 2012 that gave the third gender some form of equality (Haider, 2009). In addition, the court ordered the federal and provincial institutions to grant them basic rights of work, education, health, and jobs in various government departments over a comparable period of time

(Daniela & Devika, 2015). Yet, despite the court's ruling, these rights remain elusive and still not put into practice in the community (Saddique et al., 2017), ignoring the transgender in every walk of life including, education, government jobs, health care and even security for their life.

### **2.3. Attitudes towards the Transgender**

There are number of national and international studies which show the discrimination and social exclusion of transgender community in society. Morton (2008) found that most of the respondents had been subjected to transphobic harassment by strangers in public places who perceived them to be trans, mostly in the form of verbal abuse, but some respondents had experienced transphobic threatening behaviour, some had been physically assaulted and few had been sexually assaulted. Whittle et al (2007) also discovered that a majority of the respondents had faced harassment in public spaces.

Sharma (2009) says, that the stigma attached to the third gender ultimately leads to social exclusion that pushes them to the fringes of society. According to transgenders, this condition makes their inclusion very difficult in society. Further, the general population's fear of stigma is so strong that it not only drives transgenders out of their homes, but also undermines their relatives' interactions within their kinship relations and also hinders the establishment of fresh links with others. Another study (Batool, 2019) focusing on the ongoing denial of equality the social distinction and apathy towards transgenders, found they were ostracized. On account of their identity they are forced into ritualized begging because adequate schooling, health care and job opportunities are not available for them.

Clements-Nolle et al. (2006) in their study to evaluate the independent predictors among transgender people of attempted suicide found depression, gender-based discrimination, and victimization based on gender were independently linked with attempted suicide. In addition, increasing social acceptance of the transgender community and decreased gender discrimination may help prevent suicide in this highly stigmatized group.

Studies in Pakistan have also highlighted the transgenders' social exclusion in society. Khattak (2017) in their study to explore *Khawaja Saras* gender identity and social interaction issues in Pakistani society, found that they were offered less respect and social acceptance, and felt socially isolated to a significant degree. In addition, there was a greater need for trust and encouragement among *Khawaja Saras* to live within mainstream society while making their social conditions favorable and creating a respectable space for themselves through refined behaviors, improved human conduct and established personality.

## 2.4. Barriers to Transgenders Education

The literature on transgender students reports high rates of bullying, abuse, and violence (Wyss, 2004). Studies show that transgenders experience discrimination in educational institutes all over the world.

A research by Whittle, Turner and Al-Alami (2007) on the experiences of discrimination among transgender people looked at school experience as one arena in which there is inequality for trans people. The study found that most of the transgenders' youth were harassed or bullied at school, not only by their fellow pupils, but also by school staff including teachers. In addition, findings from research of a similar nature using data of self-identified trans students found that 82 percent of these students felt insecure at school, while 37 percent remained absent from school "frequently" because of the bullying due to their gender; 62 percent struggled with cyber harassment, and, 67 percent had their possessions ruined at school (Greytak, Kosciw & Diaz 2009). Faculty often do not take the demands of students seriously to use their affirmed name, creating anxiety and distress for trans students (Goldberg et al., 2018).

In addition, the researchers (Burns et al., 2016) conducted a study to examine and understand the contributing factors and nature of educational inequality at various stages of their education for transgender students. The key obstacles were: gender stereotyping in classrooms, lack of awareness and comprehension of trans issues, lack of school guidance, inflexibility regarding school rules, rejection (including self-exclusion because of feelings of not being accepted), complicated processes of enrolment, moving away from home, and inadequate facilities. Further, the study revealed that faculty and staff do not have adequate skills and training on transgender matters, that there is a shortage of working plan on transgender issues, that there are few facilities available on institutes for trans-students, with insufficient therapy services available for the transgender pupils (McKinneys, 2005).

Another research (Grant et al., 2011) suggested that most of the trans students in high school report feeling unsafe because of their gender expression. The survey data demonstrated that high rates of bullying and physical assault were committed during school against trans students, prompting almost one out of six students to leave school. In addition, another study (Whittle et al., 2007), from a much larger sample of trans people, documents similar problems in classrooms.

According to studies, trans-students who report higher rates of harassment and discrimination, have a more negative perception of campus and classroom environment, and feel less welcomed as part of the campus community as compared to other students (Garvey et al., 2015). In their study Marine and Nicolazzo (2014) demonstrated that educational institutions reflect and reinforce social gender in practices, policies, and standards. While, Hall (2006) maintained that the "hidden minority" of trans people are oppressed in a society where heterosexuality is

considered the custom, and usually fail to find safe places of approval. The negative stereotypes that society imposes upon this minority create internal sentiments of misery, self-loathing, and low self-confidence. In addition, trans youth's emotional distress has been well reported as contributing to high-risk factors such as failure in school, drop-out, drugs abuse, unemployment, prostitution, and suicidal attempts. Bockting et al., (2013) found that psychological distress levels in trans people were directly impacted by stress related to social stigma, prejudice, and discrimination. These stresses can be a result of external and internal experiences.

Another study in Pakistan indicates that transgenders are willing to get education and to change their current occupation (Nazir & Yasir, 2016). They were currently engaged in occupations that were not considered respectable. In terms of employment, a positive aspect of the transgender population was that there was a strong likelihood of willingness to pursue certain honorable professions. They also needed support from the government to follow their choice of careers. On the other hand, for many transgenders, school becomes the first stage in the public arena in which personal insecurity is experienced. In class, verbal harassment and physical abuse are transgender-related occurrences (Riaz, 1996). In addition, one transgender explained that during school life he / she endured abuse. He / she explained how he / she was originally attending a school for boys but was moved to a mixed school after complaining to teachers about being touched and teased by classmates. The same person who graduated from college twenty years ago also explained how much bullying he / she had to quit at a boys ' college and received private tuition at home (Haider, 2009). According to the theory of gender minority stress (Hendricks & Testa, 2012), social aspects of discrimination build traumatic conditions for trans people, which can lead to problematic affective, emotional, and behavioral responses, resulting in impaired well-being (Perez-Brumer et al., 2017). The present study investigated the research question: What are the experiences of trans-students in transgender school?

### **3. Methodology**

The study used quantitative approach to conduct the research by using case-study design. The case study design is valuable in areas where there is negligible amount of previous work and not much is known about the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 1990). Aliaga, and Gunderson (2002), describes quantitative methods as elucidating an issue or phenomenon through gathering numerical data and analyse using mathematical methods; in particular statistics to answer questions like who, how much, what, where, how many, and how.

#### **3.1. Sampling**

In the study, purposive sampling technique was used to select the participant. Purposive sampling is a type of sampling in which the researcher consciously selects specific elements or subjects for inclusion in a study in order to ensure that the

elements will have certain characteristics relevant to the study (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009). The trans-students who were enrolled in the school at that time were all included as sample of the study.

## **3.2. Data Collection and Analysis**

### **3.2.1 Data collection Instrument**

Data for the purpose of the study was collected through survey questionnaire as a tool to investigate trans-students experiences in the transgender school. In addition, quantitative procedure is useful to quantify opinions, attitudes, and behaviors (Sukamolson, 2007).

### **3.2.2 Theoretical framework**

As, the questionnaire aimed to explore the experiences of trans students in the transgender school the Trans theory aided in the construction of statements that explored the identity-based experiences of students in relation with school environment. The transgender theory, an emerging theoretical orientation that encompasses the unique experiences of transgender. This theory departs from being entirely theoretical, rather this position seeks to honor trans people's daily needs and experiences in a real context. In addition, the trans theory offered the possibility of going beyond the biological dimension of transgenders and examining their identity-based interactions in very day-to-day life, including their desires, problems and perceptions, in order to obtain insight from first hand data.

### **3.2.3 Questionnaire structure**

The questionnaire had two sections. The first section was used to collect demographic data about age, gender, education, and occupation. The second section of the questionnaire was based on the questions organized into several categories according to their purpose, and links with the conceptual framework, to investigate the trans-students' school experiences of attitudes towards trans identity; resources; personal safety; classroom environment; social aspects of school life; mental and physical health and societal support. The close-ended questionnaire consisted of 30 statements. All responses were measured on a three-point rating scale (agree – undecided – disagree).

### **3.2.4 Validity**

In order to identify any type of problem (e.g. spelling error, ambiguity, and repetition) in questionnaire items, pilot survey was performed before the actual data collection. For pilot, the study conducted survey from three participants which were selected randomly from transgender school. Afterward, the study analyzed the participants' responses and their views about questionnaire construction to revise the

tool for improvement. Further, these participants were not included in the sample to conduct the final survey.

### 3.2.5 Data analysis

For quantitative analysis, the researcher used SPSS software for analysis. The collected data was analysed by applying SPSS for descriptive statistics i.e. calculating percentage. The percentage was calculated for each question respectively through SPSS. Moreover, the percentages were demonstrated through table for quick understanding.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Demographic Profile

The section shows the demographic profile of the students with respect to their age, education, and employment details. Results indicated 5 of the students fell into the 31- 45-year age bracket while 7 respondents were in the 18-30-year age group suggesting that all the students were in the adult learner category. It is important to note that some of the students did not indicate their age. In the education category, only 2 students had completed their primary education and 13 students had done or were doing short courses. It indicates that majority of students did not get any formal or academic education. Employment category shows that 2 students were doing part time job, 4 were doing full time job and 9 students were unemployed which is highlighting that some of the students were doing jobs along with their education.

### 4.2. Analysis of Questionnaire Data

**Table 1 Attitude towards Trans Identity**

Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Satisfied with current school life	8	53.3	4	26.7	3	20.0
School shows respect toward trans identity	11	73.3	3	20.0	1	6.7
Students feel confident about their identity	11	73.3	3	20.0	1	6.7
Discriminated based on gender	5	33.3	2	13.3	8	53.3
School is welcoming for trans people	12	80.0	2	13.3	1	6.7

The Table 1 shows the students responses to feelings about their identity and others attitude towards their trans identity in school. Of the 15 students 12 felt that school was welcoming for trans people, suggesting that the majority of the students were satisfied with the overall attitude of people towards trans identity in school. A majority of the students did not feel discriminated on gender basis although some felt

discriminated, indicating some elements of gender discrimination were present in school.

**Table 2 Resources**

Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Enough resources	6	40.0	4	26.7	5	33.3
Health services	0	0	3	20.0	12	80.0
Discuss problems	8	53.3	4	26.7	3	20.0
Counselling services	4	26.6	5	33.3	6	40
Bathroom facilities	10	66.7	5	33.3	0	0

Table 2 shows the responses of students about resources in school, 6 participants felt that school had enough resources while 5 disagreed, suggesting that there was something missing in current resources for students. Majority of the participants disagreed that their school provided health services and counselling services, it shows that school was not providing proper or sufficient counselling services and students discuss their problems with general staff in school.

**Table 3 Personal Safety**

Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Feel safe at school	12	80.0	2	13.3	1	6.7
Physically safe in classroom	12	80.0	3	20.0	0	0
Physically safe outside of the classroom	12	80.0	3	20.0	0	0
Emotionally safe in classroom	10	66.7	3	20.0	2	13.3
Emotionally safe outside of the classroom	8	53.3	2	13.3	5	33.3

The Table 3 shows responses of students about personal safety in school. Most of the students felt physically safe in and outside of their classroom, it indicates that large number of the students were physically safe in the school and they did not face physical abuse. Results are also indicating that some student felt emotionally unsafe outside the classroom which means that the environment outside the classroom was not comfortable for them.



**Table 4 Classroom Environment**

Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Teacher takes care of students	9	60.0	3	20.0	3	20.0
Encouraging behavior of teacher	10	66.7	3	20.0	2	13.3
Teacher is helpful	9	60.0	3	20.0	3	20.0
Class stays busy and does not waste time	8	53.3	3	20.0	4	26.0
Teacher's ways of doing things are fair	8	53.3	4	26.7	3	20.0

The Table 4 presents the responses of students on the classroom environment. A large number of participants felt that their teachers cared about them and encouraged them to do their best, the results are indicating that most of the students were satisfied with overall classroom environment as shown in table 5.

**Table 5 Social life in school**

Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Satisfied with social life within school	8	53.3	4	26.7	3	20.0
Good interaction with non-teaching staff	5	33.3	5	33.3	5	33.3
Good interaction with teachers	9	60.0	4	26.7	2	13.3
Good interaction with other students	7	46.7	5	33.3	3	20.0
Feel association with the school	7	46.7	5	33.3	3	20.0

Table 5 displays the students' responses about their social life within school. 9 (60.0%) students agreed that they had good interaction with teachers and 7 (46.7%) chose the last option that they had good interaction with other students, findings show that most of the students had positive interaction with teaching staff and other class fellows. On the other hand, interaction with non-teaching staff was not satisfactory for some students.

**Table 6 Physical and Mental Health**

Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Satisfied with physical health.	10	66.7	3	20.0	2	13.3
Struggle with mental health issues	4	26.7	5	33.3	6	40.0

The Table 6 shows the responses of students on their physical and mental health. Overall as indicated most of the students were satisfied with their physical health. On mental health issues, a majority were undecided as indicated where 6 students were not struggling, 4 were struggling and 5 students were not sure. It is significant to note that some of the students were not aware of what mental health signified and consequently had no idea about their mental health.

**Table 7 Societal Support**

Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Support from society is important	10	66.7	2	13.3	3	20.0
As a student, received support from society	3	20.0	5	33.3	7	46.7
Happy with the societal support	3	20.0	3	20.0	9	60.0

**Table 7** shows the participants responses about societal support. Majority of the respondents agreed that support from society was important for them. 7 (46.7%) respondents replied that they did not receive support from society. The results are indicating that societal support is important for students, but the society do not give them satisfactory support. It also indicates that the students had some expectations which were not fulfilled by society.

## 5. Discussion

In the context of demographic profile of trans students, the findings show that all learners were in the adult learner category with some having had no formal or early education background. Most of the respondents had taken up courses offered by the school, some of them had taken up courses in addition to their jobs, it indicates that this school was the first opportunity for them to get an education as well as continue with their jobs. Batool (2019) in their study also highlight the denial of equal opportunities and persistent societal indifference towards the transgender; marginalized and often forced into conventional begging in the absence of adequate schooling and job opportunities.

It is important to note that the students exhibited a positive attitude towards their own identity in school and pointed out that they felt confident about their trans- identity in the school environment, it indicates that the school provides opportunity to show and express their trans-identity which has made them comfortable in the school environment. This is supported by an earlier study (Hall, 2006) which concluded that the trans minority are degraded in a society where heterosexuality is considered the

norm, and usually fail to find supportive environments. The negative stereotypes create feelings of misery, revulsion, and depression.

The findings on personal safety show that large number of the students were physically safe in the school. But some student indicated that they felt emotionally unsafe outside the classroom, which means that the environment outside the classroom is not comfortable for them. It is important to note that students felt emotional disrespect but did not face any kind of physical danger from other people in school. As number of previous studies (Wyss, 2004), also reported the unpleasant incident faced by trans students that nearly everyone showed horrible incidents of emotional and physical abuse like taunting, pushing, unwanted touching, in the school. Further, trans-students' emotional distress has been well reported as contributing to high-risk factors such as failure in school, drop-out, drugs abuse, unemployment, and suicidal attempts (Hall, 2006).

In trans-school most of the students were satisfied with overall classroom environment. In addition, the students felt safe physically and emotionally during teacher-student interaction. Most of the earlier researches on classroom environment noticed the discrimination (from peer and teachers) experienced by trans students in school, while others examined reactions to fellow-related bullying of gender non-conforming students. A research by Whittle et al., (2007) also found that most of the transgenders were harassed or bullied at school, not only by their fellow students, but also by school staff including teachers.

On the other hand, the findings indicate that the respondents found their interaction with non-teaching staff unsatisfactory. This behavior is also reported in other studies where transphobic bullying was a problem in school settings, findings from research found that majority of trans students felt insecure at school, while some remained absent from school "frequently" because of the bullying due to their gender (Greytak, Kosciw & Diaz 2009).

In response to the queries about their physical and mental health a large number of the students were satisfied with their physical health. It is important to note that few students were struggling with mental health issues and some students had no idea about their mental health, it indicates that some students might be struggling but they were not aware. The earlier study pointed out the reasons of mental health issues in trans people as Bockting et al., (2013) found that mental suffering levels in trans people were directly impacted by stress related to social stigma, prejudice, and discrimination. These stresses can be a result of outside and inner experiences (actual experiences of stigma, and fear of stigma and discrimination).

In the context of societal support, most of the respondents replied that societal support is important for them, but they are not getting enough support from the society. This negligence is also confirmed by a study as, Talwar (1999) states that, in Pakistan, transgenders are treated in a discriminatory way. They are deprived of

employment quotas because of their identity, they cannot take advantage of the educational opportunities because of the behavior of people with them. However, charity is given to them by the public to receive prayers only, on the whole less people like to interact with them. Further, Hendricks and Testa (2012) also indicate, social aspects of discrimination can lead to problematic emotional, and social responses, resulting in compromised well-being (Perez-Brumer et al., 2017).

Students asked about resources, all participants reported a lack of resources in school. This finding is also supported by previous studies as, the researchers (Burns et al., 2016) conducted a study to examine the contributing factors of educational inequality at various stages of their education for transgender students. The key obstacles were lack of awareness and knowledge of trans issues, lack of school guidance and insufficient facilities.

The findings also show that school lacks provision of health and counselling services. Also established in previous studies, where McKinney (2005) found that transgender believe that there is a shortage of working plan on transgender matters, that there are few facilities available on campuses for students who are transgender and that there are not adequate therapy services available for transgender students.

## **6. Conclusion**

Most of the literature about the transgender students' experiences in mainstream educational institutes showed discrimination, verbal, and physical harassment. In the context of this study, majority of trans students feel physically and emotionally safe in trans-school. These include the positive teacher-student, student-student interaction, feeling comfortable in their own trans identity in school, unsatisfactory experience with non-teaching staff, lack of health and counselling services. The goal of this research is to promote awareness and conveying the message towards society, government, and educational authorities to continue the betterment of transgenders lives. Understanding of student's experiences is very important to understand and resolve their issues. Without understanding the gaps, education cannot be correctly targeted and without education they cannot improve their life.

### **6.1 Implications**

The school should organize seminars inside and outside the school to provide awareness about trans identity and promote education for trans people, it will help to increase knowledge of trans population and also help to highlight the positive image of trans people in society, which can help to decrease disrespectful behavior towards trans people. Society should help these institutes so that they can better serve to trans students. In addition, government and educational authorities should focus on to provide facilities and promote trans education opportunities and issues in collaboration with society.

### **6.2 Future Directions**

Future research can focus on older transgender students to explore more about their trans experiences in school. In addition, this research could be expanded to include school staff and authorities to gain more knowledge about trans educational issues.

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