

**“Money can buy love”: Contextualizing love in the
zenana/khusra communities of Rawalpindi, City Kasur,
Mansehra City, and *Kot Radha Kishan***



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ACRONYMS

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CSWs: Commercial Sex Workers

FSWs: Female Sex Workers

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IDIs: In-depth Interviews

IDUs: Injecting Drug Users

IMF: International Monetary Fund

MSM: Men who have Sex with Men

NACP: National AIDS Control Programme

NGO: Non-governmental Organization

STDs: Sexually Transmitted Diseases

STIs: Sexually Transmitted Infections

GLOSSARY

Adhi warmi (pachas rupiya): fifty rupee note

Ami: mother

Arhibaaz: a stubborn person

Bailay sajan (dost yar): close friends

Baja: trumpet

Batcha: dancing boy

Biila/bila/beela (gareeb koja): poor ugly looking man

Biryani: a South Asian rice dish cooked with a combination of spices, meat and vegetables

Chahat mand: admirers

Chamariyan: eyes

Chamkana: to dance

Chamkay: regular clients/customers

Chango (bhang): a concoction made of marijuana leaves

Chapti: hole appearing after castration resembling a female vagina

Charheeta marta (shokhiyan marna): to show off

Charkhi: car

Chati: chest

Cheesa: a beautiful man

Cheesi: a beautiful woman

Chimta: musical tongs

Chuski: cigarette

Dai: a midwife

Dhandha: prostitution

Dholak: double sided drum

Dou varmi/vadvi (dou sau rupiya): two hundred rupees

Ehtiyat: protection

Eid: muslim festival (holiday) celebrated twice a year (Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha)

Firka: female clothes

Fukar (mazak): jokes

Fo kara de (dafa kara dai): to get rid of someone

Girya(s): lover(s)

Hadibaaz: a thief

Haldi: turmeric

Jaddi pushti: ancestral

Kachiyaan kalama na khut (fazul batay na kar): don't talk rubbish

Kalki/khalki: shoes

Katka (aik hazar rupiya): one thousand rupee

Khadla/khadrha: a local vernacular for a zenana in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Khailwa: alcohol

Khamara: meat

Khusray/khusras: plural of khusra

Khut (bolna): talking

Khwahish: desire

Koli: small room

Kotki: male clothes

Kucha kachi: lazy

Kunda: food

Londay baaz: a pedophile

Mammy: female breasts

Mandi: a local vegetable shop

Miraasi: a musician in a traditional musical band

Mithae: combination(s) of traditional hand-made sweet(s)

Nafs: self control (in this research used in the context of undergoing castration)

Nai: a barber

Nakhuta: a useless man

Neerka: milk

Nirbaan/nirvan: a castrated man, termed as a *khusra* after castration operation

Panchayat: a village council of social control

Pan/panpaisha: prostitution

Panki: bread

Patashay: small hard-baked sugar cakes

Phakar (gaaliyaan): oral abuse/calling names

Punj varmi/vadvi (paanch sau rupiya): five hundred rupee

Rarha (dhandha)/panpaisha (jism faroshi): prostitution

Rasam: a cultural practice

Rootha agaya (dil a gaya): falling for someone

Saheliyan: female (*zenanay/khusray*) friends

Sangat: group or accompaniment

Shab-e-Barat: the night between 14th and 15th day of *Shaban* during which Muslims worship all night seeking forgiveness for their sins

Shoorma: brother

Shoormi: sister

Tamshbeen: spectators/ clients (may not be regular, mostly new)

Thapar sair (kisi sy kharcha pani lena): to get money for food from someone

Uqwi/uqwa: an uncastrated man, termed as a *zenana*

Varmi/vadvi (aik sau rupiya): one hundred rupee

Vatal/watar: buttocks

Warma: charas

Zenanas/zenanay: plural of *zenana*

Ziaditi/jiyazti: rape/coerced intercourse

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ABSTRACT

In the context of Pakistan, the existing body of literature on male-female transgender persons has majorly focused on health-related issues of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS. Very few ethnographic research materials have gone beyond and explored the social and cultural contexts of not only STDs but also of zenana/khusra gender identities, their socio-economic organization, and their relational dynamics and reciprocities with their lovers (giryas). This research has focused on these research domains for that the context-specific framework of transactional sexual relationship had been indigenized. Using qualitative data elicitation techniques (in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation) and analysis (conversational and thematic analysis), this research has explored the importance of love to the lives of zenana/khusra characterized by meagerly rewarding survival options, socially structured marginality, and structural violence. Instrumentality of love-based relationships, commodification of love, trade-off between love and money, importance of girya for strategic needs to be fulfilled, and emotional proximities in the context of HIV/AIDS related risky behaviors are found out to be the main areas of thematic focus of this research.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH RATIONALE

Pakistan, despite historically and culturally being a homosocial and homoaffectionalist society, is asymptotic towards discrimination and ostracization of ‘off the track’, ‘sinfully unconventional’ or ‘deviant’ (C. Caceres et. al 2008) individuals of the society. Particularly in South Asia, for people of third gender roles (including *hijra*, *zenana*, *khusra*, *chavas*, *panthi*, and *kothi* identities), societal intolerance and violence is attributed to strict moral, religious, and legal codes. According to Pakistan Penal Code, male homosexual activities are punishable; moreover strict social norms and religious statute further prohibit such sexual proclivities. With severe consequences to those men and women indulged or caught in non-marital sexual activities and prosecution against adultery and infidelity, the more accessible choice for unburdening the compulsive sexual urges for men is to get into *secretive* sexual links with other boys or feminized men (Khan and Khan 2010). Among these feminized men are the *khusras/zenanas* who are best defined as women trapped in the bodies of men. These are biological males who are raised as boys but show pronounced inclinations towards inhabiting attires and behaviors of women. Domestically sidelined, socially ridiculed and sexualized, and economically marginalized, *khusras/zenanas* leave their native areas and join *hijra* communes called *Dera* where their entries are assured by following organized rituals and customs.

This research has covered certain aspects of the lives of individuals in these communes. The broader areas of thematic focus covered were the framework and discourse of their culture, socioeconomic organization, socialization into socio-sexual environment, social exclusion and abuse, and sexual and economic exchanges. The attempt of this research is not to controversialise, sexualize or vulgarize the individuals in these communities, rather to confirm to the existing body of scholarship which empirically exposits the health-related issues, seclusion, sexual abuse, and disempowerment of *zenanas/khusras* and to humanize with their struggle for survival in the environment plagued with fear, threat, intimidation, and violence. In addition, this

research aims to take one humble step ahead in exploring the agentic and strategist aspects/dimensions of their lives. This whole agenda of *zenana/khusra* working as agents of self-construction in the highly vulnerable atmospherics of disempowerment and minimum negotiating power is conceptualized at the backdrop of two fundamental concepts: love and money. In this particular regard, the research domain and framework of *transactional sexual relationships* is the interest of focal point. This framework is indigenized for these communities in order to better explore and understand the macro level aspects (monetized sexualities, economic side of transactional relationships, emotionally indifferent vs. emotionally charged economic and sexual exchanges), micro level aspects (manipulating power structures for self driven interests, self construction through agency, agency through *staging* love for material advantages), and epidemiological aspects (emotional proximities and HIV/AIDS vulnerabilities).

Very few ethnographic studies have explored such complexities of sexed economic relationships in male-female¹ transgender prostitution ranging from transgender prostitution as a survival strategy to reaffirmation to ‘one’s sense of self’, from high-level stigmatization to discrimination which is a by-product of stigma against male (either transsexual², transgender³, transvestite or cross-dresser⁴) sex workers, from *longing*, *finding* and *performing* love to eventually *commodifying* it and financially securing oneself from such relationships. The studies on few Brazilian same-sex couples (Rebhan 1999), feminized *bar boys* in Bangkok (Wilson 2004), and *sanky pankies* of Dominican Republic (Padilla 2007) have generally covered such research areas. But for South Asia in general and Pakistan in particular, there is a research lacuna for these areas are yet to be introspected. This lacuna is attributable partly to the inefficacy of state involvement in incorporating the issues of sexualities into the agenda of policy discourse. And, partly to the

¹ MTF (male to female)-a person born biologically male but identifies, inhabits, and lives as a female (Schulden et al. 2008).

² Transgendered biological males who undergo gender change or gender reassignment surgery and are in sexual contact with men only (Schulden et al. 2008).

³ Transgendered biological males who do not necessarily undergo any sort of change in physical attributes but they primarily are in sexual link with males (Schulden et al. 2008).

⁴ A person who dresses traditionally like the opposite sex although does not intend to live as the opposite sex (Schulden et al. 2008).

widespread societal stigmatization and ostracization of transgenders resulting themselves living into undergrounds and resorting into prostitution/sex work either as a survival strategy or 'coming into terms' with their sexualities or both.

In Pakistan bio-medical, mostly cross-sectional, studies have highlighted the importance of conducting research on Men who have Sex with Men (MSM - popular term in HIV/AIDS context used to neutralize the debate on sexual identity vs. sexual behavior) because the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and high-risk sexual behaviors - multiple sexual partners and unsafe sexual intercourse - is high among MSM (*hijra/khusra/zenana*) than Female Sex Workers (FSWs) and Injecting Drug Users (IDUs). The biomedical literature on FSWs of Pakistan has indicated that among *steady partners* and *regular customers* the condom use is low due to trust, emotional attachment or love that to some extent is covered in MSM literature. But to what levels stigmatization and discrimination results in making MSM emotionally vulnerable to search for lovers (through sexual exchange or from formal or informal networking) and practice unsafe sexual intercourse for the sake of love, are yet to be explored. Also, under what circumstances *hijra/khusra/zenana* internalizes the violent sexual behaviors of their lovers need research introspection. The positioning of monetary transactions in this framework is also an important research area in which the main focus was to introspect whether lives are risked for material benefits while feigning romance or not.

Theoretical Explorations

Theoretically, this study has explored:

- 1) History of Western sexed economic relationships and the importance of human subjectivities (emotional love) between men.
- 2) Islam and homosexuality: Islamic histories and laws on transexualism/transgenderism, and poetic references on sacralized love for boys.
- 3) Contemporary Muslim world and male homosexuality (prime focus on male-female transgender).

- 4) Definition and history of transactional sexual relationships and its research relevance to South Asia.
- 5) The debate in literature on Prostitution vs. transactional sexual relationships and its relevance to South Asia.
- 6) Theoretical and pragmatic explanations of love, with essential focus on relationship between emotional proximities and economic exchanges.
- 7) Organizational culture, formal and informal sexual networks and main actors involved in the sexual economies of Pakistan essentially focussing on *khusra/zenana* communities.
- 8) Construction of *hijra, khusra, zenana, chavas, panthi, and girya* identities in South Asia; Issues related to their sexual and gender identities, stresses of alienation, low self-esteem, familial rejection and social ostracization resulting from their gender-nonconformist behaviors, their quest of finding love for financial and emotional security through their sexual networks or communes (*Deras*).
- 9) Materiality of bodies, commodification of intimacy, and love in the midst of male sexual networks and the scope of its application to *khusra/zenana* communities of Pakistan.
- 10) Bio-medical literature on personal/individual level causes of risky sexual behaviors - emotional proximity as a determinant of unsafe sexual intercourse - and their link to structural factors (stigma) against feminized men (including *hijra, khusra* and *zenana* identities).

Objectives of the research

The main objective of this study was:

To indigenize the framework of transactional sexual relationships for the *khusra/zenana* communities of Rawalpindi, City Kasur, Mansehra and *Kot Radha Kishan*.

The framework of transactional sexual relationships is broad and there are different dimensions to this framework. This research has focussed on emotional, economic, social or structural, and

epidemiological ones. For this reason and to narrow scope of the study, the main objective was divided into sub-objectives.

The sub-objectives of this study were:

- 1) To provide ethnographic details of *khusra/zenana* communities of selected locales, their indigenous discourses and frameworks of gender and sexual identities, language, culture, morality, code of conduct, and inter- and intra community conflicts.
- 2) To explore their socioeconomic organization.
- 3) To explore their socio-sexual networks (*dera* communes, cruising sites, soliciting areas, and other informal settings).
- 4) To conceptualize love in these networks and to understand importance of money in the love relationship of *zenana/khusra* with *giryra* (lover).
- 5) To explore need for money (in love based relationships) in increasing vulnerabilities regarding HIV/AIDS related high risk behaviors among *zenana/khusra*.

Problem Statement

This research proposes to explore materiality of love in contextual settings of *zenana/khusra* communities of Rawalpindi, City Kasur, Mansehra City and *Kot Radha Kishan* characterized with social exclusion, economic marginalization, and sexual abuse.

Research Questions

A number of questions were addressed in this research including the following:

- 1) What is the socioeconomic organization of *khusra/zenana* communities of selected geographical locales?

Research assumption/s: *Khusra/zenana* economic activities are hugely impacted by their social interactions of reciprocity and socially structured marginality, hence most of their social interactions and economic organizations overlap.

- 2) What are the formal and informal *khusra/zenana* socio-sexual settings? Why these settings are important to their lives and how do they socialize into these settings?

Research assumption/s: Socialization into socio-sexual settings:

- a) Is instrumental for *khusras/zenanas* in gaining their sense of worth.
 - b) Bases and increases the plausibility of *staging* love for materialistic advantages.
- 3) What is the importance of money in the love relationships of *zenana/khusra* with *giryā* (lover)?

Research Assumption/s:

- a) Love and money are not dichotomous in these relationships.
 - b) Emotional vulnerabilities, sexual abuse, economic needs, and social exclusion compel *khusras/zenanas* to commodify bodies and *stage* love.
 - c) For *khusras/zenanas*, *staging* love for money is important towards their self construction.
- 4) Why and in what ways *khusras/zenanas* practice high-risk HIV/AIDS related risky behaviors?

Research Assumption/s:

- a) *Zenanas/khusras* risk their lives by practicing risky sexual or non-sexual behaviors for extra cash.
- b) In their relationships characterized with emotional love, unprotected sexual intercourse is considered to be a sign of trust and love.
- c) While *staging* love for future material entitlements, if protected intercourse is to be sacrificed, it will be sacrificed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Third Gender in Asia: History, Identity, Gender role, Social and Economic Organization

Islamic history unearths three classifications of people of third gender roles: eunuchs, *mukhannat* and *hijras* (Siraj al-Haque 2010). Eunuchs were people born with male sexual organs and raised as boys but castrated. Through castration, they did not become females, rather adopted a ‘no-gender’ role which means having no social and legal gender roles. The second classification of *mukhannat* includes people who are born with male sex organs and raised as boys but showcase feminine behaviors. The term shows transgender/transvestite behaviors and does not show any particular sexual orientation. In Islamic history, they have been labeled as men with effeminate conducts. However, in medieval times they were referred to as men who played passive roles in sexual intercourse. Third classification of *hijras* includes people who are born with male sex organs and raised as boys but after reaching the age of puberty they self-identify as women and start dressing and behaving like the opposite sex. More appropriately, after joining the highly structured clans of *hijra* communities they undergo castration process (which involves removal of both testicles and penis) voluntarily. Since *hijras* are best defined as women trapped in the bodies of men and because of their strong desires to inhabit the physical, sexual, and social roles of women, they are referred most closest to the transgender experiences (Siraj al-Haque 2010). In their attempt to look more feminine they inhabit certain female characteristics which include adopting female names and dressing, and growing long hair.

Siraj-ul-Haque (2010) argues that in Muslim patriarchal societies where gender binaries as men and women taking legally sanctioned and socially normative gender roles are highly valued, a third gender or transgender experience could be seen as a threat to the socio-cultural fabrics. Since Muslims whether conservative or neo-traditionalists, regressive or progressive, backward or modernists try to reside into Quranic and Sunnah references for solutions of their personal and

social issues, Siraj-ul-Haque (2010), also, tries to explore some progressive and embracing referential evidences from Quran and Sunnah to accommodate transgender roles. The most dominant among these roles in Islamic history are those of *mukhannath* who rather than socially referred as sexualized bodies were defined in terms of their ‘speech, gesture, gait, and clothing’. Muslims were not socially secluding towards *mukhannath* as they recognize their (*mukhannath*) proclivities towards femininity as innate that must not be blamed. Islamic historians and commentators distinguish between *Khilqi* and *Takallufi* with former defined as a person who behaves effeminately due to inherent dispositions whereas the later due to self-driven interests and ulterior motives. In Islam, these are *Takallufi* who are blamed because their behaviors do not express their personalized inclinations and innate dispositions. On contrary, *mukhannath* were given specific gender roles. They had access to private places of women where men were not allowed, and to public places where men dominated and women were not allowed. Some functioned as singers, entertainers, and comedians. Since society, in general, accepted the third gender role, hence *mukhannath* were not socially banished. But there have been instances when as a result of working as mediators for heterosexual adulteries they have been banished by the Holy Prophet and much later by the rulers of Ummayyad Empire years after the Holy Prophet’s death. Particularly in Ummayyad Empire, *mukhannath* were castrated as punishment for their immoral acts. There are different reasons and interpretations for reasons of this punishment. But according to al-Isfahani’s version, the ruler was angry at the musicians and singers because his most favorite slave girl ignored him once to listen to man’s singing voice. Due to jealousy he ordered castration of not only that particular man but also of *mukhannath* involved in musical entertainment. Moreover, the stories circulated about involvement of *mukhannath* in facilitating romantic interactions between men and women which was socially reprimanding, also ignited the agitation among rulers against *mukhannath*. The *mukhannath* response towards castration was sarcastically humorous and they agreed to it calling ‘another circumcision’. After this punishment there are rare mentions of *mukhannath* in Medina and Macca, according to some scholars they were driven out.

The Holy Prophet distinguished among individuals because of their gender identities. He distinguished between men who were feminine due to their ‘sense of self’ and those who behave effeminately due to ulterior motives. However, by the time Hadith were being conserved by the

Hadith scholars, Muslim rules were being framed and revised by Islamic jurists, and moralities were being set by Islamic moralists, such intricate differences were missed. The heritage of Classical Shari'ah may not be completely encompassing certain delicate contexts of gender and sexuality which were acknowledged by the Holy Prophet. However, with rising sociological and anthropological interventions and most significantly with evidences from bio-medical materials, Muslim jurists and moralists incorporated references from Quran and Hadith on slightly edgier and radically contemporary gender and sexuality related issues of sex-realignment, gender change or reconstruction surgeries.

Life experiences of the Holy Prophet have been reported by His companions and wives where He interacted with *mukhannath*, effeminate men, and eunuchs. Hadith, also, show that *mukhannath* were allowed to visit the Prophet's households to meet His wives. *Mukhannath* used to exclusively exist and practice third gender roles in pre-Islamic societies; in contrast, eunuchs appeared to be fresh occurrences in the early collective establishments of Islamic communities in Medina. The first eunuch to be mentioned was the castrated servant of the Prophet's concubine named Marya. Marya was Egyptian who as a slave woman of high status was accompanied by her sister and entertained by a castrated servant of Egyptian or Ethiopian descent; he was castrated in Egypt in order to protect sexuality of high status women. The Prophet kept Marya in one of the quarters of the household where His wives used to live. She was allowed to be attended by her eunuch. Once sold to a Muslim household, eunuchs were assumed to follow Muslim religion. In some of the references they were expected to stand in a row behind men and before women during prayers, to act as a veil between two genders in the mosque. In Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean Islamic societies, eunuchs used to serve their owners in dressing, bathing, grooming, and cutting hair and nails. Among Persian, Roman, and Byzantine owners/rulers, they were ordered to function as household slaves. Particularly, guarding women's quarters of aristocrats was the most prestigious duty to be fulfilled by them.

In the South Asian context, *hijra* is defined as a third gender (Nanda 1999; Abdullah et. al 2012). Usually defined as an umbrella term for people performing third gender roles, *hijras* include intersex (hermaphrodites), transsexuals, transgenders, cross dressers, homosexuals and bisexuals (Abdullah et. al 2012). The localized South Asian vernaculars are context specific, and the term

hijra can be classified into *zenana* (cross dressing men who may or may not be castrated), *khusra* (feminized men who are *usually* castrated), *nirban* (feminized men who are *necessarily* castrated), and *uqwi* (feminized men who are *not* castrated) (Abdullah et. al 2012).

Entry into the *hijra* communities is driven in the early childhoods by the gender ambiguousness that builds on with passing years. Additionally, the encounters with the *hijras* on various ceremonies urge feminized men to showcase their inner sense of self, gender, and identity by joining *hijra* communes (Nanda 1999; Reddy 2005; Abdullah 2012). *Hijra* communes are divided into households (*Deras*). Each household is governed by the head called *Guru*. Under each *Guru* 10 to 12 *chelas* (subordinates) work. In this hierarchical setup, strict moral and domestic codes of conduct are to be obligated by the *hijras* according to which they have to perform domestic chores, earn money, and financially contribute to the households, handover a significant chunk of the earnings to the *Guru* as a response of which *Guru* assures social security to *chelas* (Nanda 1999; Reddy 2006; Abdullah 2012).

In the subcontinent, historically, societal positions of *hijras* were different. They used to be the active members of the state and court affairs and were appointed in the harems for serving the needs of wives of emperors and concubines, also in protecting them from forceful external interventions. Respected social roles of healers and social mediators were provided to them. In the previous decades, colonization, modernization, and urbanization have eroded their social roles and relegated them to informal institutional arrangements of entertainment (dance, music, and transsexual prostitution). Naqvi and Mujtata (1997), while referring to the current status of *hijras* in Pakistan, elucidate two instances from political history of Pakistan. First, in 1960s when as a result of banning *hijra* activities they collected in front of Ayub Khan's house as a result of which the ban was annulled. Second, in 1990 election a *hijra* candidate was selected to take part from Abbotabad for the first time in the political history of Pakistan. These instances of collective action and political participation are rare and in spite of the provision of Computerized National Identity Cards by Lahore High Court in 2010, and right to contest and take part in 2013 elections, nothing significant has been achieved yet to destigmatize the individuals in these communities. The reason for this being their non-conformist gender behaviors and their involvement in "notorious" activities of prostitution and drug use. Talking about prostitution

there was a point of difference recorded between Sindhi *zenana* and Baluchi *Buggas* (a local vernacular for *hijra* in Balochistan) (Naqvi and Mujtaba 1997). To some of the respondents *hijras* are not prostitutes, whereas *zenanas* are men with families and children who fake women attires and do *dhandra* (prostitution) for money. To others, *hijras* are most admired by men because of their beauty and relational commitment. This rare study explains reasons for marriages between *hijras* and heterosexual men. The historical reasons for *hijras* to marry men were to get hold over their possessions particularly men possessing donkey carts (a high valued and prized commodity), in some of the references men would marry *hijras* because *hijras* would provide their potential husbands the amounts required to buy donkey carts (Naqvi and Mujtaba 1997). Another reason explained was the high food in-take and hence greater sexual urge of men that could only be fulfilled by marrying a *hijra*. The study calls in the attention towards the importance of castration in the social uplift within *hijra* communities. For some, castration is an act of spiritual devotion. For those among *hijras* who castrate kill their *nafs* which means sacrificing male sexual organs to get rid of sexual desires. It brings respect to *hijras* because they stake their lives as the emasculation process is intense and recuperating period is slow and dangerous (Naqvi and Mujtaba 1997; Nanda 1999).

In India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, in addition to *bidhaee*⁵ and *bazaar tola*⁶, *hijras* supplement their earnings through prostitution. Working as part-time or full-time prostitutes, *hijras* satisfy their sexual needs performing certain risky sexual acts just for extra cash (Khan et. al 2009). Exchange of sex for money is constitutive of socio-economic organization of *hijra* communities. The commoditization and objectification of bodies for loveless short-term sexual encounters constitutes an important source of meeting functional needs of *hijras* in South Asia. But for some (particularly more feminine), long-term relationships with men who they call their husband lovers is an ideal situation for emotional, sexual, and financial satisfaction (Khan et al. 2009). Such commonalities are drawn by Nanda (1999) through her case studies on *hijras* of India. Among the most highly valued of their relationships is the marriage with the men who they call their ‘husbands’. In Indian culture, marriage elates the societal status of women. And since *hijras*

⁵ Collection of money at marriages and child births through dance performances.

⁶ Collection of money doing beggary on the roads and market places.

self concept and perceive themselves as women, hence finding a man, getting emotionally and physically involved with him, and ministering to his needs and wants reaffirms femininity in them. Nanda's respondents share reciprocal relationships with their husbands, apart from financial support their husbands supported them emotionally and psychologically as well. *Hijras*, too, share their incomes earned through *bidhaee*, and prostitution. The expressions of love for husbands, observed by Nanda, are fairly dramatic and hugely influenced by the Hindi films in which romantic love and feelings of jealousy coalesce on the verge of melodrama. Among these expressions are also included gift exchanges.

Cross-cultural Perspectives

In literature there are commonalities drawn between *hijras* of South Asia and *Xanith* (*Khanith*) of Middle East and North Africa. *Xanith* is referred as a person of third gender role who has historically been economically positioned to work as 'male servant' or 'homosexual prostitute' or both (Murray 1997). He does not bring about changes in his bodily attributes or physical characteristics but dresses mostly like a woman does. Men wear long white tunic whereas women tight waist patterned colorful clothes. *Xanith* wears colored tight waist long ankle-length tunics (Murray 1997). Women with long and men with short hair whereas *Xanith* cuts medium length hair. Men and women cover their head, *Xanith* leave theirs uncovered. Both sexes use perfumes, but *Xanith* uses heavy makeup and perfume to draw male attention (Murray 1997). His mobility among women is not restricted. They are allowed to be part of female gatherings serving the needs of female ceremonial activities. They can easily move among men during the day but at nights they restrict themselves from moving freely. Their occupations (male servants and prostitutes) are unacceptable for the other two genders. But women do actively involve in household/domestic work but they are not employed as domestic servants. Murray (1997) explains that these common features between *hijras* and *Xanith* may be the result of historical links between Oman and Pakistan. From 1784 to 1958 the Pakistan Port of Gwadar belonged to the Sultan of Oman who historically and traditionally traded with Sind. In the close vicinities across the Arabian Sea, *Xanith* lived in Sohar and *hijras* in Pakistan. Even today the cross-cultural exchange takes place between Oman and Pakistan, particularly Sohar is famous for ethnic and linguistic diversity and Pakistani workers and *Baluchis* have been living in Oman.

Such historical, mercantile and cultural exchanges may have shaped some of the congregating gender roles of both *Xanith* and *hijras* (Murray 1997).

Similar in many ways to *Xanith* and *hijras* are *washega* or *shoga* of Mombasa. The term *shoga* is used in Swahili language which culturally refers to homosexually active male bearing characteristics of a female (Murray 1997). The term also was famously used among women to refer to a 'friend'. Among Swahili speaking Muslim population, homosexuality was relatively common. And most of these liaisons comprised of relationships between poor feminized young males (*shoga*) and their older patrons generally known as *basha* (derived from Pasha meaning king). Most of these relationships were temporary but some developed into permanent ones with long-term financial support guaranteed from their patrons. *Shoga* plays a passive sexual role with his *basha* playing an active role. In present day debates on sexual roles, passivity is considered to be highly stigmatized predominantly in male-male sexual links. But culturally it has not been passivity in sex, rather payment without emotional attachment that brings inferiority to *shoga* of Mombasa (Murray 1997). This provides an explanation of *shoga* to long for emotionally charged relationships where if monetary support happens then it does not bring shame to them (Murray 1997).

Conundrums of Love, Money, and Sexuality

Transactional Sexual Relationships: Concept, Thematic Focuses, Framework and Need for HIV/AIDS interventions

The definition of transactional relationships (mostly sexual) is fluid than prostitution though both involve exchange of sex for money. But the former also includes the transactional exchanges customary to heterosexual marriages and between families of bride and bridegroom. Yet the most researched transactional exchanges are signified by the life experiences of marginalized communities especially women residing in informal settlements and heading households single-handedly in Africa, karaoke bar hostesses in China (Zheng 2008), Filipino entertainers in South Korea (Cheng 2010), and bar girls in Bangkok (Cohen 1982; Askew 1999). There seems to be a gender bias in conceptualizing relationships characterized by transactional exchanges. But the concept of transactional sex itself is not gendered and applicable to a socially secluded and

economically poor community/group for these communities/groups rely heavily on their sexualities as a survival strategy, on staging and performing love to meet emotional needs and on extracting resources through long-term love relationships.

Wojcicki (2002), in a study on sexual economies of Soweto and Hammanskraal (South Africa), explains differences between North American and European construct of prostitution and *ukuphanda* (sex for money exchanges) of South Africa. Most of the ethnographic studies have viewed sex for money exchanges in South Africa as informal or transactional, the domains and conceptions of which cannot be colonized within the frameworks of western formal sex or prostitution. In the context of Sub Saharan Africa, sex for money exchanges take a variety of forms, in which sexual intimacy is traded for food, clothes, gifts, room/house rents, school fees, or non-specified amount of money. Relationships characterized with such exchanges last for few nights, and some develop into long term romantic and reciprocal relationships. Unlike formal sex, informal sex is less stigmatized, because women/feminized men involve in it play an instrumental role in meeting the needs of their respective families. Moreover, the nature of these sexual exchanges is not just money-driven as women do provide domestic services to men in addition to sexual services. Informal sex work in Ethiopia, colonial Nairobi and Cameroon illustrates emotional link-ups of women (residing in informal settlements) with their men being privileged by food and other domestic services. In most of the case studies, client men want sexual encounters to be more than money-based, as long-term emotional involvement brings happiness to them. Feminized men/women do not permanently rely on such exchanges, but in case of women, whenever economic conditions collapse, their lives become hugely dependent on multiple male partners, with their (women) families aware of their activities. Since late 1920s, women have been migrating to urban areas for employment with most of them being absorbed by the expanding informal sex avenues. As a result of this expansion, women have found themselves in relatively liberating levels and positioned themselves as headed households (East Africa), property holders and house owners (Nairobi), owners of bars, clubs, beauty parlors, and restaurants (Cameroon). In contemporary sexual settings of South Africa, taverns have appeared to be the meeting places for most of sex for money exchanges. If a woman accepts to take a favor (taking a drink/beer, or taking some money) from a man in a tavern, then as a response, she is expected to give in sexually (Wojcicki 2002). Many instances of men claiming love at first sight

to women at their first meet up at taverns are reported and women measuring this claim of love with the expected amount of money that they can cash through feigning romance. But in such informal sex avenues, there are reported cases of sexual and physical violence when women even after extracting money and other favors do not give in sexually to men or if men find their long term girlfriends getting involved with other men (Wojcicki 2002). Since in these relationships men play provider roles, and women receive material benefits, power imbalances make women susceptible to high risk behaviors. Economic side of transactional relationships shows that economically poor subjects (men/women) have to sexualize their bodies for basic necessities of life, in doing so, if they have to risk lives (multiple partners, unprotected sexual contacts, and sexual contacts with unknown persons of unknown HIV/AIDS status), they will take risks.

A study on Nigerian young feminized men shows that in addition to poverty, supplementing incomes is also a reason causing them to be in transactional relationships, most of which can develop into bonds of mutual reciprocities though the initial intention behind developing such relationships is to get material advantages. This aspect of transactional/informal nature of relationships marks the difference from prostitution. Secondly, for commercialized male sex workers particular cruising/soliciting sites for sexual encounters are specified but in transactional relationships context, both parties can meet on and operate through social networks, intermediaries, bars, clubs, parties, friend gatherings, and other locations. Of those who are less feminine looking are in sexual links with both men and women, with men they develop sexual relationships for money but with women for filling in the provider roles and for emotional ties. Hence, young men do not just form a closed sexual setup with men but integrate general population through sexual links with both men and women. The concept of transactional sex usually covers man-woman relationships but as mentioned earlier the framework is not gendered the result of which is the fairly recent scholarship on relational typologies and dynamics between men. In this milieu, Niang and colleagues (2003) depict the involvement of men in sexual relationships with men due to emotional proximities and economic exchange, a combination of which is increasing the magnitude of unprotected anal intercourse among men in Senegal which is highly susceptible to HIV/AIDS. Another instance is the famous ethnography by Gaudio (2009) on feminized men among Hausa Muslims in Kano. These men provide sexual services to men in specified women's houses, which can be termed brothels. But the framework cannot be

understood in the lines of western rubrics of prostitution because in several case studies depicted by Gaudio (2009) feminized men are involved towards relationship building through serving food and drinks, playing cards, and engaging potential rich masculine men in flirtatious conversations. Similarly, ethnography by Kleis and Abdullahi (1983) shows the importance of gift exchanging and money between feminine boys and their masculine patrons in Kano.

Gift exchanging provides important thematic focus to most of the researchers for two important reasons. First, it enables to break the western hegemonic discourse on prostitution which is viewed as contractual and monetized. Second, it enables to highlight relational setups among man/woman, boy/girl, and feminized man/masculine man in relatable ways to signify highly contextualized issues of gender hierarchies, sexual violence, and HIV/AIDS prone high-risk behaviors (Kaufman and Stavrou 2004). In some of the case studies, accepting gifts in love-driven relationships is an indicator of sexual initiation in a relationship. In others, if the sole intention is to fetch gifts and money repeatedly then as a result of it the receiving subjects find it morally compulsive to give in sexually. And some have also indicated the repercussions of gift receiving that on one hand creates a romantic environment to express love through sexuality and on the other, makes receiving parties more prone to be dependent on multiple lovers to fetch material resources and that in turn translates into an atmosphere of frustration, helplessness, and low-esteem psychologically and concurrent sexual partners without negotiating power for protected intercourse physically (Kaufman and Stavrou 2004). Some have also reported violence and coercion internalized by gift receiving parties in power-imbalanced relationships. Receiving money instead of gifts is considered insulting to most of the receiving subjects as it is culturally viewed as prostitution in African and Asian societies, but if money is given for meeting specific needs such as on education, transport, or for family support then it is acceptable. According to this specific dimension, receiving subjects in order to benefit fully, keep on finding new rich partners (Kaufman and Stavrou 2004). One for transportation, called 'Minister of Transportation', whose main duty would be to drive the subjects to the places they want to visit. Another, called 'Minister of Finance', whose main duty would be to give pocket money and additional money for bearing miscellaneous expenses, and finally 'Minister of Education' who would bear the fees and expenses on books. Another seasonal one is the 'Minister of Foreign Affairs' who would be taking subjects to exotic places. As a response of such favors if they have

to have sexual intercourse with their expense bearers, it is not considered pejorative. But having sexual intercourse without any of these rewards is unacceptable, similarly, for expense bearers, funding without sexual intimacies is unacceptable. In addition to all these bearers is a special man who is termed 'Straight Minister', he is the one who is loved the most, to whom subjects are ready to give in sexually and that even without monetary compensations (Kaufman and Stavrou 2004; Hunter 2010).

Hunter (2010) gives rather a different taxonomy of men performing provider roles. Some of the men classified as 'main lovers' are the ones with whom relationships can develop more seriously because of their relational commitments and sincerity most particularly if men propose for marriages and able to pay *ilobolo* (bride wealth). In African societies, paying bride wealth is one of the highly regarded customary practices in marriages where women are obligatory to remain faithful to their potential grooms after *ilobolo* payment. Others are the men generally known as secondary lovers, with whom relationships are temporary. Women/feminized men in these relationships are not expected to remain piously faithful or obligatory, and the need to be in these relationships is more strategic than emotional. But there is quite plausibility that such relationships can be more reciprocal than contractual in spite of the factual data indicating that financial status determines a man's status as a lover. However, some of the cases have reported sacrificing money for love. Hunter (2010) argues that expressions of love are not always materialistic. He substantiates this finding by referring to the widely quoted phrase 'love conquers all' popular among his respondents. Digging deep into the ways love can be expressed, he highlights realistic and negotiating expressions of love. Some of these expressions are emotional (love through cooking food, washing clothes, and providing social security) and some slightly materialistic (love through bearing expenses of electricity units and grocery). On negotiating terms, women or feminized men in love-driven relationships are not always exploited or conditioned vulnerable (to unprotected intercourse). The dimension of power hierarchies is not negated by Hunter (2010), but he argues that the decision of condomless intercourse can be made unanimously by both parties. Most of the HIV/AIDS campaigns cover casual relationships, the importance of integrating love-based relationships usually get sidelined. The integration of these relationships can provide a different HIV/AIDS related risky environment and the room for different HIV/AIDS interventions.

In his ethnographic research on male prostitution in Santo Domingo, Padilla (2007) notices emotional ambivalences among respondents regarding their relationships with regular clients. Most of the respondents preferred to fake romance and commitment with their foreign regular clients as it can guarantee longer term relationships with lucrative economic offers (trip to abroad and remittances). Padilla (2007) names these clients as ‘western union daddies’ because of their old age and huge remittances sent to their lovers. *Sanky pankies* and *bugarrones* usually prefer old men as their potential regular clients due to their greater tendencies towards falling in emotional bonds and filling in the role of money providers (Padilla 2007). Sex workers find it economically difficult to get a steady wage to fulfill basic needs, hence developing long term relationships can be an effective strategy because regular clients go beyond direct money exchanges to more personalized expressions of economic support such as bearing educational expenditures, providing helping hands in household construction and bearing costs of modern consumption items like motorcycles and cars (Padilla 2007). With such effective expressions of care and support, *bugarrones* genuinely start developing feelings for their foreign regular clients but since *bugarrones* are biological males who enter prostitution for survival, hence their self identification as macho/masculine active males hinders their self acceptance of emotional inclinations towards regular clients. To other *bugarrones*, developing such relationships is economically inappropriate because the benefits outweigh the costs, particularly, faking emotions is difficult for *bugarrones* as it goes against their masculinities and time spent on nurturing and trust building is long enough (Padilla 2007).

More recent studies have invested on exposing power dimensions of transactional relationships between young girls (boys) and old men (women). For poor girls (boys), the greater the economic vulnerabilities, the greater will be their dependence on sugar daddies and sugar mommies for school fees, and for accruing post-modern commodities (beer, cosmetics, branded clothes, fashionable hairstyles, jewelry, cell phones, and lunch at five star hotels) of modernizing African societies (Gukurume 2011). In addition, some case studies have also mentioned economically better-off girls to have liaisons with older men to look ‘fashioned’ among their peers or to showcase pride in having sexual links with one of the most influential men in the communities, and the fact that the girls do not have to be entirely dependent on their parents to get items of conspicuous consumption (Gukurume 2011; Zembe et. al 2013). In order to secure

relationships for commodities, girls pretend to be in love with rich older men but a number of studies have mentioned that given a choice girls would not want to stay in relationships without material advantages. Hence, on one level, women are at economically advantaged positions, but as their economic dependence on their sugar daddies mounts, the more they succumb to the risky sexual demands of their old partners as a result of which they can get pregnant or acquire STIs or HIV/AIDS. The girls can exercise agency in fooling their old and young boyfriends by staging romance and picturing crumbling economic conditions to get hold over their boyfriends' resources as girls view their sexuality as a high prized commodity which should not be given for free. But in doing so, they have to compromise on safe sex because insistence on protected sex can reduce the chances of economic advantages and the possible relational break up (Hunter 2002; Hunter 2010; Gukumre 2011; Zembe et. al 2013).

Third World Context: Complex Sexual and Economic Exchanges, and Relational Reciprocities

Khan (1999), while expounding the indigenous frameworks of gender and social contexts of *kothi* and *panthi* (third genders) of South Asia, criticizes the Western construct of sex-work. The term sex-work is usually used to destigmatize the involvement of people in flesh trade. Khan (1999) argues that this term oversimplifies the complex issue and dehumanizes with the difficult life experiences of *zenana/khuara/hijra* or women exchanging sex for money. Sex-work is like a job carrying a sense of choice and ownership. It also shows as if both parties (sex-worker and client) are equal (Kempadoo 1998; Khan 1999). But in the context of South Asian countries such sexual contacts are plagued with power hierarchies with minimalist negotiating power available to the sex-worker. This particular feature is captured in a number of case studies on *hijras* (and *kothis*) of India (Chakrapani et. al 2007), *khusras* of Pakistan (Abdullah et. al 2012; Collumbien et. al 2013; de Lind van Wijngaarden et. al 2013) and Bangladesh (Chan and Khan 2007), and *metis* of Nepal (Wilson et. al 2011) where oral, physical, and sexual abuse by police, clients, and road-side rowdies are part of sexual contacts in cruising sites. Khan (1999) finds poverty as the most significant factor for transgenders to endure violence but they still continue with sex for money exchanges because for most of his respondents, food, shelter, and clothing could be met only with such exchanges. But upon intriguing the thematic focus of his research areas factors

such as “finding a real man” (*panthi* or *giryā*) and sexual satisfaction were also found out to be reasons attributable to prostitution. In this framework the need for a real man is both sexual and emotional with money given least importance. Contrarily, in a study on French travesties, emotional relationships with clients are strictly forbidden as in French context these exchanges are purely economic and clients come to release compulsive sexual urges not to get emotionally involved. And, if a travesty gives in emotionally then it is ‘special client’ who gets benefitted from travesty both materially and sexually (Laurindo da Silva 1999). However, this framework differs when contextualized for the French gigolo/client relationship. Payments are not directly made in the form of money. Particularly, for gigolos in emotional relationships with their clients, the forms of compensations include giving gifts, inviting to expensive hotels, clubs, and funded holidays. In comparison to travesties, gigolos get material rewards in gigolo/client relationships (Laurindo da Silva 1999). In these settings, the definition of sex-work based on pure economic exchange devoid of social exchange of understanding, developing, and nurturing relationships gets blurred.

Male prostitution is not a recent phenomenon in Pakistan. Before British conquest, explorer Richard Burton explored a brothel of young male prostitutes in Karachi. This has turned into a business since then and currently there are a number of organized forms of sexual settings in the form of red-light districts in different cities of Pakistan (Mujtaba 1997). Clients of boy prostitutes come from different socio-economic classes who pick boys from different cruising points such as video games and small restaurants. Mujtaba (1997) mentions various pickup points in Karachi where clients from poor setups look for inexpensive boys for price of a meal or a motorbike ride. The male clientele include people such as truck and bus drivers, night watchmen, low income government officials, army and policemen. After General Zia’s anti-prostitution laws, soldiers who came to serve as duty officers to Karachi on marital laws were main clients of boy prostitutes.

Male-female transgender people, in particular, are mostly involved in prostitution in almost every city and town of Pakistan. Their soliciting places include shopping centers, railway stations, cheap cinemas, public toilets, and school/hospital compounds. Most of the transgender prostitutes are sharp enough to select their potential clients, they prefer not to go to their

residences, rather operate through rented hotel rooms the reason being possible occurrences of violence at residential places without any remedy (Mujtaba 1997). Apart from full- or part-time transgender prostitution, many salesmen, school boys, and hotel and garage workers prostitute for food, clothes, gifts, or for favors of getting jobs or securing a role as a TV actor. They usually range from age 15 to 25 but some well shaped prostitutes are above thirties. They belong to different ethnic backgrounds, including Afghani and Iranian boys. The most deprived and helpless of these prostitutes are those belonging from low income groups, who are said to be the wives of male clientele who are impotent, poor and could not get married due to financial constraints, watchmen, drug addicts, and small-time criminals (Mujtaba 1997). About the distribution of amounts earned through flesh trade, he gives a rough distribution pattern usually followed. For half an hour of sexual service, on average Rs. 150 is charged, half of which is paid to the owner of hotel room as rent, the remaining half is shared between male pimp and local police. It is up to the discretion of male pimp to give some amount to the boy prostitute and in most of the cases he usually gets minimum share barely 20 to 30 rupees. On average Rs. 250 is earned by a boy if he takes ten or more customers in single day, whereas police having sexual intercourse without any remuneration. The pimps of boys are usually past prostitutes, drug addicts, or masseurs. The reported cases of sexual abuse in the past and present (sex-worker) lives of boys are reported high. The knowledge about and attitudes towards HIV/AIDS is abysmal, with limited numbers of protected sex reported. To most of the respondents, HIV/AIDS is a western disease which cannot be caught to them although most of the respondents practiced unprotected sex with multiple partners on daily basis. For others, sexual intercourse with clients is mechanical, depersonalized and emotionless that it does not cause any pain or any other feeling, so if there is no pain, then catching any disease is out of question (Mujtaba 1997).

Contrary to such love-less mechanical sexual exchanges, the sexual relationships between transgender sex workers of Mysore and their clients cannot be viewed as exchange of money merely. Rather, the anthropological term of 'gift exchange' better conceptualizes the sexual encounters in which gift giving and taking was observed and reported as essential parts of socio-sexual settings (Lorway et. al 2009). In order to secure their most cherished relationships with men with whom they were most in love with, many respondents reported of providing food and gifts to their husbands. But these expressions of love can be used as tactics to increase the

possibility of future visits of their potential clients (Lorway et. al 2009). When conceptualized within the domains of moral (*izzat*) and intimate economies, prostitution no longer remains a depersonalized monetary transaction. When principles of moral economy are institutionalized into the sexual settings, the sexual encounters between transgenders and their permanent (or even temporary) clients turn out to be more personalized and less stigmatized. Money plays an important role in these sexual enterprises because of involvement of sex workers in prostitution as a survival strategy but considering the backdrop of lonely stigmatized lives of transgenders many of them reported having sexual relationships with ‘smart looking men’ for free. Apart from poverty, conformity to gender non-conformism at an early age provides an explanation for entering into prostitution.

The flows of transactions are not necessarily from *giryā* (lover/husband) to *hijra/zenana/khusra*. A study on *hijras* of Bangladesh confirms that blinded by love, they shared economic burdens of their *parik* (husbands) who continued pretending love to *hijra* wives and having unprotected sexual intercourse with them (Khan et. al 2009). In a heteronormative society like Bangladesh the *hijra/parik* relationship is socially, legally and religiously unacceptable. One of the most important reasons for marriage in Bangladesh is procreation but since *hijras* are considered neither men nor women their inability to reproduce obstructs their quest for respect which they desired through socially and religiously normative husband/wife relationship (Khan et. al 2009). Adding to this dilemma is the momentary nature of such love relationships which usually break up tragically and *hijras* are aware of such endings. But their quest for finding true love of a real man increases their emotional vulnerabilities and their unprotected sexual encounters with multiple partners (Khan et. al 2009). Unprotected sexual acts in same-sex emotional relationships characterize many factors including sexual intimacy, trust building, love, attachment and commitment (Hoff et. al 2012). Such emotional proximities typify the importance of lover in the lives of *hijra/khusra/zenana*, also demonstrating the high-risk sexual and non-sexual practices posing threat of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS.

A study expositing complexities of emotional and social contexts of male sex work in southern and eastern Africa argues that prostitution is no longer a cold depersonalized occupation in which one party is a seller and the other a buyer with monetary transactions decided prior to

sexual activity (Boyce and Isaacs 2011). The emotional bonds that male sex workers develop with some of their clients blur the boundaries between sexual transactions and intimate reciprocities. But again the importance of money cannot be ignored. Being socially deprived male sex workers (including male-female transgenders) have to majorly depend on money earned through prostitution for food, clothes and rents. And knowing that their life experiences are characterized by low savings, limited clients after certain age in commercial sexual networks, and social insecurity the more plausible way is to have a long-term relationship with a man for future security (Boyce and Isaacs 2011). Such relationships guarantee both emotional and financial supports. However, sex workers have to hide their occupation from their primary partners due to fear of disclosure to their partners and possible repercussions of disclosure such as violence. In these relational dynamics insistence on condom use by sex workers to their primary partners is considered a sign of distrust. Repeated unprotected sexual links with their primary partners and clients create a high-risk socio-sexual environment.

Tan (1999) gives in-depth relational arrangements between *bakla* (person having third gender roles in Philippine) and their 'real men'. For *bakla*, 'real men' are those who are masculine in their physical appearances and most importantly who play active sexual roles. The flow of transactions between two parties is not just limited to money, of those who are in long term relationships with real men exchange gifts from each other. Real men are heterosexuals, who adjust in these relationships due to social constraints which limit them to approach women sexually, also due to unavailability of inexpensive women to be in such transient relationships. In their relationships with *bakla*, they have to perform certain gender roles that prove their masculinities to *bakla*. Performing provider role is the most important. Whether in cash or kind, it is one of the prime responsibilities to be fulfilled. Then, they are not allowed to do domestic chores as such responsibilities are fulfilled by their *bakla* wives. They must secure their *bakla* wives from other men. There must also be an element of jealousy, an expression of anger/violence upon finding if their *bakla* are in relationship with other men. In Philippine, these relationships are less stigmatized due to their 'reciprocal' than 'contractual' nature (Tan 1999).

S Chiffer and Aggleton (1999) unravel different facets of love in their brothel-based study on *Cacherismo* in Costa Rica. One of the aspects of this study highlights that respondents feel love

for those clients who treat them well, who provide them with shelter, food, or clothing. These feelings are developed instantaneously without considering whether some relationship will ever exist or not, and if existed, whether it will be short or long term based. For most of the respondents it is the instant emotional connection that they feel towards their clients who may help them in coping their issues of existential burdens and violence-ridden nature of sex work.

A study featuring different dimensions of male sex work in Santo Domingo shows the search of young and passive sex workers for foreign clients for financial reasons (Antonio de Moya and Garcia 1999). Some foreigners from Europe and North America may be successful in taking their young lovers to their countries. The lovers' interests are in migrating to foreign countries than solidifying emotional relationships with their foreign husbands. But due to age and socio-economic asymmetries and differences in lifestyles and cultures, most of the young lovers voluntarily left the relationships, some deported and others no-more in relationships but living as illegal migrants.

Another distinctive study, capturing varying emotional dynamics between young feminized male sex workers and their regular/casual clients, provides an evidence of relationships with sugar daddies (Davis and Feldman 1999). Money was the decisive factor for feminized men to stay with rich sugar daddies. Despite the age differences and possible chances of violent behaviors, most of the respondents preferred to stage romance with old casual clients for meeting their and their families' everyday needs. As a response to their staged romance, some respondents equated their sugar daddies' buying clothes for them as buying love. But most of these asymmetrical relationships were short-lived because of their momentary contractual nature. On the other hand, some relationships were age symmetrical and long-termed driven by love with regular clients. The study calls in the attention of incorporating perspectives of 'those in love' (who can risk their lives and practice high-risk sexual/non-sexual behaviors for the sake of love) into the agenda of HIV/AIDS discourse.

Love: A missing link in HIV/AIDS discourse

The Importance of Emotional Proximity

The impact of inconsistent condom use on HIV prevalence is causing rise in epidemic than no condom use. Among male-female transgender people the low condom use is considered to be the sign of commitment and love especially among those who are in emotional relationships with other men (Hearst and Chen 2004). Among cohabitating *tongzhi* (Chinese vernacular for feminized men), one partner's intention to use condoms is often regarded as a sign of distrust and less affection by the other partner (Zhou 2006).

Condom use becomes more implausible in love-based relationships with steady partners than with casual partners (Bengtsson et. al 2013). Despite the provision of free HIV/AIDS related information, accessibility to condoms, and acquisition of HIV/AIDS knowledge, feminized Chinese students practiced unprotected receptive intercourse with their 'regular' (steady or non-casual) partners (Xu et. al 2011). Elements of faithfulness and love were recorded among Vietnamese feminized men (Bengtsson et. al 2013). It is not always the stigma against MSM that limit their access to HIV/AIDS control programmes or their willingness to seek preventive information and use condoms, rather it could be the personal choice of male-female transgenders or feminized men to increase their emotional proximity to their partners (Bengtsson et. al 2013).

Need to be loved: Discrimination, Violence, Emotional vulnerabilities and high-risk behaviors

Discrimination is referred to as the direct outcome of stigmatization as a result of which the individuals who are perceived as different are socially and economically marginalized. For male-female transgender people, living at the peripheries of socio-economic organization and victimized by economic discrimination, prostitution is left out to be the only option for survival. Loneliness, powerlessness, fear and other emotional turmoil make them vulnerable to be accepted, wanted, and loved by a male partner. Affirmation to one's femininity (through sex reassignment surgeries) and performing feminine gender roles (of looking after their male

partners like their wives) make them more physically and emotionally dependent on their lover husbands. Under these situations, male-female transgender people choose not to use condoms because they want to sustain their relationships in any possible way they can. The study on Bangladeshi *kothis*, *hijras* and *panthi* attributes to features such as poverty and widespread inequality that constricts them to undergrounds and exposing to HIV/AIDS risky behaviours (Chan and Khan 2013). The transmission mechanism of HIV/AIDS initiated from the injecting drug users (IDUs) first, from IDUs to CSWs (both male and female due to sexual and non-sexual contacts (bodily injection of drugs)) and finally to the general population. Experiences of sexual violence were reported in a study on Nepali transgender persons (Wilson et. al 2011). Despite the fact that same-sex relationships are not criminalized in Nepal but still there exists widespread prevalence of physical and sexual violence by policemen against *metis*. They were maltreated by the policemen, sometimes arrested under false accusations of having sexual intercourse with multiple partners in public places and releasing only when they (*metis*) provided free sexual services or paid certain amounts. Also, incidents of rape or sexual abuse were reported by a number of respondents. Inside police stations *metis* were forced to coerced intercourse. Under such conditions the use of condoms as a harm reduction strategy to HIV/AIDS is not only non-negotiable but also out of question (Wilson et. al 2011). In India, *kothi* faced extortion, informal taxation, arrests under falsified charges, and excessive beatings from policemen without strong reasons (Chakrapani et. al 2007). The incidents of unprotected forced intercourse by policemen were also reported and in most of the cases the requests from *kothi* for condom use were punished with physical beatings. In doing so, both involved in unprotected intercourse were in danger of contracting and transmitting HIV/AIDS. The strong alliances between policemen and road-side rowdies further worsened the situation as both parties were actively involved in practicing sexual and physical abuse against *kothi*. Forced/coerced sexual intercourse at nimbler ages when reproductive organs are not fully developed shows maximum likelihood of anal rupture and excessive bleeding that without medical help and repeated abuse can develop into STDs later on in the lives of *hijra/zenana/khusra* (de Lind van Wijngaarden et. al 2013). All the respondents in a study on feminized young men of Lahore and Karachi were physically abused or raped repeatedly (Wijngaarden et. al 2013). Out of 10 case studies, 6 indicated experiences of

rape as first time sexual encounters of victims. Most of the respondents were physically and sexually abused by their own male members of the families and were drifted out of their houses.

Khusras reported being sexually abused or active at younger ages and raped by policemen (S Hawkes et. al 2013). Violence from police, customers and family members was a common factor reported by both *hijra* and female sex workers. In comparison to previously conducted studies in Pakistan, this study is important for these two highly stigmatized groups because it emphasizes on drawing strong links between sexual violence and higher-risk sexual behaviours (S Hawkes et. al 2013). In comparison to other provinces of Pakistan, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among *hijra* sex workers (HSWs) of Larkana was higher (Altaf et. al 2013). Among other reasons attributable to HIV/AIDS, poverty and unemployment are two important factors resorting HSWs to decentralized modes of prostitution in Larkana. Due to sexual domination of male clients, the HSWs in Larkana were not in a position to negotiate on condom use with their clientele. Abdullah et. al (2013), in a qualitative study on *hijra/zenana* of Pakistan, bridges a link between social exclusion which is pulling *hijras/zenana* to essentially earn through prostitution. The occupational trends have shown that *hijras/zenanas* have been actively involved in earning through performing arts including music and dance, but in Pakistan the rising costs of living due to inflation have adversely affected the already-poor segments of the society, and that has significantly caused *hijras/zenanas* to be earning through ‘easy money’ ways such as prostitution. Prostitution is the result of social exclusion and further socially excludes the *hijras/zenanas* who live in and operate through rented dingy rooms in commercial areas of Pakistan. Contrived by economic and social marginalization, the feelings of loneliness and depression intensify the need to be loved and embraced.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FRAMEWORK

A very important part of this research is the concept of love. Literature covers different schools of thought on love. This research, in particular, has focussed on three of the thoughts: political economy of love; feminist and queer perspectives.

Love as a discourse

Gendering Love: Feminist and Queer Perspectives

In literature there are different epistemological definitions of love. These definitions are covered in different schools of thought. Feminists' views on love are divided. To some, love is liberating, empowering and people who are romantically in love with each other share equal space in a relationship. Moreover, love has the courage to break away shackles of orthodox cultures and societies. But this 'positive interpretation' is not unanimously embraced by all feminist and queer theorists. These theorists come up with discourses on love who view love as patriarchal, sexist, and heteronormative. Romantic love is seriously criticized for the liberty and freedom it entails. This sexual and physical freedom to emote and express romantic love is dangerous particularly to those societies where monogamous partners and traditional family setups are given prime importance. In addition to these interpretations, love is criticized, also, for the ways it traps women in patriarchal traditions of becoming dependent on the opposite sex, circumscribing under a marriage contract that legally allows men to sexually advance them, and ending up having and looking after children (Grossi 2012). Love promises freedom from social constraints and oppressions but what usually happens is quite antithetical to what love promises. Emotional subjectivities such as depression, dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, and unhappiness are some of the noticeable repercussions of love. With rising capitalism, division of labor mounted to the extent that women were increasingly conditioned to homes to look after the family and men rapidly confined to work for wages at factories, the result of which was the feminization of love: gendered expressions (verbal/non-verbal) viewing women economically dependent on and

domestically subservienting their men (M. Cancian 1986). Queer theorists criticize romantic love because of its inability to include same-sex emotional bonds. To queer theorists, love scripts are socially constructed in which only heterosexual love is discussed. Since society views same-sex love as ‘promiscuous’ and ‘sexually obsessive’, hence the respectable scripts of heterosexual love including dimensions of marriage, and parenthood do not include gay or transgender love (Grossi 2012). Feminists’ critique on love as a way for men to oppress women and queer critique on love as heteronormative does not mean that love cannot bring desired changes in peoples’ lives. If love shatters, it constructs also, if love disempowers, it creates agency towards self-construction also, if love excludes, it challenges existing rules to achieve freedom also (Askew 1999).

Commodifying Love: Feigned Romance and Commoditized Sexualities

Askew (1999) introduces the concept of “self-construction” to justify the reason of Thai girls to join bars and to benefit from their sexualities. Emotionally saddened by the failure of their previous relationships and anguished by the lack of commitment from Thai men, girls joined bars as a strategy to regain their sense of worth, respect and self. And, the first step towards self-construction was to get material advantages by staging love. In an environment characterized by violence and threat, power imbalances and material disadvantages, girls strategized to learn tricks of the trade and created agency by taking independent decisions, manipulating structures, fooling “monogamous partners” (regular/steady clients), and extracting resources to augment respect among peers and families. Similarly for Chinese women working as bar hostesses in China and facing limited employment opportunities due to low literacy rates among rural migrants they have to capitalize on their bodies. In the bar setup if a woman succumbs to the manipulative romantic schemes of their male clients who use their bodies sexually without proper monetary compensations is considered to be degrading both professionally and culturally. This study brings in another dimension of choosing between real/selfless romantic love and capitalizing on it by women. But in most of the cases it is romantic love which is commoditized and feigned under crumbling economic conditions. Apart from sexual commodification, women feigned romance to their clients by staging love through expressions of care, devotion, and trust. Essentially the attempt is to extract financially as much as they can from their prospective

'husbands' but somewhere the hope of finding true love free from sexual and monetary interests always stays.

Conceptualizing Love: Social vs. Economic Exchange

Blau's conceptualization of love involves two types of exchange, social and economic. The relationships based on social exchange are intrinsically gratifying which usually transform into long-term exchange of mutual sharing, trust, and reciprocity. Whereas, the relationships based on economic exchange are purely contractual and extrinsically gratifying in which money matters the most with minimal emotionality of relationships involved (Blau 1964). However, with bloating economic challenges of meeting even the basic necessities of life an element of monetary (cash/kind) exchange is expected even within the relationships driven by mutual reciprocities. In order to explain the relational intricacies of Thai women with foreign men in tourism-oriented prostitution Cohen (1982) uses Blau's typology of relationships intertwining elements of both social and economic exchange. First type in this typology is *mercenary* in which exchange is purely economic and payment in cash or kind is made for exchange of sex. But Thai girls may not necessarily emphasize on asking specified amounts rather, leave payments to the discretion of foreign clients (Cohen 1982). The second type is called *staged* in which girls, very manipulatively, feign romance with potential foreign clients to get financial benefits. The attempt in this relational typology is not to cement emotional relationships with clients. The attempt is to apply strategies that can make clients fall in love with women, trust them, and forget about their involvement in flesh trade so that when special money allowances are requested by girls, they get fulfilled (Cohen 1982). After clients having returned to their native places, the women may continue with the flesh trade or with applying similar strategies to other potential foreigners (Cohen 1982; Askew 1999). The next stage is called *mixed* in which a prostitute being part of a bipolar world explores genuine feelings of love for the client. In this complex and conflict-ridden stage emotional affiliation seems to take over economic interests but money still matters the most (Cohen 1982). The final type is *emotional* in which women are completely in love and money matters the least. The women may get married to their foreign clients, may live with them and fulfill their familial obligations with the highest sense of loyalty. This stage primarily depends upon the emotional attachment of women with their client

“husbands” and to what extent women are ready to give up economic interests for love (Cohen 1982).

Problematizing Love: Political Economy of Love and Sexuality

Meanings, expressions, and interpretations of love are framed according to different social and economic class structures. This particular argument is based and reinterpreted by Thomas and Cole (2009) who problematize the model of romantic intimacy by bringing in the conundrums of love and money through African case studies. The perception of ‘I love him because he gives me money’ does not incessantly hold true in the African context though influx of neo-liberal agendas have skyrocketed regional inequalities, aggravated gender gaps in education and survival, led to feminization of poverty and survival, sidelined issues of marginalized communities, and finally commoditized and monetized the relational arrangements (Cole and Thomas 2009). However, the presumed consent that interests in money draw emotional interests to be staged and performed seems to be a bit stretched. Contextualized models of love in Africa have consented that love and money are not mutually exclusive: it is material exchanges which can cultivate genuine feelings for and being in love. Receiving gifts can be synonymous to *accepting* love from lover rather than *staging* love for future material entitlements. Local vernacular of love-*fitivina* in Malagasy, expresses complementarities between *emotion* and exchange (material). Western conceptualization of material exchange as ‘self-interest driven’ and love as ‘least selfish’ and ‘altruistic’ may be entirely inapplicable when contextualized for Africa as love and exchange can form most of the relationships (Cole and Thomas 2009).

Ngabaza et. al (2013), while recognizing love as an emotion difficult to define unanimously and comprehensively, inscribe the gendered nature of love according to which love is constructed socially and expressed by men and other genders differently. In addition to gendering love, love is influenced by the economic positions of individuals in the society. Signifying the gender role of men as providers and women/feminized men as receivers, expressions of love become more physical for men and more emotional for women/feminized men. A difference between provider love and romantic love is highlighted in a number of African case studies according to former women/feminized men love men for meeting their consumptive needs and in latter emotions

supersede materialism. But this difference blurs when women/feminized men *genuinely* fall in love with their providers when their materialistic needs get fulfilled.

Euro- American conceptions of love are more or less synonymous to humility and self-sacrifice. A person should not love because of his/her personal interests. One must cultivate within oneself to love selflessly. Instrumental onset/formation of love is incoherent with western conceptions of love. Elements of materiality, economic proclivities, and monetized sexualities are not supposed to build and nurture selfless relationships. But Cole (2009) and Linda-Anne Rebhun (1999) highlight that rising poverty in Africa and Brazil respectively has caused emotional and sexual relationships to be viewed in economic contexts. Cole (2009), in particular, brings forth in-depth analysis of Malagasy word *fitiavina* meaning love. In her ethnographic research on Madagascar, several of her respondents talked about love free from monetary benefits as *fitiavina madio* (clean love). But to others, exchanging gifts is a pure expression of love. Cole (2009) in her attempt to analyze the complexities of such contradictory viewpoints, explain the social dynamics that have led to contradictory changes on *fitiavina*.

In 1990s, government in Madagascar allowed economic liberalization through IMF intervention, after fifteen years of state socialist policy. As a result of which foreign products, television shows, and contacts intensified resulting in high-pace desires and aspirations among local youth to adopt such lifestyles. Moreover, with structural adjustments of IMF, devaluation of local currency and unemployment among youth increased. The youth desired to secure a high-rewarding place in the highly competitive job market, contemporaneously the youth could not lose contacts with their rural backgrounds which has own sets of moral conduct, expectations, and expressions of love. Accustomed to the desires of being valued high on monetary terms, burdened by the expectations of rural families, and succumbed to the contradictory sets of urban and rural moralities, youth could not consider self-interest driven benefits and romantic intimacies as mutually exclusive (Cole 2009). However, men usually complain of women believing on commodified love and not on *fitiavina madio*. But women justify themselves by bringing in issues of gender disparities in the job market, subservience positions at the households, and male predilections towards viewing women as sexualized objects, to negotiate on versions of *fitiavina* where money involvement cannot be separated from love (Cole 2009).

Many women have more than one man to meet even basic necessities and one special man with whom they share reciprocal relationships. These are the women who are in better pragmatic positions to distinguish between *fitiavina madio* and money-driven love interests. These are the women who distinguish between men who they want for ‘three C’s- cash, cell phones, and the cars’ and men who they develop emotional ties with (Cole 2009). On contrary, some women fall for and then keep on relationships even with abusive/violent lovers without money/material advantages due to genuine feelings (clean *fitiavina*) (Cole 2009; Cole and Thomson 2009). When non-instrumentality of love is taken into account, then women are viewed by men as giving and sacrificing, and in response men serve women in their household domains. But this discourse on love explains the domination of active over passive, emotional and physical disposals of passive over active, and a pedagogical space for researchers to seek into relational dynamics for HIV/AIDS insights.

These case-studies explain that emotional indifference does not always hold true in sexual links of women/feminized men working as prostitutes with some of their clients. Moreover, the transformation of relationships from economic to social exchange goes beyond the scope of emotionally indifferent occupation of prostitution and gets more explanation within the domains of emotionally shaped transactional relationships.

Contextualizing Love: Sacralized Expressions of Love in Muslim Theology and Poetry

Muslim theologians and poets embody sacralized versions of same-sex or homosexual love in which no sexual dimensions are involved. Insightful and provocative Arab poet Abu Nawas depicts in his poetry certain angles of romance between men. Similarly, Ibn Hazm recognizes through his poetry the inner dispositions towards sacred love between men. They both staunchly advocate the expressions of love for societal and spiritual harmony that in turn binds human beings from fragments into unity. They both view love to be more powerful than any form of restrictions through law: in spite of the fact that same-sex contracts in the form of marriages are proscribed in Islam, but Islam is not dismissive to love, nor love is prohibited by law though sexual acts are (Wafer 1997). Baghdadi poet Muhammad Ibn Dawud was also a loyal supporter of platonic model of love which describes human souls to be round/sphere but after entering to

the consumptive nature of materialistic world the sphere breaks into two equal halves, each half desires to be reintegrated again and this reintegration happens through emotional and spiritual unity (Wafer 1997). Ibn Hazm's critical innuendos of marriage as a contract for procreation and permissibility of heterosexual intercourse is conspicuous as he perceives marriage much more than legal definitions. To him, marriage is about building a structure that promises to provide security to the partners through love. However, this discourse of poetic same-sex love is constrained by social and moral codes of conduct (Wafer 1997).

Wafer (1997) narrates one of the life experiences of a Persian Sufi poet Fakhr al-Din Iraqi. He was born in Hamadan. He was seventeen years old when once a group of *qalandars* came to Hamadan. Amongst that group was a beautiful young boy Iraqi was attracted to. When the group left the place Iraqi charmed by the beauty of a young boy, followed him to India. Iraqi's life is full of such episodic experiences of getting attracted to young boys and covering distances to catch a glimpse of beauty created by God. Contemporary Sufi writer Mir Valiuddin recounts another experience of Iraqi's falling in love with a cobbler's son in Cairo. Famous Persian mystic Farid al-Din Attar brings in another classical illustration of sacralized love between Mahmud (a conqueror who introduced Islam in India) and Ayaz (a Turkish slave and an army officer who worked for Mahmud). The relationship between Mahmud and Ayaz was reciprocal and considered a classic example of mutual love. In some of the Attar's stories, Mahmud is the lover and Ayaz is the beloved, and in others Ayaz wishes to die at the hands of Mahmud. In this context, Mahmud is viewed as the 'Divine Beloved' and Ayaz as the passionate lover. These individualized expressions are regarded as innocent and sacralized expressions of love by some of the Arab and Persian Sufi poets (Wafer 1997). To these poets, God reveals His beauty through beautiful persons created by Him. This view is conceptualized differently by other Arab and Persian poets who view the entire universe and nature as a reflection of beauty created by God (Wafer 1997).

Contextualizing Love: Desacralizing Love in Asia through Sexuality and Economic Exchange

Romantic man-boy relationships are not uncommon in South and Central Asia. In Afghanistan, the more prominent of these relationships are between beardless/adolescent boys who dance in

feminine ways to entertain influential Afghani political and military leaders. Quraishi (2010) unearths various dimensions of *bacha bazi* (boy play) culture in Afghanistan. The documentary unravels struggles of dancing boys in coping with the sexual abuse to which they are subjected. Internalization and institutionalization of *bacha bazi* as a cultural practice makes even more difficult to address personal, health and social issues linked to it. The roots of this practice are from eunuchs of Al-amins's court and harems of the Abbasid period. Despite the fact that Islamic jurists have been condemning the practice for centuries, it still managed to seep into different parts of Middle East and South and Central Asia. Recent Taliban codes clearly assert that *mujahidin* are not allowed to take beardless/young boys into their private places. But still pedophile relationships constitute as one of the significant male-bonding relationships in Afghanistan in which innocent poor boys are allured to modern day commodities by rich men who claim to love boys for their innocent charm, effeminate beauty, and sexual receptivity.

Frederick (2010) mentions city of Banu in the Northwest of Pakistan where sexual abuse of adolescent boys occurs in the name of cultural practice *bacha bazi*. He sketches a picture of young attractive boys dressed in lavender gowns parading through the town from where they get selected by their male patrons for concubinage. The conceptual framework of this practice is in many ways comparable to *bacabozlik* (boy games) institutionalized among Uzbeks of Afghanistan in 1970s (de Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani 2011). The relationships between boys and their patrons are not merely sexual. The patrons provide their *batchas* with food and clothing. In some instances, patrons keep providing money to the families of *batchas* when boys become men and *bacha bazi* has to end. Spending on the beautification of boys is important as it boosts respect of patrons and desirability of attractive *batchas* in the social circle of patrons. These boys usually come from low socio-economic class and mostly sold by their parents to patrons due to poverty. *Batchas* usually do not take considerable amount of time to adjust to the new surroundings, rather after spending some time they get used to it the reason being fulfillment of materialistic desires (de Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani 2011). In most of the cases, married patrons bring *batchas* to their homes, remove *pardah* (veil) of wives and daughters with them, and feed them with the entire families. Their wives do not view *batchas* as threats to their married lives because of the transient nature of the relational arrangement between their husbands and *batchas*. Feelings of romantic love as the relationship grows, along with respect,

care, and courtship are some of the reported emotional subjectivities that patrons and *batchas* feel for each other, whereas feelings of possessiveness, jealousy and competition on the part of patrons are also reported (de Lind van Wijngaarden and Rani 2011). But there is an exploitative side to it as well. *Batchas* spent significant years on this craft but by the time they reach puberty they were replaced/substituted by other beardless boys. They did not have much formal education to fall back on once they were not suitable enough for the business. Intake of huge amounts of opium and deaths due to debauchery are most commonly covered repercussions (Murray 1997).

Framework of transactional sexual relationships

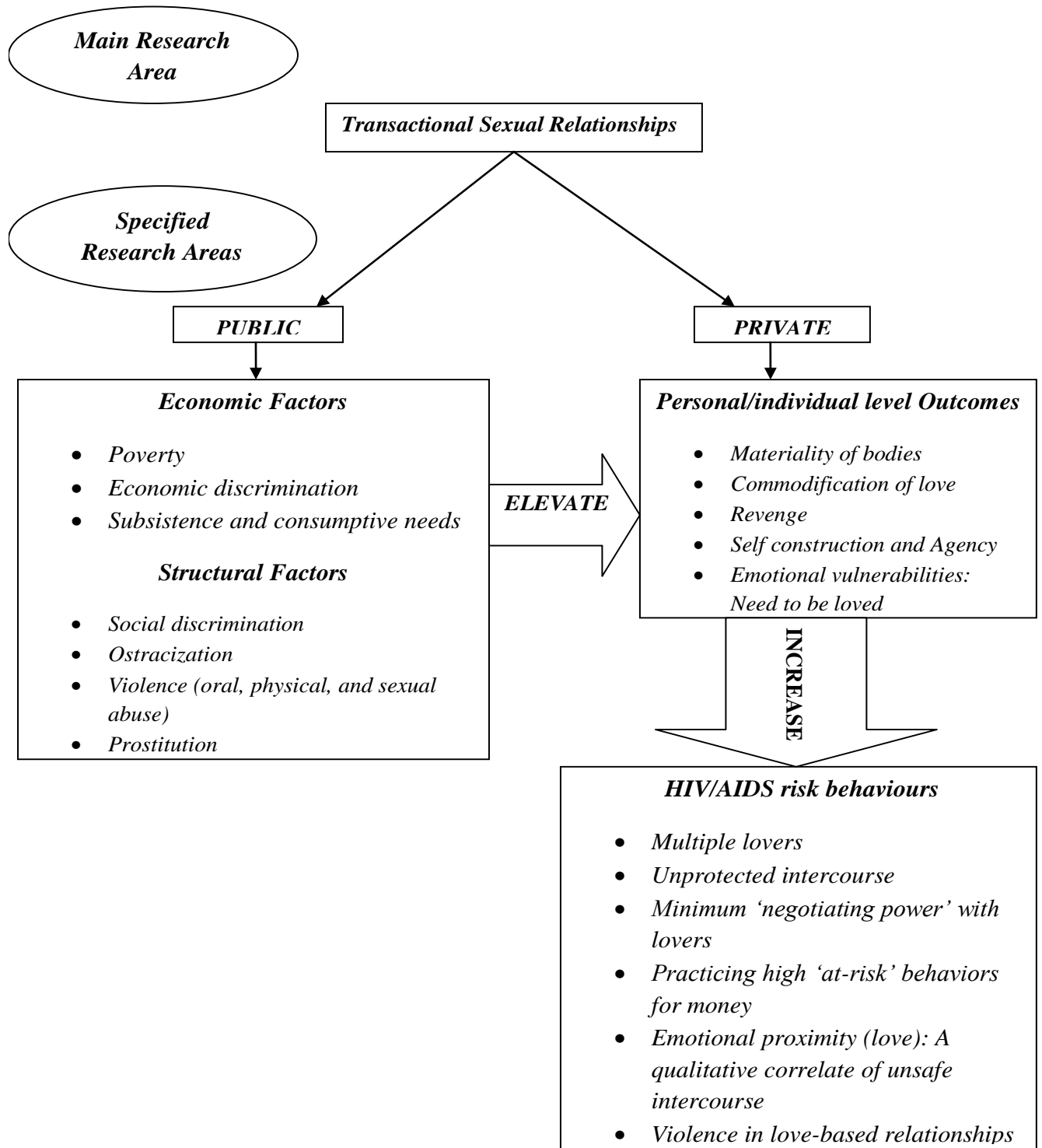
From research point of view, transactional sexual relationship is quite an under-researched and under-theorized research area. Often confused with prostitution, transactional sexual relationships are considered to be culturally normative particularly in poverty-ridden countries. Bringing in the discourse of gender dimensions of transactional sexual relationships, women/feminized men consider themselves agentic by exploiting and manipulating the men by extracting resources. For men, performing provider role is culturally considered to be an indicator of masculinity. Men sometimes knowing the fact that they are being strategized and exploited, still financially support for their sexual needs. The positioning of love in this framework is instrumental as it is fundamentally love (feigning romance) around which both providers and receivers strategize to gain material rewards, power, status, self-identity, and agency. Hence the Euro-American construction of prostitution viewing men/women/transgenders as sexually passive, bodily objectified, emotionally vulnerable, and epidemiologically prone to HIV/AIDS risky behaviors may not be fully applicable when viewed from a different cultural perspective. Preference of materialistic needs and wants at the cost of risky sexual behaviours is also covered in a number of ethnographic case-studies on transactional sexual relationships. With rising globalization and modernity, consumptive nature of such relationships has been covered in some of these case studies (Hunter 2002; Madlala 2003; Wamoyi et. al 2011; Zembe et. al 2013). And, others have focused on subsistence dimensions. The items on which relationships are staged are both for subsistence (basic necessities) and conspicuous consumption (alcohol, flashy clothes, cell-phones etc.). For any of these items, safe sexual intercourse is sacrificed. This

framework is most fundamental to this research as the attempt is to indigenize it for *zenana/khusra* communities of selected locales. Conspicuous versus subsistence needs, money versus love, staged versus real love, prostitution versus reciprocal sexual exchanges, poverty and violence, high-risk sexual practices are some of the areas of this framework which will be thoroughly studied. But since this research is using the anthropological concept of indigenization which respects the local contexts of geographical locales, residing communities and their perceptions, hence all the context specificities will be maintained in this research.

Social and economic structures

Social and economic structures create and broaden hierarchies and inequalities among individuals of the societies. But individuals (economically and socially disadvantaged) are not static rather active agents who in order to meet basic amenities, manipulate these structures and influence to bring about change in their personal spaces. These are the fundamental theoretical propositions of the *Structuration Thesis* of Anthony Giddens (1987). Giddens defines structures hindering livelihoods of individuals as *external forces*. This research conceptualizes structures as economic conditions obstructing *zenana/khusra* from necessities of life, society can also be conceived in this context as structure forcing *zenana/khusra* to live marginally. HIV/AIDS is also a structure because it further stigmatizes *zenana/khusra*. All these obstructing structures bring about changes in the behaviors of *zenana/khusra* and enable to act towards change strategically and manipulate them to hold material entitlements by staging love and commodifying love relationships.

Indigenizing the framework of transactional sexual relationships



CHAPTER 4

LOCALES

Four geographical locales of Rawalpindi, City Kasur, Mansehra and *Kot Radha Kishan (Kachi Kothi)* were selected for research. Out of the four Rawalpindi is an urban center which has gone through the most rapid urbanization, industrialization, commercialization, and economic development, although, this development has occurred spatially and has not trickled down indiscriminately or equally. With booming foreign and local monetary influx into the construction and commercial sectors of the city, increasing consumptive nature of the society, and rising proclivities towards the post modern commodities, the urban center is becoming more monetized. Moreover, social and income inequalities have increased which can be observed with high inflation inflicting the already-poor societal segments, mounting poverty, and informal settlements around the outskirts of most of the commercial areas of Rawalpindi. Income inequality, in particular, has increased in relation to socio-economic characteristics (age, gender, race, and ethnicity). The impact of this development at the cost of equality innately provides strong locale settings for the study on *zenana/khusra* communities for two important reasons. First, out of four Rawalpindi is the most thickly populated with the transgender communities residing most in the dungeon dark one or two room settlements of incomplete or under constructed buildings. Second, in the context of political economy and transactional sexual conceptualizations of love, the impact of economic and social structures on the *zenana/khusra* social organizations, economic adaptations, sex-for-money exchanges, and decisions on whether to (or not to) commoditize love will be more comprehensively researched in the contextual social settings of Rawalpindi as the city has gone through speedy social and economic transitions.

City Kasur, on the other hand, is still in these transition phases, and *Kot Radha Kishan* is a town which is not transitioned although substantial preliminary signs of socio-economic modernizations (budding construction sector, use of capital intensive technology on lands, two degree colleges each for both genders, two private schools and one academy, one government health centre and one private hospital) and consumptiveness (commercial shops of cell phones,

foreign style foods, and highly stylized female beauty salons) are thoroughly observed throughout this research. Towns which are in closer vicinities of urban centers show the greatest growth (Horton and Hunt 1999). Being a town in the vicinity of the capital city of Punjab (Lahore), *Kot Radha Kishan* has attracted industry. With cheap and abundant supply of male and female labor, the town has attracted financial investments through canned food industries, which has majorly resulted in raising living standards and modernizing society.

City Kasur is the headquarters of Kasur District in the province of Punjab. Famously known as the city of saints, referred to as the city of the most sensational singer of the subcontinent, Noor Jehan, and relished for the spicy fish and local sweet *andrassay*, the city epitomizes strong spiritual and cultural heritage. Economically, the city is undergoing rapid economic development. Industrial development has been swift in the last two decades, raw leather industries export leather within the country, and light machinery, textile, and food industries coupled with sugar cane mills are boosting the city economically, also, providing livelihoods to most of the people. Hand looms, which have now been replaced by machine looms, are other progressing industries. Agriculturally, the city is famous for the production of turmeric, *Kasuri methi* (fenugreek), potato, wheat, and sugarcane. Academically, the city runs a number of public and private schools and colleges. Currently, there are seven public and private hospitals, and one major medical laboratory.

Both *Kasur* and *Kot Radha Kishan* have been selected purposively because of the locales' strong cultural and historical references of transgender communities. In comparison to Rawalpindi, *Kasur* and *Kot Radha Kishan* are less densely populated locales, particularly the latter being a town has a more homogenous and less mobile population. The social interactions are intimate, and social control is regulated by the social institutions comprising of union councils (political institution), police (institution of formal social control), and *panchayat* (in part cultural, in part institution of social control). Mansehra city is the part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region of Pakistan. The focus of this research was on Mansehra city which is the administrative capital of Mansehra district. The city has undergone a rapid socio-economic progress through the influx of indigenous gemstones, flourishing tourism industry, and a number of primary and secondary schools/colleges and Hazara University. Tourism and cultural miscellany had also contributed

towards the socio-economic uplift of the city. Mansehra city was selected to bring in a different corpus of perspectives of *zenana/khusra* communes from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa part of Pakistan.

In selected locales, social institutions in the form of economic⁷, social control⁸, health⁹ and communication¹⁰ tend to discriminate, and taboo certain residing communities. Transgender community being one of these is perhaps the most deprived, and circumscribed of the functions and utilities which these institutions promise to deliver. Given these constraints, the deprived community has to live, has to develop a social organization, has to adapt ways for livelihood, and has to fill in their emotional spaces. Doing field work, and exploring the lives of transgender communities at the backdrop of varying socio-economic contexts of these locales, led to easier comparative analysis.

Babu Building (Mansehra) and *Handaal Chowk* (*Kot Radha Kishan*) provided rich locale settings for research on *zenana/khusra* communes because these locales are homes to the poorest of the community members. *Babu building* is a dilapidated three storey building with roughly cemented walls and coarse staircase. Each storey comprises of four to five small rooms. The room where I lived on rent, during my research, was on the second storey, the door to which was coloured green and made of tin. My room was in between the other two rooms rented by two *zenanas*. The monthly rent was 3000 Pakistani Rupees. The rents varied in each locale. Usually the *deras* located at or near commercial sectors or residential areas (near Mansehra Main *Chowk* in Mansehra, *Darzi Mohallah* in *Kot Radha Kishan*, *Raja Sultan Market* and *Dhoke Kala Khan* in Rawalpindi and *Haji Fareed Road* in city Kasur) were higher than those located at non-commercial and non-residential areas. *Deras* of *Pirwadhai* in Rawalpindi, though located in residential areas were less rented because of poor people residing in the rented rooms of poor physical infrastructure. *Handaal Chowk* is situated near railway station and *Babu Building* near a number of car mechanic shops and truck driver's stopover points providing a variety of clients to

⁷ Commercial enterprises, labor unions, and construction authorities.

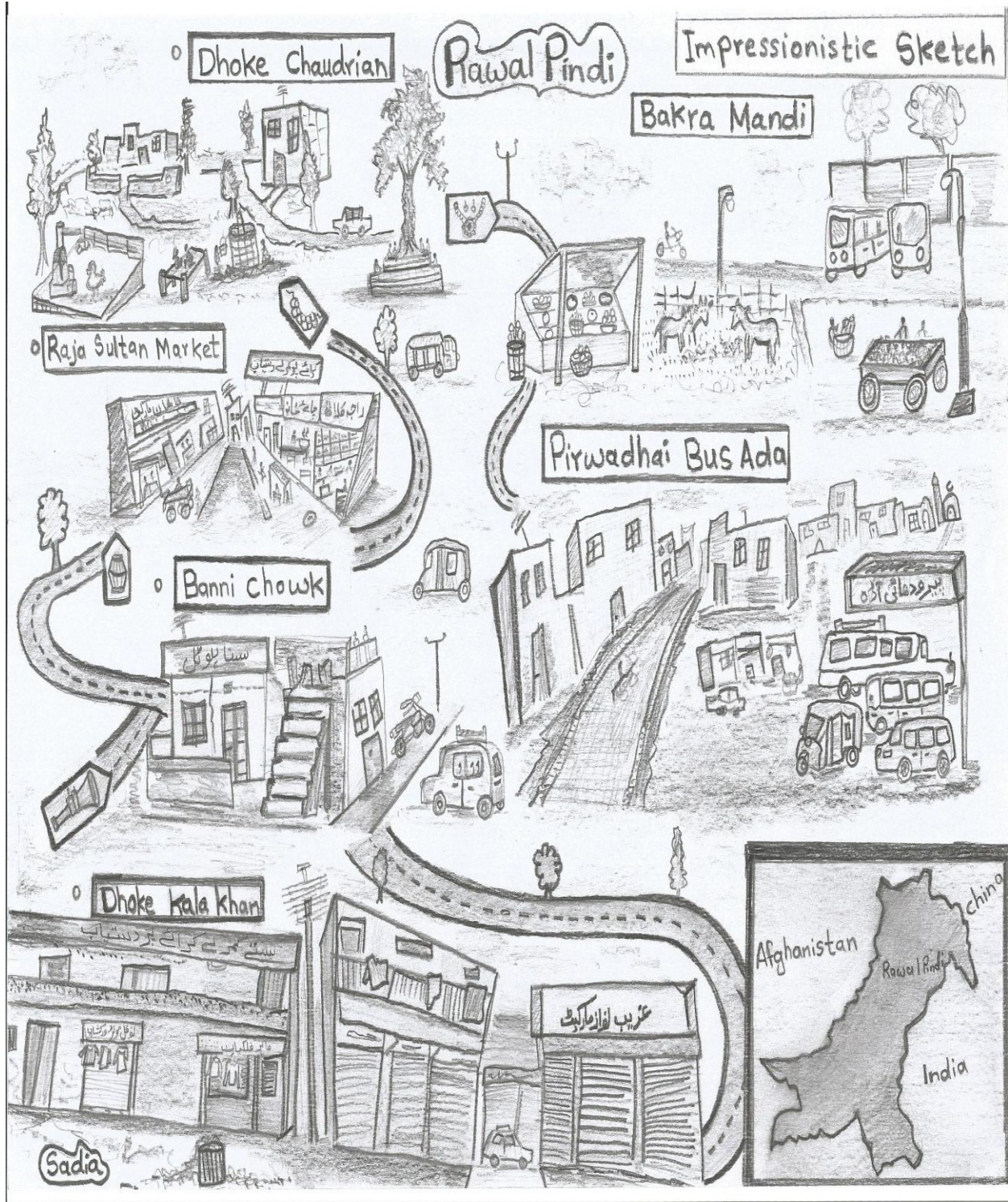
⁸ Governmental and social agencies of social and economic development.

⁹ Hospitals and clinics.

¹⁰ Transportation agencies, postal services, and utilities of telephone, television, newspapers, and periodicals.

zenana/khusra for sex-for-money exchanges. The respondents from *Pirwadhai*, also, responded of most of their clients coming from *Pirwadhai adda* (bus stand) in Rawalpindi. The *deras* at *Handaal Chowk* were one or two room settlements, the one where I lived was a single room *dera* which I shared with one of the respondents during initial and final research.

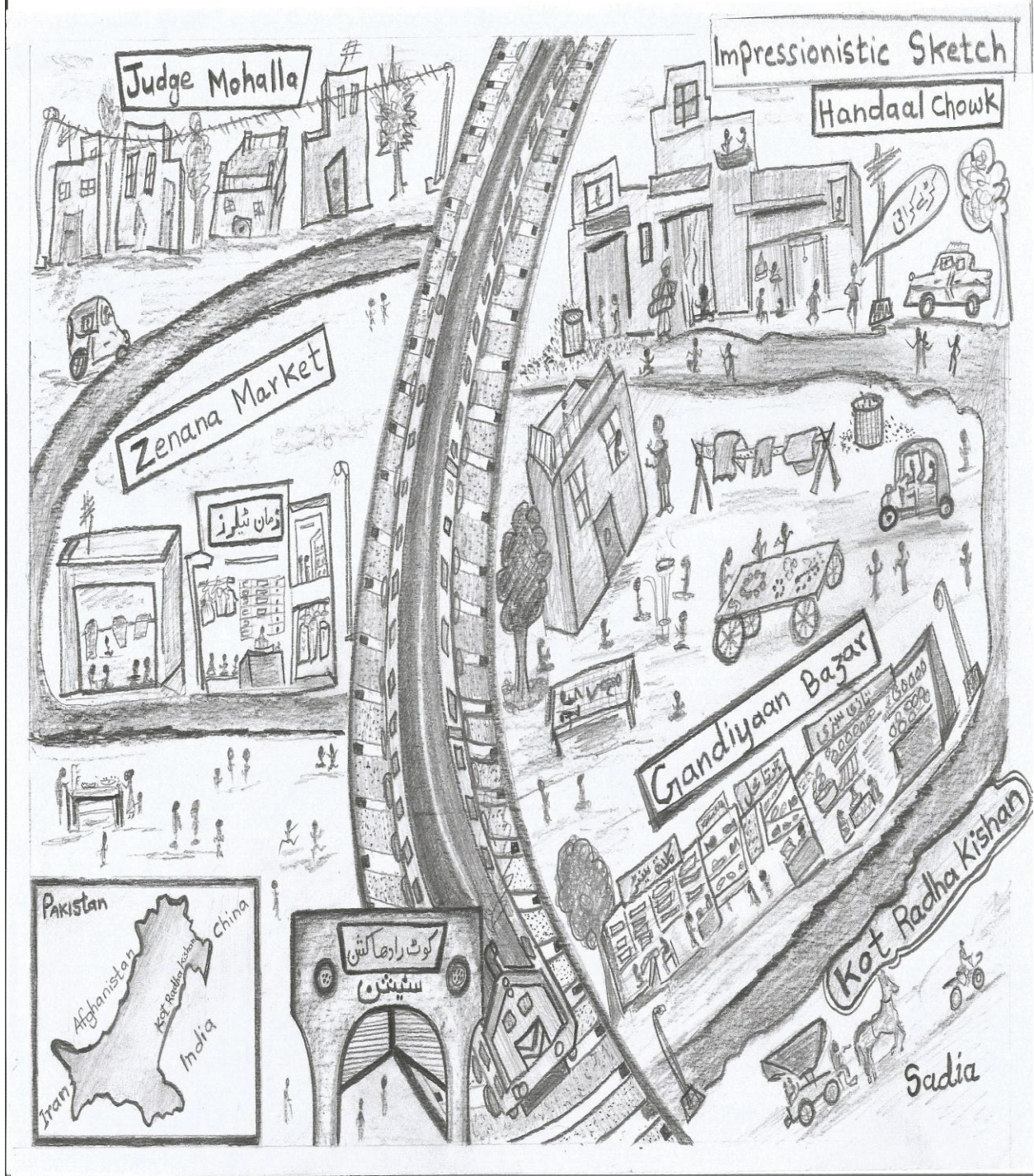
The *dera* at *Haji Fareed Road* (city Kasur) where I stayed was a double storey settlement, the walls of which were painted pink. Unlike other *deras* from other locales, this one had an attached bathroom. I shared a room with one of the respondents in the upper storey and covered other *deras* in the near vicinity during initial and final research. The *deras* of *Kot Murad Khan* (city Kasur) were located in a narrow street near a very old tree to which community feels emotionally connected with. They don't want to eave this narrow street because of the tree which they call '*khusri*'. The oldest *khusra* narrated a story of a man who used to live with his wife and two children hundreds of years ago at a place where she has been living for more than two decades. At that time the tree bore fruits (*bair*- jungle fruit) in abundance. The man used to get tired by cleaning the ground from the heaps of jungle fruit which fell from the tree. One day after he got fatigued by the daily exercise said to God to either stop growing fruit from that tree or he will cut that tree. He never had another child after this incident; also, the tree never bore fruit again. '*Ay koli dar ay, saday war gi khusri ay*' (She shares a room with us, she is a *khusri* just like us) is a reminiscence of the emotional affiliation of *zenana/khusra* residents with that fruitless tree.



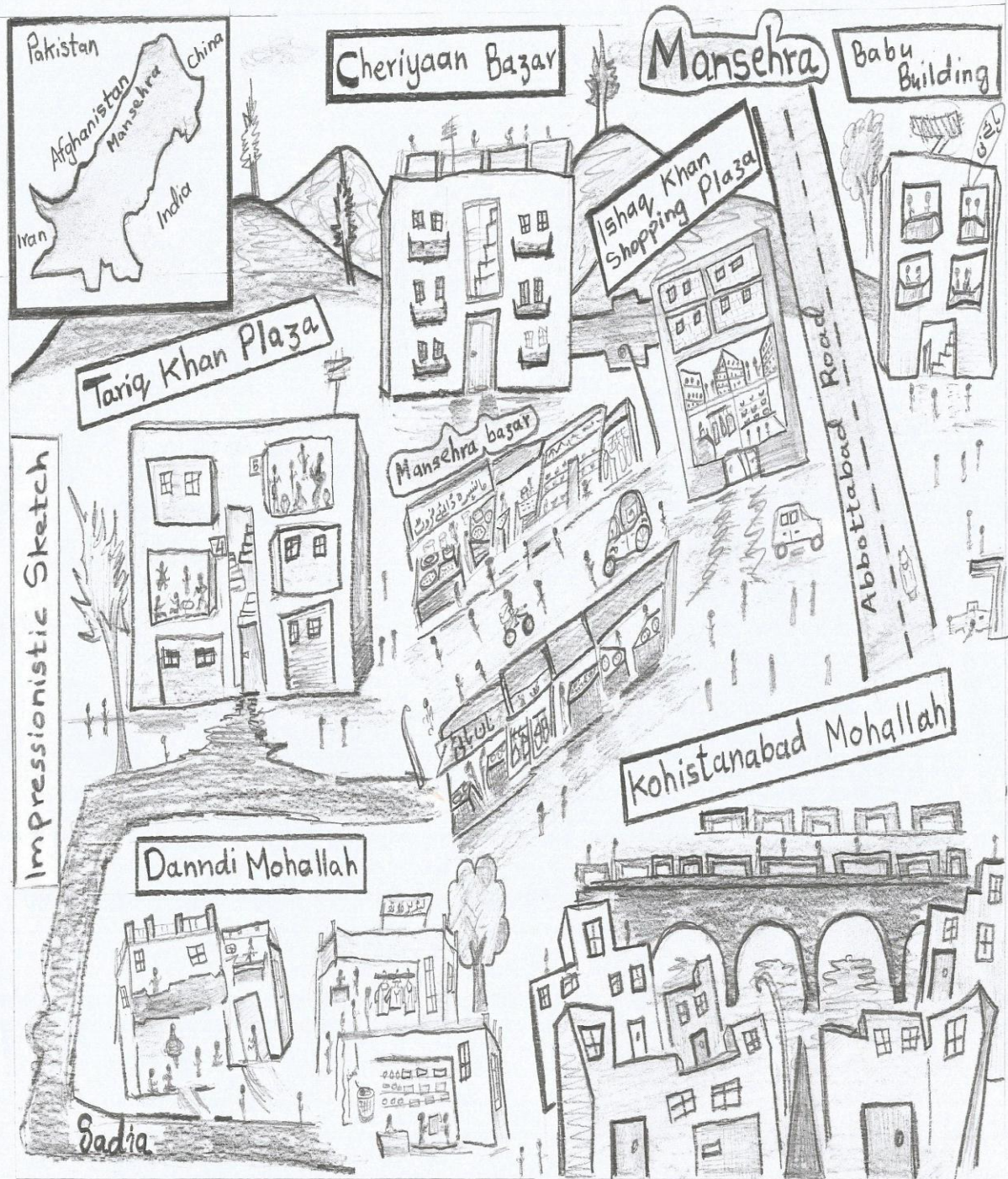
Impressionistic sketch of Rawalpindi showing six areas covered from the locale



Impressionistic sketch of City Kasur showing two areas covered from the locale



Impressionistic sketch of *Kot Radha Kishan* showing four areas covered from the locale



Impressionistic sketch of Manshehra city showing six areas covered from the locale

Description of respondents

Zenanas (uncastrated feminine men) might dress as women but *khusray* (castrated feminine men) were observed always dressed in female clothes. But that doesn't make a *zenana* less feminine looking than a *khusra*. Most of the *zenanas* wore male clothes in their daily routine lives as they had not completely lost ties with their families. Since they had to visit their families, transforming their bodies through injections, breast implants, and castration wasn't an option for them. All the castrated *khusray* from each locale had permanently left their families though they kept on sending monthly money for household expenditures. *Zenanas* from each locale were observed wearing a combination of male and female clothes, usually dressed in white, black, brown, and grey (manly colors) male *shalwar kameez*. *Kameez* (shirts) were usually tight and short resembling like short shirts of female *kameez* with shoulder length hair usually rolled up and tied with hair pins. *Khusray* wore *shalwar kameez* of dark feminine colors (red, pink, orange, yellow, and green) with naturally grown long hair mostly left untied. *Zenana* from Mansehra usually wore male *shalwar kameez* with Afghani *patu* (male shawl), whereas *khusray* wore traditional long colorful female tunics. I found Mansehra more conservative and hidden for these communes than the other three locales. In other locales I observed respondents moving in market places dressed in female clothes. Whereas in Mansehra their mobility was not restricted, but they had to be extra cautious of not getting dressed as females in public spheres barring functions for which they had to leave *deras* and travel miles to surrounding villages in revealing female clothes. Use of make up and jewellery is essential too especially for dance functions. Dark lip colors and nail paints, heavy make up base, showy blush on and shimmery eye make up with heavy artificial jewellery items were necessary for functions. In daily routine *kajal* was used by many respondents. Use of cheap local body lotions, hair removing and fairness creams were also common.

They communicated in Punjabi (Rawalpindi, *Kot Radha Kishan*, and City Kasur) and Hindko and Punjabi (Mansehra). They all understood Urdu. And, excepting few, most of the respondents talked in Urdu. Farsi is their personal language through which they were observed communicating in all the four locales. Farsi is not a Persian language, the name Farsi is given because of *hijras'* historical links with the Mughal era. It is a secret code language (Awan and

Sheeraz 2011) which is spoken for their private conversation not for others to comprehend. With the exception of Mansehra, respondents from other locales interacted with me in Punjabi and Farsi; I took time in learning Farsi words (nouns, pronouns, and verbs) during initial research. With the help of key informants and long telephonic conversations with them between initial and final research period, I managed to comprehend their code language. In Mansehra a combination of Hindko, Punjabi and Farsi was spoken with me. Respondents from City Kasur and Rawalpindi spoke to me about Farsi becoming less popular as a mode of communication within the community due to difficulty of new *zenana/khusra* entrants in learning a new language. Secondly, I also heard respondents saying that the language had become more known to the people outside their community and hence less effective as a secret tool for communication. Non verbal communication entailing specific connotations was also observed in all four locales.

Few *zenana/khusra* define themselves in terms of the social standards, most according to who they feel they are and others by drawing historical references and community differences between *nirbaan* (castrated man) and *uqwi* (uncastrated man). Among male-female transgender persons are *zenanas* who according to group consensus are biological males but are born with female souls. Whereas *khusras* are castrated men who are biological males inhabiting female souls since childhood. To *zenana* getting operated through castration is sinful and outright abomination as this act, which can never be reverted, goes against the religious teachings. To one *zenana*, *khusray* in their attempt to look feminine never get inner satisfaction even after castration, they are jealous of each other, they argue over beauty, haggle over money and compete for *giryas*.

In Kasur, respondents located major differences between a *zenana* and a *khusra*. To them *zenana* is always uncastrated and a *khusra* born as a hermaphrodite but a *khusri* is always castrated.

Neeli: The difference is huge. Some of them [*zenanay*] are those who dance and perform at functions, others [*khusray*] collect *bhidaiyaan* from homes and *khusri(yan)* is(are) high class the most demanded, she(they) is(are) considered full females except the fact that she(they) can not procreate otherwise she(they) can get married to a man.¹¹

¹¹ City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

Consenting to Neeli was Reema, who replied:

Reema: They [*khusray*] are the real ones who on the birth of newly born babies go from door to door for *bhidaiyaan* or perform at marriage functions or on roads wearing musical anklets [*ghunghuru*] and the *zenanay* are ones who earn through *pann*. They perform at *melas*, they are men who can get married to women as well. *Zenana* is in a way similar to other two because they all have feminine souls, one is born neither as male nor female [*khusra*], the other becomes a female [*khusri*] after castration and the last one [*zenana*] remains a man externally and a female internally. She talks and behaves like a man. I can bet you will recognize a *zenana* in a room full of men just by her mannerisms. She will want to run away from her family to join us so to dress, eat, sing, sleep, talk, walk, like a woman.¹²

Few also included the changes brought in other physical attributes for example breast implants or breast enlarging injections while discussing local vernaculars. To others, *khusra* is one who has undergone both: breast enlargement and castration. Saima who defined herself as a *mard khwaja sara* distinguished between *hijra* and *mard khwaja sara*. To her both are the women trapped in the bodies of men with one as castrated (*hijra khwaja sara*) and other as uncastrated (*mard khwaja sara*). *Hijra kawaja sara*, no matter how much envious by uncastrated men, are the most respected and considered the most authentic within the community, for sacrificing their *nafs*¹³ to become women. Even those who remain uncastrated have to undergo rapid (and sometimes painful) physical transformation as part of preparation for functions which include growing long hair, plucking facial hair through tweezers, waxing whole bodies, growing nails long, and feminine gait. Nevertheless, the bodily attributes, though essential in distinguishing one type from another, diffuse for many in the community as all share female souls. Since childhood, almost every respondent inhabited feminine attires applying make up, wearing female clothes, playing with dolls, and doing female domestic chores.

Kulsum: By birth? Ancestral? [*Jaddi pushti?*] Really? No one is by birth, honestly. If father is a *khwaja sara*, it doesn't necessarily mean that a son will also be a *khwaja sara*. I tell you one thing, listen please, if a person is born with a body of a female but have a male soul then it is not her fault. It is by birth, she is not born with that control or choice over her body. Likewise, if a man is bodily man but has a soul of a woman, is it his fault? Why to cringe over

¹² City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

¹³ Self control. In this context, however, sacrificing *nafs* means cutting penis

his femininity or her masculinity? Why to repudiate? Why to hate? How can we like women? . . . Soul cannot lie; it compels us to be true to ourselves.¹⁴

Kajal: We are women. I wouldn't have chosen this life for me if I was a man. Our urge to become women is mostly mistaken by society. They consider us promiscuous that we want to be in multiple sexual relationships with men. It is untrue. [pause] If sexuality is the only reason then why to emulate femininity! Sexual links can happen between men as well, no need to live as women for the fulfillment of sexual urges. Soul is the true reason. [We] feel like women, we feel being trapped in a wrong body, [i] have not castrated though.¹⁵

Injecting female hormones (estrogen) to develop *chaati* (chest) or *mammay* (female breasts) was observed through fieldwork. Female hormones can be induced into the bodies orally (through tablets) or through injections. Of those who developed breasts reported of using female hormonal injections easily accessible from medicine stores without a prescription. A local tablet with the name of baby vinato is available in the market to open up the milk glands of breast feeding mothers. These tablets help in swelling breasts, for this reason excessively used by the *zenanas* who want to develop breasts quickly. Breasts developed through silicone surgery was reported by only two of the respondents (Rawalpindi and Mansehra). Castration surgery was reported by four (two from Rawalpindi and remaining two from *Kot Radha Kishan* and Kasur). Respondents from city *Kasur* and *Kot Radha Kishan* operated from *Kudhian* which is one of the councils of Kasur district. A respondent from Kasur operated soon after joining *dera* before turning eighteen, which helped her in naturally developing breasts. According to a common belief in the community that if *zenana* undergoes castration before eighteen or preferably between thirteen and fifteen then breasts start to develop naturally. Silicone surgery costs fifty to one lac rupees and sometimes post operative care can incur more expenses. Same is true for castration surgery. Historically and culturally, emasculation surgery had been operated by a *dai* (midwife) or a *nai* (barber) or by other transgender fellows. As a result of increasing deaths due to blood loss and aggrandizing post operative complications, surgical methods are being preferred in the community. Kashish claims of observing one of her friends completely transformed into a woman after surgery. To her amazement, her facial hair stopped growing with her skin becoming softer and complexion fairer. Since these attributes are highly demanded by *chaamkay*, they

¹⁴ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Dhoke Chaudrian*

¹⁵ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

channel their ways to get a good price by banking on their transformative beauty. During post operative time they don't earn. They bank on the amounts earned and most on their *giryas*. They take complete bed rest for a month only to leave for passing urine and stool. After forty days of rest they take bath, apply makeup, wear a new dress, and try to look as beautiful as they can just like a young untouched girl. At night they go outside dressed as a woman with a fresh cotton cloth filled with fresh hand picked fruits (mostly apples and bananas) searching for a lush green tree. After finding the desired tree they stand near it, hug it, and ask for its beauty. 'I want to be like you, I want to be fertile, to be attractive and verdant as you are. Give me your beauty. I am here to be like you, give me all your powers and take my inabilities.' was narrated to me by Kashish. To make tree happy they leave fruits there and come back. This is their belief that it will make them beautiful and powerful. They feel as if they are born again and they want all the well being in their second lives, practising this customary ritual is a first step towards it. They don't get physically involved with anyone for a year, it can ruin their beauty, it can be painful also. For a *nibaan (nirvaan)* from Rawalpindi, it took almost a month for the stitches of slit areas to heal. She called her close *saheli* to look after her. She gave ten thousand to her for her services and spent forty thousand on her recovery. *Desi ghee*, minced meat, juices, whole black pepper, dry fruits, eggs, figs, and pumpkin were reported necessary food items to speed up the recovery. Applying piodine two or three times a day is also mandatory to avoid infection.

In addition to 'an urge to becoming feminine', few underwent these surgeries due to community pressures and to increase their profits through alluring more *chaamkay*.

Neeli: It turned out to be essential. I can not live with my family nor can I live with people other than like me. After castration I can have access to ancestral and highly regarded *gurus*. Honestly, I wouldn't have taken such a robust step in my life if it wasn't for my survival. This society forces us to do; I got fed up with the cursed words and oral abuse of people only after which I decided to fully embrace this life.¹⁶

Reema: It is very important for our work. In our profession-- when I used to sit among castrated ones they [*khusray*] used to say, "I find myself better than you, you are uncastrated, you shouldn't be amongst us . . ." such conversations are very common among us. I had to listen to all of that but now I feel equal to them. They can not

¹⁶ City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

claim to be superior to me. I feel confident too. Another important thing to notice is that *tamashbeen* will like me more, they will desire [*khwahish*] us.¹⁷

Interviewer: *Khwahish?*

Reema: They would want [*talab*] to have us [and] their urge to have us will rise. It will raise our earnings and profits too.

¹⁷ City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

ANNOTATED TRACING OF THE KHUSRA FIGURE

KHUSRA FIGURE

- YOUNG ADULT
- NIRBAN

COLOUR

- DARK HEAD
- WHEATISH COMPLEXION
- WHEATISH COLOUR BODY

EYES CLOSED

NOSE RING

DANGLING PINK EARRINGS

LEFT HAND HOLDING A SIDE OF DOPATTA

TRADITIONAL GLASS BANGLES

LEFT ARM

POSTURE

- STANDING
- FACING FRONT
- RIGHT ARM BY HER SIDE

PROPORTION / BODILY FEATURE

- SLIM
- TALL
- BREAST IMPLANTED
- CASTRATED

RIGHT HAND HOLDING A LADIES PURSE

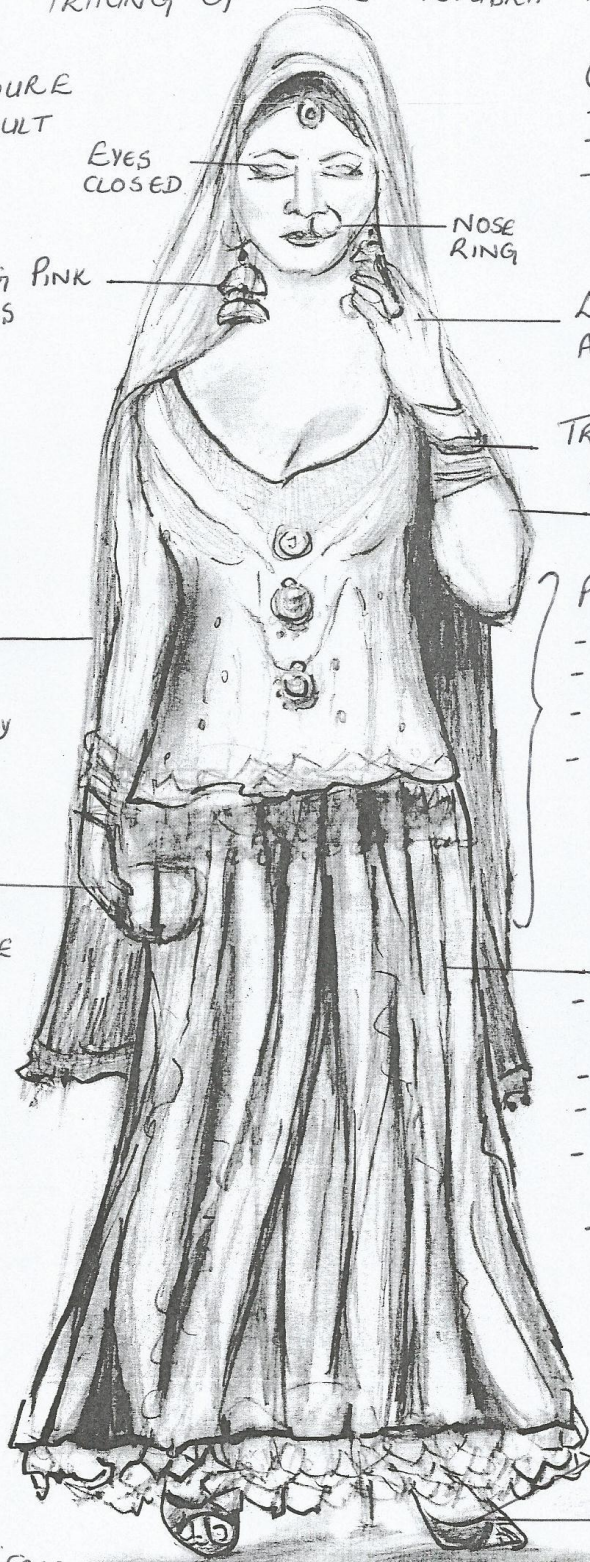
DRESS

- A FEMALE CHOLI GHAGRA
- FULL LENGTH
- FULL SLEEVES
- COLOURED PINK AND BLUE
- DOPATTA COVERING HEAD

HIGH HEEL SHOES

SKETCHES BY
TABASSUM (FREELANCE ARTISTE)

LEFT FOOT POINTING TO ONE SIDE



ANNOTATED TRACING OF THE ZENANA FIGURE

ZENANA FIGURE

- YOUNG ADULT
- Uqwi

- EYES
- DARK
 - OPEN/LOOKING FORWARD AT READER

HAIR (BLACK)
TIED UP

COLOR

- DARK HEAD
- WHITE COMPLEXION
- WHITE COLOUR BODY

POSTURE

- STANDING
- FACE FRONT
- BODY SLIGHTLY TILTING RIGHT

RIGHT ARM ON LEFT SIDE

RIGHT HAND PLACED AT A LEFT HIP BONE

LEFT HAND RESTING ON A LEFT HIP BONE

PROPORTION/BODILY FEATURES

- VERY SLIM
- TALL
- UNCASTRATED
- PROPORTION OF HEAD TO BODY

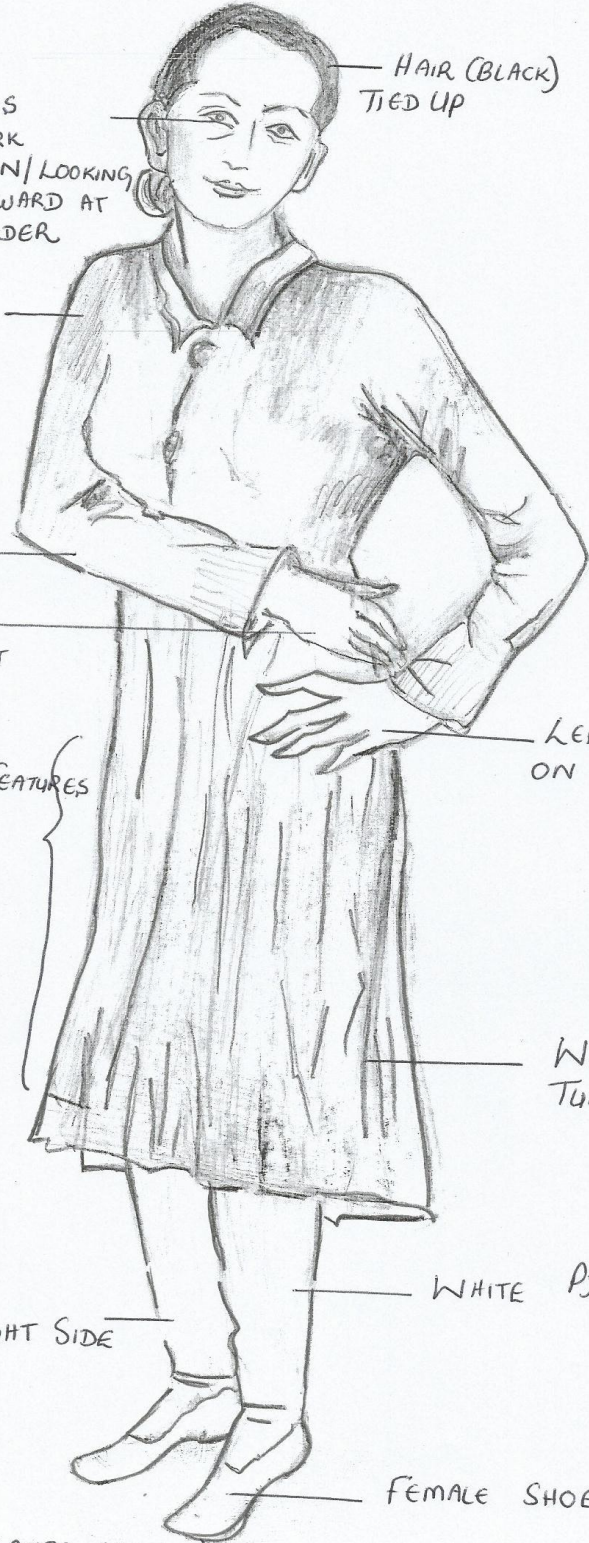
WHITE LONG TUNIC (FITTED)

LEGS TILTING TOWARDS RIGHT SIDE

WHITE PYJAMA (FITTED)

FEMALE SHOES

SKETCHES BY
TABASSUM (FREELANCE ARTISTE)



CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

The nature of the study was exploratory. Ethnographic fieldwork research methods were suitable for the research. The nature of the study is such that data related to some areas such as early lives of respondents, societal perceptions towards them, their sexual settings or networks and love relationships cannot be reliably elicited without being part of the community. Moreover, for understanding discourses of community's language, rituals, ceremonial activities, customs and social structures, it was equally important to live with the community. Pilot studies were conducted in the selected geographical locales before conducting final research. The main objectives of these pilot studies were to initially conduct observational studies, then to frame topic/interview guide, to set the social contexts, and to find out whether framework on the *khusra/zenana* communities of these locales be indigenized and upon knowing outcomes turning out to be positive the attempt was to collect the socio-demographic data after properly recruiting respondents, setting sampling techniques, visiting *deras* and cruising sites with the help of key informants and guides.

Sampling techniques

Since the communities live in dispersed marginalized areas (mostly part of informal settlements) hence using random, probability sampling was inept, therefore non-random, non-probability sampling was used. Moreover, random, probability sampling is used in quantitative research in which the attempt is to list every element in the population to be investigated where each listed element has the equal probability of being selected. Qualitative sampling, on the other hand, is used in qualitative research which gives benefits of not including every element. In addition, Berg (2001) recognizes that it is impossible in some of the sensitive research topics to include each element. He gives an instance of a study on prostitutes where listing of each prostitute is not possible, the best which can be done is to list the *known* prostitutes of specified territory only. In qualitative sampling the chances of selection of each element are unknown but characteristics of

the population to be investigated are known which are used as selection criteria. Qualitative sampling, such as selective and purposive, peer-driven and snowball were used in this research. A type of non-probability sampling is the snowball which is highly effective in accessing and listing the 'hard to reach populations', 'classes of deviance' and for sensitive research domains (Berg 2001). Hence, combinations of peer and snowball were most effective in targeting the hard to reach communities of *zenana/khusra*. This research used a phased approach (Gaskell 2000) in which during first phase (initial research) interviews and focus groups were conducted. After having gathered and analyzed data from the first phase, the second phase focussed on those respondents, covered those research areas and categories which were more interesting and relevant to the research. Hence initial research was crucial for final field visits and final analysis.

Sample size

In qualitative ethnographic research samples are usually small in size. There are reasons attributed to it. First, there will be a saturation point beyond which including more sampling units/elements will not lead to new evidence or information (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). Second, if in-depth analysis is to be done, then within each sampling unit there will be many 'bites' of information. In order to analytically grasp and to do justice to these, sample size is required to be smaller (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). Finally, availability of resources is crucial in furthering with more interviews, discussions, and participant observations. This research kept sample size small. In addition to the aforementioned reasons, sample size was kept smaller because the study population of *zenana/khusra* is not very diverse, hence keeping smaller samples and analyzing in-depth incorporated all the inner diversity which was needed. Moreover, the number of selection criteria was not large; keeping smaller selection criteria led to smaller sample size. Gaskell (2000) argues that more interviews do not automatically imply better understanding or analysis. In this research, too, it was reflected that the initial interviews were unique and surprising to the extent that similarities between the accounts/experiences seemed to be non-existent. With more interviewing common themes started to come to the fore and a more all-encompassing understanding of the social reality or milieu emerged. No more data elicitation techniques were employed after reaching this saturation. Then it was impossible to transcribe the data of too many respondents as there was quite a possibility of a loss of information while

analyzing textual records, writing down verbal tones and non-verbal communication if sample size had been kept too large.

Table 1: Total number of respondents

Locales	Number of respondents
Rawalpindi	12
<i>Kasur</i>	4
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	10
Mansehra	7
Total	33

A total number of thirty three in-depth interviews were conducted in the final research with the maximum respondents interviewed from Rawalpindi and minimum from Kasur. The decision on the number of respondents interviewed from each locale was dependent on the number of areas included from each locale and on how much a respondent is contributing towards the research. Most of these thirty three in-depth interviewed respondents also participated in the focus group discussions.

Table 2: Number of *Nirban* (Castrated men)

Locales	Number of <i>Nirban/nirvan</i> (Castrated men)
Rawalpindi	2
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	1
Kasur	1
Total	4

Two of the respondents/participants interviewed or grouped into focus groups from Rawalpindi were *nirban*; each of the remaining two was from *Kot Radha Kishan* and Kasur.

Table 3: Number of *Uqwi* (Uncastrated men)

Locales	Number of respondents
Rawalpindi	10
Kasur	3
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	9
Mansehra	7
Total	29

As shown in the table most of the respondents were *uqwi* with maximum interviewed/grouped into focus groups from Rawalpindi and minimum from Kasur.

Table 4: Number of castrated (*nirban*) respondents who enlarged breasts through silicone surgery

Locales	Number of respondents
Rawalpindi	1
Kasur	1
Total	2

Only one participant from Kasur took part in a focus group and one from Rawalpindi in both interview and group discussion had developed artificial breasts through silicone surgery

Table 5: Number of castrated (*nirban*) respondents injecting estrogen (female hormones) through medicine and/or injections

Locales	Number of respondents
Rawalpindi	1
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	1
Total	2

Two of the remaining *nirban* respondents used medication/injections to develop breasts.

Table 6: Number of uncastrated (*uqwi*) respondents injecting estrogen (female hormones) through medicine and/or injections

Locales	Number of respondents
Rawalpindi	2
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	4
Mansehra	2
Total	8

In comparison to *nirban* respondents/participants, a greater number of *uqwi* respondents used injections/medicines to inject female hormones into their bodies.

Tools for data elicitation

The instruments used for data extraction were a structured interview including structured questions (yes/no, multiple choice questions) for socio-demographic and behavioral data. But for personal information, interview protocol/guide including open-ended questions was followed.

Interview protocol included main areas of research interests. Using such a protocol instead of *structured* questionnaire led to easy flow of conversation. Gaskell (2000) emphasizes on putting time and effort on the construction of a topic guide because it provides a flow to conversation and an easy framework for discussion. For this research it helped me in (re)gaining momentum in conversation whenever my mind went blank in the middle of a conversation/interview. Preliminary observational studies, meetups with transgender experts, and rapport building with the respondents were instrumental in including more research areas to the interview guide and excluding the few existing ones either for conceptual reasons or because the respondents had little to respond about them. I had to revisit and modify topic guide thrice during the progression of this research because the research areas which were important for the respondents of one locale were less important for another locale. Moreover, certain headings of a paragraph (indicating research areas) were removed from guide because those were the areas originally considered central to the research but later turned out to be uninteresting to the respondents. Topic guide was used flexibly with other forms of data to explore social phenomena/reality. For this reason *naturally occurring* data through participant observation was used. Participant observation proved out to be effective in covering up the discrepancies in the course of the fieldwork, in understanding various aspects of research interests such as visiting cruising sites was helpful in understanding the client/worker relationship and other dynamics of *khusra/zenana* prostitution, also in finding more suitable respondents. Moreover, certain things can be adequately understood by experiencing them. By taking part in whatever being studied produces rich insights which cannot be achieved through *generated* forms of data.

Field study is a term often used synonymously as ‘ethnographic study’ or ‘ethnography’. It is the least structured form of observational study which takes place in natural environment and employs unstructured participant observation¹⁸ (Bailey 1994). The attempt of ethnographer is not essentially to prove or disprove research hypothesis, rather to describe in detail any culture or subculture including religious, ritual, ceremonial, and legal practices which in turn requires researcher to be part of the community or culture being studied. For this reason, in this study, the researcher lived with (and as part of) the community. Field notes were effective in noting down

¹⁸ The attempt of the researcher is to pose as participant observing and memorizing what occurs the whole day and recording the impressions at nights (Bailey 1994).

day-to-day ethnographic accounts relevant to research. In literature there are different ways mentioned to keep field notes, this research adopted abbreviated notes through paper slips and index cards to record verbatim accounts, location setups, conversation timings, and physical appearances of the study subjects. These records were jotted down and sketched into full accounts (Berg 2001). Field diary was also used for more personalized reflections on the accounts/events.

Data was generated through informal open-ended in-depth interviews (IDIs) the aim of which were to achieve both ‘breadth and depth of coverage’ of key issues. To achieve this, content mapping and content mining questions were asked. Content mapping questions were instrumental in opening up various dimensions of research and perspectives of respondents. Here the attempt was not necessarily to strictly follow the areas mentioned in the interview protocol/topic guide but to include and recognize areas or dimensions relevant to the respondents. Content mining questions were deeply explored for those areas or dimensions using probes or follow-up questions. Use of probes in mining questions continued until complete and clear understanding of the respondent’s perspective was achieved. IDIs were recorded with a digital recorder, transcribed verbatim in local language and translated into English twice to not to lose the authenticity of the local language but local vernaculars, linguistics, expressions, gestures, gazes and annotations were retained. For recording reluctant respondents, quick notes were taken right after the interviews. Data was checked and crosschecked with the help of key informants.

Narrative interviewing is the technique in which narrative of the interviewee is given prime importance with minimum interruptions from the interviewer (Jovchelovitch and W. Bauer 2000). In this research the attempt was to not to strictly follow the topic guide/interview protocol and question-answer schema; also, the attempt was to go beyond interviewer-interviewee monotony. Hence narrative interviewing style was adopted to minimize the influence of interviewer and to verbalize the perspectives of interviewee through story telling and listening to the interviewee. *Zenanas/khusras* being vocal were open to narrate/tell stories. Verbal interruptions while narratives/story telling were minimized. Only active listening, non-verbal communication (head nodding, hand movements to continue, facial expressions to show

interest), paralinguistic support ('I know', 'I see', 'yes', 'hmm') were followed. While narratives important questions were written on topic guide only to be asked in the next step of questioning phase. Probing questions were usually asked after narrative ended and before questioning phase started. In narrative interviewing use of language similar to the interviewees is preferred. I can not claim of using Farsi and Punjabi language thoroughly, though during final visits I used local language(s) more effectively for probing questions and eliciting contextual information. Questions targeting to elicit fresh or additional material were asked during questioning phase. Narratives were recorded with a digital recorder for verbatim transcription.

Another 'data generated source' of focus groups was also used for three important reasons. First, to cover highly subjective/abstract discussion oriented research domains. Second, to depersonalize conversation for information rich but reticent respondents. Third, to obtain more generalized patterns on certain set of questions. More importantly, in focus groups respondents become vocal, they seek questions, comment on the perceptions and viewpoints of others, the result of which are refined arguments and complete responses to the discussion oriented research areas. Focus groups were systematically organized keeping into consideration the practicalities such as timings, venues, recording of discussions, and refreshments or other incentives at the venues. Informal conversations with the respondents were helpful in eliciting data after which the data was synchronized into themes and subthemes to be covered in the research.

Tuckman (1965) in Gaskell (2000) describes four developmental stages while conducting focus groups beginning with *forming* stage in which there exists a confusion and ambiguity amongst the participants about group identities, followed by *storming* stage in which difference of opinion between participants or between moderator and participants lead to arguments or even conflicts, the next is *norming* stage in which group consensus begins to emerge followed by the *performing* stage in which group consensus is achieved and exceptions to the rule are noticed. The final is the *mourning* stage in which more relaxed and private conversation takes place after recorder is switched off and the researcher wishes of not having switched off the recorder. For this research *storming*, *norming* and *performing* stages were more pronounced. Disapprovals, arguments, sarcastic comments and verbal fights were experienced during most of the focus groups. As a moderator I had to intervene to bring in another dimension to the point of argument

or to completely change the issue under consideration by bringing in another research area. After achieving normal flow of conversation the similar issue was again brought into the discussion which in most situations led to more consented and less disputed views. Quick field notes were written to record those conversations that happened after the group discussion when the recorder was switched off.

During group discussions few participants either nodded or shook their heads to the opinions of other participants. In order to vocalize their bodily expressions I had to say, “So, there seems to be a consensus on this”, or “Few are not agreeing to her” so that their bodily expressions conveying approval or disapproval could be recorded. Similarly, hand clapping (conveying disapproval), or putting index finger of a right or a left hand on chin (conveying seriousness or amazement) to the talks/views of other participants had to be questioned by me. Probing also helped in clarifying new words or phrases of Farsi language. My role in the focus groups was to facilitate the discussion. But since the participants knew each other beforehand, they took the charge and performed an active role in letting me (their *shoormi*- sister) know about their verbal codes.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was used to analyze data. For thematic analysis, thematic framework was constructed. In order to construct thematic framework, all the field notes, and transcribed data from recordings was segmented, initially indexed and then coded, categorized and sub-categorized, themed and sub-themed, and structured under suitable categories such as ‘socio-economic organization of *zenana/khusra* communes’, ‘*zenana/girya* relationship’, ‘love supersedes money’ etc. In Ethnomethods naturalized transcriptions are desired (Olive et. al 2005). In order to preserve local contexts meaningful involuntary conversations (laughing, crying, gasping, sniffing), response tokens (*hmmh, yeah, huh*), and non-verbal codes or verbalizations (gazing, gesturing, hand movements, facial expressions, pointing, head nodding, head shaking) were maintained.

Conversational analysis is the analysis of the talk for which clear tape recording and detailed transcriptions are desired (W. Bauer and Gaskell 2000). In-depth interviews and focus groups (during initial and final research) took place inside *dera* communes to avoid external intrusions through noise. Detailed transcriptions were desired and a couple of attempts were made to refine transcriptions through including non-verbal codes and pitch, stress, and loudness of voice. Stylistic notes/transcription conventions were used to convey meaningful voice expressions. The transcription conventions used in this research are:

- 1) . . . means that the transcriber missed a word because he couldn’t hear or when the voice of respondent tailed off
- 2) means that the transcriber couldn’t hear more than a single word
- 3) --. means that the narrative has been interrupted by external factors (another person, knock at the door, opening of the window, or any unforeseen occurrence)

- 4) -- means a false start when the study subjects wanted to say something else but started with a confused set of words
- 5) Underlined texts means emphasis or stress
- 6) CAPITALS means loudness of voice
- 7) /
/ means overlapping conversation
- 8) == means that the conversation continued without hearing a pause
- 9) ((*text*)) italic texts between double round brackets means bodily expressions and emotional overtones (laughing, crying, gazing, sniffing, head nodding and shaking, gasping)
- 10) <text> texts between angle brackets means that the words spoken were faster than the rest of the conversation
- 11) [text] texts between square brackets include additional explanations, side comments and italicized foreign words/phrases/sentences (Urdu, Punjabi, and Farsi).

Commas, colons, semicolons, exclamation marks, periods, and question marks were used according to the sentence construction to convey meanings and interpretations as close to the narratives/perspectives of the respondents as possible.

Stages of analysis explained through example

The rationale for explanation through example is to provide a brief illustration to the readers on how the analysis in the subsequent sections was done.

Stage 1: Verbatim description (without translation and punctuation marks/stylistic notes)

Munni: *Manti hun keh hamaray bachay nhn hotay hun bhe kaisay nhn paida hosaktay na phir bhe jaisay phir bhe maa hain behan hain bhai hain saaray rishtay hote hain na paisay dene ke lye*

Pooja: *Jadh shaadi kar lo tey saday bachay wi ho ey jaanday ay*

Munni: *Naway shadi kar lo uss tey kuriyaan aan ussi shadi jogiyaan ni aan uthay ja kay dao na lagay tey ugli di dih da bajh la ke daag la ke beh jao saari zindagi di laanat o baduawaan daiway saanu jholi kad kad ke meray palay ki she la ditti ay tey unha naal behtar hai saatrah da gala ghut lo*

Stage 2: Applying stylistic notes

Munni: *Manti hun keh hamaray bachay nhn hotay. Hun bhe kaisay? Nhn paida hosaktay na! Phir bhe jaisay-- Phir bhe maa hain, behan hain, bhai hain, saaray rishtay hote hain na paisay dene ke lye.*

Pooja: *>Jadh shaadi kar lo tey saday bachay wi ho ey jaanday ay<*

Munni: *Naway shadi kar lo! Uss tey kuriyaan aan, ussi shadi jogiyaan ni aan. Uthay ja kay dao na lagay tey agli di dih da bajh la ke, daag la ke beh jao. . . . Saari zindagi di laanat o baduawaan daiway saanu jholi kad kad ke, meray palay ki she la ditti ay. Tey unha naal behtar hai saatrah da gala ghut lo.*

Stage 3: Word by word translation (with stylistic notes and punctuation marks)

Munni: Agree I that us children no can. Can also how? Can not reproduce na! Still also like-- Then still mothers are, sisters are, brothers are, all relationships are money give to.

Pooja: *>When married get then we children too have can<*

Munni: Noway married get! We girls are. We marriage able no are. There no perform then next daughter broken will be, destroyed her. . . . Whole life cursing, rebuking that me with what thing bound. Instead from this better is wish strangled be.

Stage 4: Making sense of the translation

Munni: I agree that we cannot have kids. How can we have [ones]? We can not reproduce *na!* Still also like-- Still we have mothers, have sisters, [and] have brothers, all relations to give money to.

Pooja: >We can have kids too if we get married<

Munni: No way, how can we get married! We are like girls. We are unable of getting married [to a girl]. A girl's life can be destroyed, she will be broken for life if we fail to perform well [at wedding nights]. . . . Rebuking, cursing, flinching for bounding us with them for life instead of doing this [to someone's daughter] it is better to not to wish for marriage.

Stage 5: Indexing/coding

a) Constructing an index or a coding frame

For thematic analysis text was analyzed, for that the most important step to follow was constructing a coding frame. Codes were generated majorly through data. After having generated codes, categories were generated by text reduction. Long units of texts were reduced to summary sentences and sentences into short descriptions or keywords (explained in stage 6).

1. Third Gender

- 1.1) Self definition (sexuality, inner self, inhabiting femininity, female soul and attire)
- 1.2) Coming out
- 1.3) Family pressures
- 1.4) Leaving home
- 1.5) *Nirbaan* (castrated men)
- 1.6) *Uqwi* (uncastrated men)

2. *Dera* life

- 2.1) Interaction with each other
- 2.2) Feeling free and confident
- 2.3) Sharing

- 2.4) Economic activities
 - 2.5) *Guru/chela* relationship
 - 2.6) Other relations
3. Marriage
- 3.1) With a woman
 - 3.2) With a man
- b) Tagging data

In this stage text units were tagged with codes/sub-codes generated in the previous stage.

Munni: I agree that we cannot have kids. How can we have [ones]? We can not reproduce *na!*
(1.1) Still also like-- Still we have mothers, have sisters, [and] have brothers, all relations to give money to. **(2.6)**

Pooja: >We can have kids too if we get married< **(1.1)**

Munni: No way, how can we get married! We are like girls. We are unable of getting married [to a girl]. **(1.1)** A girl's life can be destroyed, she will be broken for life if we fail to perform well [at wedding nights]. . . . Rebuking, cursing, flinching for bounding us with them for life instead of doing this [to someone's daughter] it is better to not to wish for marriage. **(3.1)**

Stage 6: Thematic Charts

For each research area a separate thematic chart was made. The chart presented here is for *Dera* life. Chart has been divided into seven columns. Main research area is written in the first column. Various dimensions of that area are mentioned in the remaining columns. The socio-demographic information of respondents is presented in the respective rows. Corresponding to the columns of dimensions of research area and the rows of respondents is presented the elicited and transcribed data which will be used to generate categories in the subsequent stages. Here the quotes from five respondents have been included. The original chart had the quotes of all the respondents the inclusion of which was difficult to present here due to lack of space. The empty

boxes show that no substantial data was elicited on the research domains mentioned on the top most columns of the thematic chart.

2 Dera Life	2.1 Interaction with each other	2.2 Feeling free and confident	2.3 Sharing	2.4 Economic activities	2.5 <i>Guru/chela</i> relationship	2.6 Other relations
Pooja <i>Zenana</i> , 30, <i>Kot Radha</i> <i>Kishan</i>	<i>Dera</i> is important because we come here--. All our friends visit us here, [we] enjoy here, smoke cigarettes, make merry, chat to each other, we cook, eat together, we invite our friends here, we receive invitations for functions. . . .	Where ever I want to go I go, whoever I want to meet I meet, whatever I want I get. I manage it well. When I know I should be on point at home as a man I am there. And when I have spare time just for myself then I am a woman among my friends chatting and	Like anyone from <i>saheliyan</i> pays a visit, just like <i>Panga</i> has come to see me now.		<i>Guru/chela</i> relationship is like father/son relationship. If <i>chela</i> stays well with her <i>guru</i> then nobody criticizes at all but if she does not listen to <i>guru</i> , does not show respect to her, or insults her in front of her peers or friends then GURU WILL	What why! Because this line is such that we need relationships we can call ours. These relationships have meanings. GURU MAA is also important <i>na!</i> Family is usually complete when that motherly lacuna is filled. <i>Guru</i> is a father then

	<p>The invitees come to meet us here. [pause] Our loving partners come to see us here, our <i>zenanay</i> friends [<i>saheliyaan</i>] visit us, we give them company with warmth and hospitality, we do our private fun chat, rather than standing on the road somewhere outside or anywhere at heavy rains or in winters or in</p>	<p>enjoying.</p>			<p>NOT TOLERATE IT. <i>Guru</i> is <i>guru</i>, whether senior or junior, beautiful or ugly, no matter what her appearance is like when a <i>chela</i> has taken an oath to be working under her then no point of being rude and disrespectful towards her <i>guru</i>.</p>	<p>there has to be a mother otherwise people in our community ask, “Who your mother is? So and so is my mother. So, be my daughter please, no way you are not trustworthy” [<i>“Teri maa kaun ae? Falaani meri maa ae. Aa tu meri dhi ban ja. Jaaway tu kisay di ni”</i>]. <i>Guru maa</i> is different form <i>guru</i>, she is</p>
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	scorching heat. Fun is always within four walls and in private.					very motherly, she looks after us like a real mother does. She gives us gifts, clothes, money, shoes. We start expecting from her whereas <i>guru</i> expects from us. I can get whatever I need from my <i>guru maa</i> .
Sassi <i>Zenana</i> , 34, <i>Kot Radha</i> <i>Kishan</i> Guests visit us, <i>saheliyaan</i> come to meet us, male friends [<i>bailay sajan yar</i>] drop by to		My <i>saheliyaan</i> are very dear to me. They respect me a lot, show a lot of concern towards me, my health, and well They prefer staying at <i>deras</i> , calling in five customers [<i>chaamkay</i>], and receiving one thousand in an	She is a <i>nirban</i> . She is growing old now. I meet her hardly once in six months or in a year but I respect her a lot.	

	see us.		<p>being. <i>Wiharhi</i> is my home town. How can I live there! I had no option except staying away from my home and earn I have made my own house here.</p>	<p>hour. When this is an option then why to work too hard, they are scared of putting in effort [<i>dardiyaan ae khawariaan toon</i>].</p>	<p>I used to go with her to every gathering. We both share a reciprocal relationship. When I was young, she kept on noticing me during my visits to <i>deras</i>. She knew of me and my femininity. She enticed me towards this life. I was young and quite passionate so I joined her. I was allured to this life by her. I shifted to her</p>	
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					place. At that time our house was adjacent to hers. I spent three years with her.	
Seemi <i>Zenana,</i> 19, <i>Kot Radha</i> <i>Kishan</i>	Yes, All of us-- The ones like me pay visit to <i>deras</i> . We are their friends they are ours.	I cannot explain what I feel when I visit <i>deras</i> , so relaxed so much-- -. What we say it, confidence yes-- We feel so confident, we do whatever we want to do in <i>deras</i> . Like our <i>guru's</i> clothes are always there for us to wear and look		We need to have four [or] five hundred rupees daily so that we can enjoy. I don't have money now, so I want to go to <i>dera</i> . I want men to give me hundred, two hundred rupee note. This is what I need at the moment. We	We haven't rented a <i>dera</i> , our <i>saheli</i> [Guru] has. We go there for <i>paisha</i> , we give her share out of our earnings, she, also, gives us our shares from her earnings. She earns through <i>paisha</i> and dance functions. She is the one who	

		<p>beautiful. We wear those, apply makeup, we dance, we cook, we make fun, whatever we do we do it on our will. Before that-- I used to live in my native village but never wanted to stay there for too long, with no friends around to talk to and share with. [pause] I am happy here at least I can be myself without anybody to</p>		<p>have a common friend, she has her own <i>dera</i> here [<i>Gandi Bazar</i>]. That <i>saheli</i>, she and me all three get ready mostly at evenings. A customer will come, he looks over us, and we ask him of his preference. The one he prefers puts forth the demand of not less than three hundred rupees. If he agrees then we go to a small</p>	<p>pays the <i>dera</i> rent, not us.</p>	
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		repress me and my feelings.		room, get paid first, then give in sexually after which we divide equal shares amongst the three of us. If three hundred then hundred each will be each one's share.		
Saeeda <i>Khusra</i> , 35, Mansehra	Look! We are here. Everybody from <i>koli</i> number 2, from number 3, 4, 5. . . She has come from Babu			This is our business center. We start our work from this place. We cannot deal our professional	Father/son, mother/daughter. . . . But guru[s] can be a snake who can wound her [their] own <i>chela[s]</i> like a	<i>Hae hae</i> , don't tell a lie <i>jananeya!</i> [<i>Hae hae</i> , way <i>jananeya koorh tey na maar!</i>]. How can I hate,

	[Building]. . . .			lives at family homes. The people who invite us to their functions will not visit our homes <i>na</i> , obviously they will come to our <i>deras</i> with their invitations. This place becomes our home and our business place. Our family will not take us back <i>na</i> .	snake stings her own family.	you are my <i>shoormi</i> [<i>Mere tey koe kachi ni, tu tey mere shoormi ay</i>].
Raheela <i>Zenana</i> ,	So that we can meet our needs, do what we want to do, eat what		All of us-- We live together. We are dependent on each other in a	Look, this <i>dera</i> is a place where my friends come over it is a place	<i>Guru/chela</i> relationship is like student/teacher.	<i>Mama</i> has decorated it [room]. I and <i>guraee</i> helped

<p>28, <i>Kot Radha</i> <i>Kishan</i></p>	<p>we want to eat, meet whoever we want to meet. We don't allow every person to enter into our premises, very selective and special people we allow. We have bought this place for ourselves. We live here by our choice.</p>		<p>number of ways. <i>Dera</i> costs us thousand rupees each, we can afford rents because we share.</p>	<p>where most of my. . . . I need a place to entertain clients [<i>tamashbeen</i>] too. It is both a place to live and to run my business. I have to prostitute [<i>dhandha</i>] on <i>dera</i> as well that I can not at my place.</p>	<p>Guru treats us like our parents. She is our parently figure. You know, if today we look after our <i>guru</i>, meet her needs. . . . We basically are setting examples for others to follow us. Definitely, I am going to take up the role of a <i>guru</i> in future. I will have many <i>chelas</i> working under me. If we show respect to our elders today</p>	<p>her. <i>Khala</i> and <i>chacha</i> bought these decorations.</p>
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					our juniors will respect us tomorrow. If anybody wants to sustain in this field then respect is essential.	
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Column 2.1

Pooja- Friends visiting, enjoying, smoking cigarettes, merrymaking, chatting, cooking and eating together, inviting friends, hospitality, and warmth.

Sassi- Guest visiting, *saheliyan* coming, and male friends dropping by.

Seemi- *Zenanay* visiting *khusray*, *khusray* visiting *zenanay* at each other's *deras*.

Saeeda- *Khusray* coming from adjacent rooms and others from *Babu Building* for exchanging pleasantries.

Raheela- Meeting selective and special persons, living by choice.

Column 2.2

Pooja- Balancing the dual lives (of a married man and the other of a *zenana*) quite well, free to meet anyone, free to go anywhere she wants to with all her desires and wants being met.

Seemi- Wearing her guru's clothes, applying make up, free from family obligations and doing everything on her will.

Column 2.3

Pooja- Pointing towards Sana to show Sana's concern when she visited to bed side Anjali.

Sassi- *Zenanay sahelian* showing respect towards Nussi and concern towards her health.

Raheela- *Zenana/khusra* sharing *dera* rents.

Column 2.4

Sassi- Entertaining *chaamkay* (clients) at *deras*.

Seemi- Highlighting importance of *dera* for earning through prostitution.

Saeeda- Calling *deras* business centers and dealing her professional lives through *deras*.

Raheela- Meeting her *chaamkay* at and running her business through *deras*.

Column 2.5

Pooja- *Guru* as head of the *dera* commune, showing respect to her is essential.

Sassi- *Zenany* accompanying *Gurus* to different gatherings, Nussi sharing reciprocal relationship with her *guru*.

Seemi- *Guru* renting out rooms to *zenanay/khusray* for part time prostitution.

Saeeda- *Gurus* showing anger over *chelas* when their demands are unentertained, orders are rejected and payments are denied.

Raheela- Equalizing *guru* with a teacher who deserves respect.

Column 2.6

Pooja- *Gurus* filling fatherly lacunas and *Guru maa* filling motherly lacunas.

Saeeda/Raheela- Importance of relationships *guraee/shoormi* (sisters), *khala* (maa's sister), *chacha* (*guru's* brother).

Stage 7: Generated categories

Category (for a thematic chart presented previously)

Importance of *Dera* to the *zenana/khusra* communities

Examples of descriptive themes/items covered

Socialization, freedom and reciprocity

Family pressures, *dera* and struggle for survival

Business center

Likewise for each of the following categories separate thematic charts were constructed.

Category

Social organization

Examples of descriptive themes/items covered

Guru Chela relationship

Guru Maa

Shoormi (Guru Behan/Gurree)

Saalgirah

Third Gender

On becoming feminine

Category

Economic Organization

Examples of descriptive themes/items covered

Dhinga/tola bazaar

Bidhaee/taarhi and *Jorha*

Dance Functions

Prostitution

Category

Girya/zenana relationship

Examples of descriptive themes/items covered

Dichotomy of love and money: Money supersedes Love

Dichotomy of love and money: Love supersedes money

Love for *zenana*, money for *girya*

Zenana/khusra as agentic and strategists

“We need a man”: *Girya* as a guard against structural violence

Category

Love, money and at-risk behaviors

Examples of descriptive themes/items covered

Risky sexual practices among *zenana/khusra*

Zenana/khusra proclivities towards at-risk sexual behaviors due to emotional proximities

Helplessness as an explanation of unprotected intercourse

Highly contextualized explanations of getting assured that *girya(s)* is (are) not promiscuous

Category

Language of love

Examples of descriptive themes/items covered

Verbal and non-verbal codes

Classification of *girya(s)*

Levels to love

Field Diary

Following are the two extracts of field activities from two different field diaries maintained during this research.

Kot Radha Kishan

Day 6

Morning

Pooja's *Dera*

Quite antithetical to the perfectly constructed sanitized life you have given me *ami* here I am standing, half naked, waiting for the hot water which Anjali is doing on a rusted small gas burner. I can see her through a perforated grimy curtain dangling as a veil between *koli* and this *miniscule area which has no roof, no opening for cross ventilation, no wash basin, no washroom flush, no water tap, no light, not even a door, still they call this area a washroom.* It is my sixth day into the field and I am adapting both literally and figuratively.

Love,

Son.

January 10, 2014.

Rawalpindi

Day 10

Evening

Rukhsana's *Dera*

The celebrations grand and function gaudy. I have seen Gudiya scraping through *dhinga* and living on *pann* but it is her day today. She is the center of attraction. From *expensive bridal make up* to *rented car for her grand entry*, from *booking a marriage hall for the celebration* to *nine food items decided from the menu*, from *printing an invitation card* to *hiring a disc jockey*, from *expensive jewellery* to *incredibly crafted two dresses*, the preparations are promising. Her *giryā* may propose to her for marriage. He hasn't gifted her a ring as yet. The racing speculations are that he will surprise her on her big day. She is happy, so am I.

Love,

Son.

February 6, 2014.

Field diary is a less formal and a more personalized expression/reflection of field activities by a researcher (Bernard 2006). For this research, notes of field diaries were written as mini letters to my mother. The activities of each day were written during nights by memorizing (and sometimes noting down on index cards and paper slips) the day timings/periods on which those activities took place. The parts of these extracts which are italicized convey information which may not always be elicited through generated forms of data. The information in the first extract convey inadequate physical infrastructure of informal settlements where *zenana/khusra* reside. The information in the second extract was included in the subsequent subtopic of 'Saalgirah' to explain the relevance of such functions to the lives of *zenana/khusra* communes.

Noncontrolled Unstructured Participant Observation

The term ‘noncontrolled’ means that the researcher doesn’t have control over natural settings of research or in other words the researcher is not conducting observation in a controlled laboratory setting. Observational studies in a natural setting and uncontrolled environment are mostly unstructured (V. Young 2003). Bailey (1994) classifies observation into overt in which the study subjects are aware of being observed and view researcher as an outsider and covert in which the study subjects are unaware of being observed and view researcher as an insider. For this research, I introduced myself to the study subjects as a student interested in the lives of male-female transgender persons. Key informants proved to be the most conducive intermediary between me and the study subjects. With the help of key informants and rapport building, the observational studies which in the initial research design were tentatively planned as noncontrolled and nonparticipatory turned into noncontrolled and participatory. I was perceived as *kothi* or *moorat* (a feminine man) by *zenana/khusra* communes, which further helped me in gaining entry/access to the field sites and to observe *zenana/khusra* lives in detail. Often I heard, during focus groups, one *zenana* saying to another, “*Kachiyān kalama na khut, ay asa di cheesi shoormi hy*” (“Don’t tell a lie, she is our beautiful sister”) and “*Shoormiyan naal kachi ni ay*” (“Sisters don’t hate each other”). *Shoormi* in their Farsi language means sister. They consider me their sister and telling a lie to and hiding things from sisters is disallowed in the community. ‘Participation’ of a participant observer is relative and context-specific to the field settings, nature of the study, and themes covered in the research. The content covered, the social realities explored and the lives in-depth examined were novel, intriguing, hidden, tabooed and unconventional that the degree of participation had to be more and the relationship between researcher and subjects to be informal and reciprocal.

The following is an extract of the description of a meeting held by the project coordinator of a foreign-funded project on the rights of transgender persons of Kasur. The meeting took place in a marriage hall ‘*Kasr-e-Anwar*’ at *Kot Radha Kishan* and was moderated by Shamajan, a transgender activist from District Kasur. Among invitees were the heads of the social control institutions of *Kot Radha Kishan*, a *maulvi* (local religious clergy), and the members of *zenana/khusra* communes. This illustration is basically a snapshot of one of the days of

zenana/khusra lives. Also, it illustrates the apathy of the heads of social institutions towards transgender issues and the emotional disconnect of *zenanas/khusras* towards their own rights.

“We will get a box of *biryani* and a can of pepsi, that’s it,” the response of Raheela when I asked her the importance of previous meeting was perplexing my mind. I was glad on going to attend this meeting to have my own reflection and interpretation of the outcomes of meeting. I saw them getting prepared less adorned, not gaudy at all with shawls covering their heads and quite unusually most dressed in male clothes. Raheela, Pooja, Queen, Seemi and Khusboo were dressed as males, whereas Sassi, Shazia, and Nargis as females. Covering a kilometer distance of rocky routes from *Handaal Chowk* to *Gandi bazaar* on a horse cart was therapeutical as the previous night was late at the *mela* and our quest for some much-needed respite in stillness and quietness was found while covering that distance. Blinking eyes, sleepy yawns, jolting heads, and loosening bodies were all indicative of the sleepless night and extreme tiredness. I managed to open eyes to observe passersby ridiculing us and Raheela reciprocating by calling them with names. I heard Raheela murmuring into my ears educating me with few more Farsi words to upgrade my vocabulary and to make my vocal involvement more active within the community. . . .

The programme was two hours late from schedule. We were seated on one side of the hall; the seats on the opposite side were reserved for the dignitaries. The programme schedule was handed over to us, which overpromised and much to my disappointment under delivered. The written schedule started with the *talawat* (recitation of *Surah*) followed by preliminary address by the project coordinator, followed by opening session on the importance of voicing transgender rights, then important findings of initial research in Kasur district, discussion and finally closing sessions. The commencement of meeting was late due to late arrivals of dignitaries and with the exception of *talawat* the rest of the schedule wasn’t followed. The preliminary address was underway when a privileged person from the opposite side pretexted of other engagements. Another person, after five minutes, criticized of taking too long to wrap up the whole meeting. Shamajan tried every trick to make them sit and listen to the issues but to no avail.

In the meanwhile I noticed Nargis writing something on a piece of paper with a pen. Later, after meeting, Raheela told me that Nargis had exchanged her cell number with the same ‘privileged person’ who was getting late for other important engagements. “Nargis is a *nirban*, she is beautiful, she is very famous,” Raheela’s reply, on our way back to *Handaal Chowk* when I asked her the reason for the exchange of cell numbers, was anticipated. “It happens a lot, we get contacts of *cheesay* (beautiful) men through these gatherings,” Raheela added.

Methodological issues

a) Different words, similar context

During interviews and focus groups different words and phrases were spoken by the respondents which conveyed similar implicit/hidden connotations.

Table 7: Hidden/implicit meanings

Words/phrases	Literal meaning	Hidden meaning
<i>Khothi howay tey paar na chukey</i>	A jenny has to carry the load	A <i>zenana</i> has to prostitute for a living
<i>Jithay waikha tawah parat uthay guzari rat</i>	I spend night where I find food from (<i>tawah</i> - a flat base frying pan, <i>parat</i> - a stainless steel kitchen utensil)	I give in sexually when the price offered is high
<i>Aao jee tay jao jee</i>	First come then go	A number of clients come and go
<i>Me tay meleyan tay shawa shawa karni aanh</i>	I do <i>shawa shawa</i> at <i>melas</i>	I am sexually active while being at <i>melas</i>

Table 8: Hidden/implicit meanings

Words/phrases	Literal meaning	Hidden meaning
<i>Dand tatha wa khassi kar lo</i>	A buffalo is under knife, castrate him	He (<i>giryā</i>) is in love with you; extract (money) as much as you can
<i>Chura pher</i>	Run a knife	Deprive him (<i>giryā</i>) of his money

The literal meanings in these contexts are different from hidden meanings. The hidden meanings, on the other hand, are implicit and convey more or less similar connotations with words spoken in the similar context of prostitution, sexual activeness, and multiple clients (first table). Phrases in the second table show instrumental nature of *giryā/zenana* relationship. Similarly, *moorat* and *zenana* were spoken interchangeably for uncastrated feminine men. *Nirban/nirvan* and *kati patang* (cut kite) were spoken interchangeably for castrated feminine men. *Paisha*, *rarha*, *dhanda*, and *pan* are the local terms for prostitution.

b) Similar sounding words, different contexts

Saeeda: *Hae* Allah, how can I pass on its meaning to you! Okay listen, “Oh! *hi janu* why don’t you give up on shyness? *Oho*, don’t be too shy! Come on *na!* *Uff, hae* I will give you so much pleasure! I will do *this* to please you, *that* to seduce you. . . . Nothing can be given for free *na*. . . . Everything has a price, paying a price is essential. I befriend men. . . . Not a five hundred, thousand rupee friend. No less than twenty or ten thousand [rupees], no one can convince [me] on less than that only after that I agree to give in.

Shamshad: *HAE! HAE! HAE!* ((*three times palm clapping*)). . . . As if she has landed from sky [*HAE! HAE! HAE!* . . . *Ay wadhi koe asmana toonh lathi ay*].

Saeeda: *Hae way!*

This excerpt from Saeeda's in-depth interview was the toughest to transcribe in detail because of word 'hae'. In this conversation a word 'hae' is used in different contexts conveying different meanings. 'Hae Allah' conveys bewilderment of Saeeda on not being able to exactly convey her point of view. *Hi* (similar sounding to *hae*) is spoken in the context of exchanging greetings. *Uff hae* conveys excitement. 'HAE! HAE! HAE!' conveys ridicule. And, 'hae way!' conveys astonishment.

c) **Double selection process**

Before thematically analyzing data, the data was run through a double selection process. First selection stage is not up to the researcher's discretion in which respondents choose and select on what and how to respond. Adoption of techniques to check reliability of data is mandatory in this stage, also, cross checking results is important. The researcher in the first stage can adopt techniques and tools which can assure that whatever elicited from respondents is reliable. To check reliability and authenticity of data, probing, prompting, cross-checking, observing are some of the techniques but most are context-specific. Cross-checking, in particular, is crucial in qualitative research. For this research, data was crosschecked using triangulation as the ethnomethods of IDIs, focus groups, and participant observation contemporaneously examined the same social reality. Data was also crosschecked with the help of key informants. Triangulation involves use of more than one data elicitation technique, in this research observations, individual and group interviewing were adopted which helped in highlighting the discrepancies of data gathered from one technique through crosschecking with the help of another technique. For instance, few respondents in City Kasur denied of earning through prostitution when they were interviewed. The next day they were seen standing along the street corner looking for potential clients near a late night tavern at *Chandini Chowk*. And, during focus groups (final field visits), they were seen active in explaining the client/*zenana* relationship.

In *Kot Radha Kishan*, Pooja (my first key informant who travelled with me to Rawalpindi to access more locales) and I were termed *shoormi* (sisters) of each other which helped me in gaining entries more easily and smoothly to the hard-to-enter *deras* of Handaal Chowk (*Kot Radha Kishan*) and *Dhoke Chaudrian* (Rawalpindi). Late night informal conversations were the

most helpful in gathering additional information relevant to the research objectives. In Rawalpindi, *Kot Radha Kishan*, and Mansehra most of the respondents chose to smoke *garda* (charas) before being interviewed so that they can be open and uninhibited which again helped in easy flow of narratives without breaks.

The next and final stage of selection process is up to the researcher in which he/she selects out of the elicited and transcribed data on what (or what not) to convey to the readers. This stage is crucial as it bases the subsequent process of analyzing the data. Research objectives, comprehensive coverage of the selected research areas and study populations, and familiarization with the recorded and transcribed data are some of the ways through which inclusion and exclusion decisions can be made by the researcher. Second stage is discussed here with help of an example.

Noori's interview: An example of second stage of double selection process

Noori: Is she the one who has come to write a story on us? [*ay jairhi story likhan ayeen ay oh?*]

Pooja: Yes [*anh*].

Noori: About what? [*kairhi story likhan ayeen ay?*]

Pooja: About love, about our lives [*payaar day baaray ich tay zindagi day baaray ich*].

Noori: We will not tell her. Don't you know? You are a *moorat* [*Allah na karay uss ni dasday. Tainu ni pata? Toonh moorat zaat ay*].

Pooja: I know. I gave her seventy five minute long interview [*mainu tey pata ay. Mai tay khud sawaan ghantay da interview dita ay*].

Kareena: She is also a *moorat* [*tey o wi moorat ay*].

Pooja: She is a *moorat* too [*o wi moorat ay*].

Noori: Then, she doesn't know what our feelings are? [*tey inhu ni pata ki jazbaat onday ay?*]

Pooja: Nobody has touched her *na* [*inhu kisi ney chua ni na*].

Kareena: Come sit here *janu* [*ao na betho na janu*].

Noori: Is she untouched? [*ae untouch ay?*]

Pooja: Yes. Whore, you haven't even seated us [*haan na tu tey bethaya wi ni sanu gashtiyay*].

Noori: Whore, sit here or there or anywhere you want [*ithay bay ja randiyay uthay bay jaa jithay dil karay*].

((*Noori has left room to make tea. She is out for five minutes.*))

Kareena: She will tell you openly. She, for her man-- She has made breasts for her man. She says she will marry him [*oh tainoo dassay gi sahi. Oh aapnay banday waastay aapnay mammay wi banrha lye ay oh aapnay banday day peechay ay. O kehendi me shadi karan gee*].

((*Noori screaming from kitchen*))

((*Laughs*))

Kareena: Don't worry *janu*, she is bemocking [*aisay he mazak kardee ay na jaanu*].

((*Noori has entered the room*))

Pooja: Please don't be angry *na* and don't abuse *na* [*tussi gussa na karo na jee gaalaan wi na kado na*].

Noori: *Hae!* I am a little girl. I am young. I am hot blooded. I will abuse, tell her to give us money [*hae! me tay bachi aan. Jawan aanh. Khoon garam ay galaan tey me kadaan gee wadh wadh, inhan nu kawo saanu thapar daiway*].

Pooja: She is a student *na* [*ay tey student ay na*].

Noori: From where have you come? [*kithoo aye ay nii?*]

Interviewer: Islamabad.

Pooja: She is a student [*ay student ay*].

Noori: Are you a *moorat*? [*moorat ay toonh wi?*]

Pooja: Yes she is a *moorat* [*haan moorat ay*].

Noori: What type of *moorat* is she *baji*! If she was my *giryā* I would not have let her gone from here virgin [*ay kiss tarah di moorat ay kash ay baji! honda giryā tay iss da ghoot bharyā janrha sii aaj mai addi wi laan dainrhi sii*].

Pooja: Come sit here with us [*aao na baitho na tussi wi ithay*].

Noori: *Haee nii* sister about what are you going to talk to us? [*haee nii behanna kii kalaam bajan lagi saday ghaar?*]

Pooja: Nothing to worry sister [*koe kalaam nii bajan lagi nii baaji*].

Noori: Come whore sit here. . . . From which city have you come? [*uttay charh jaa nii randiyay. . . . toonh kitthay di ay?*]

Pooja: I am from Lahore [*me Lahore di*].

Noori: Where from Lahore? [*Lahore toon kidru?*]

Pooja: I am from *Kot Radha Kishan* [*mai Kot Radha Kishan*].

Noori: Where are you from? [*pichu kidru?*]

Pooja: She is from Islamabad [*ay Islamabad di ay*].

Interviewer: I am from *Hazara* [*Hazaray di aanh*].

Noori: First sister you come with me inside, then I will let you interview me [*pehlay baaji toonh ghanta andar chal, phir tay phir tainu interview daiwaan gi*].

Kareena: Shut up [*karay kara*].

Noori: She is not a complete *moorat* [*ay ghat moorat ay*].

((*Laughs*))

Noori: She is half a *moorat*. What is she talking about! She is educated [*ay tay lotraan di moorat ay baaji. Ay kiway jae kalamaan kardi! Parhi parhae*].

((*More laughs*))

This is an extract from a 30 pager transcribed interview of a *khusra* from Rawalpindi. Pooja, in this conversation is the first key informant, and Kareena is a *chela* to Noori. Only one long quote and little relevant information was included in the analysis section from the transcribed interview of Noori. Noori's most illuminating responses were to the questions on sexual networks and prostitution not to say that she wasn't vocal or contributing to other research domains but the information shared by other respondents/participants on other research areas were more comprehensive, crisp, relevant, and explanatory. Hence, researcher in this case filtered the data and provided only relevant parts to the reader. The extract mentioned above (and many others like these) was not included for two reasons: due to irrelevance to the topic and due to use of expletives/profanity.

d) Ethical Issues

Original names of the respondents have not been used. Their names have been changed into pseudonyms. Purpose and objectives of the research were mentioned to the interviewees (participants) before conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups. And only after their willingness to take part in interviews and focus groups, they were interviewed or grouped in discussions. Issues related to reliability of data with respect to the techniques employed to data extraction have been aforementioned; however the attempt was to represent reliable data (perspectives, perceptions, views, choices, and preferences of *zenanas/khusras*) not to demean their characters or sensationalize their lives. I, as a student researcher, went to the communities with an open mind and neutral stance and the data I managed to elicit using both naturally occurring and generated data sources is a true reflection of the communities' perspectives free from my own views or biases. Profanity was avoided. However, certain bodily mannerisms and facial expressions, and local vernaculars conveying specific meanings were retained. The sketches of the respondents have been drawn with their consent; the facial features have been changed to assure anonymity. And, the artists who drew the sketches have been acknowledged.

CHAPTER 7

INITIAL RESEARCH (Social Contexts, Participant Observation, and Initial Fieldwork)

Initial research through pilot studies was conducted in three selected geographical locales (Rawalpindi, *Kot Radha Kishan*, and City Kasur). These studies have helped to access communities, to build rapport among them, to set sampling frames and to partially decide on possible sample sizes, and to set social contexts. Before conducting initial research meetings with two transgender activists (Kasur and Rawalpindi), resource persons from National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) and research coordinator of Good Thinker organization (an NGO currently undertaking a Canadian funded project on rights of transgender persons in District Kasur) were conducted to access the communities through already conducted surveys. But unfortunately the studies conducted by NACP are mostly context specific and there is no specific household survey through which respondents can be mapped and accessed in the geographical areas of interest. All that was learnt through these meetings was to get into contacts with the ‘influential’ or ‘star’ persons within the communities who would help in finding more respondents. In Kasur, however, I did not manage to get into contact with the ‘star’ person whose contact details I got from transgender activists. So, in order to generate sample frame I had to use snowball sampling. In literature there are two types of sample frames: sample surveys including administrative records and other secondary data sources, and generated sample frames for a particular research study. Snowball or chain sampling is one of the sources of generating sample frames in which the already interviewed persons are asked to identify other potential persons who meet the selection criteria. In literature this approach is highly regarded for sensitive research areas and to gain access to dispersed and hard to reach populations.

Apart from conducting prior-initial research meetings, surveys on the Informal economies of Pakistan were also scrutinized, but all the surveys exclude illegal activities including drug, trafficking, smuggling, and prostitution. And, since the individuals in the *Dera* communities are

majorly involved in drug use, and prostitution, hence finding any geographical space for *zenana/khusra* in these surveys was a futile activity. However, raw data in the form of unpublished M Phil and PhD dissertations did prove out to be most effective in setting contexts, particularly in case of Rawalpindi those locales were not included in research settings which were already covered by the existing raw data. Moreover, a close friend working in one of the well reputed policy sector institutes told that some of the transgender persons have been included in some of the regular household consumption and labor surveys but they have been enlisted as males in the surveys which makes it difficult to differentiate third gender from strict binary division of gender and to exactly access their places of origin. Keeping all these considerations and limitations, snowballing seemed to be appropriate.

City Kasur was selected as the first locale to be researched upon in the month of October, 2013. After spending a whole night and the next day visiting all the possible sites where *zenana/khusra* could be present (*Baba Bullay Shah* Shrine, driver hotels and taverns of *Chandini Chowk*, School Road and Railway Station) we (me and my friend with whom I stayed in City Kasur) managed to find *Khusarh Gali* located in *Kot Murad Khan* which is considered to be the hub of *jaddi pushti* (ancestral) *hijras* of Kasur from where few respondents were interviewed. The interviews helped in clearing my scope to set social contexts of the research. *Khusarh Gali* proved to be a strong starting point for gaining access to the *Dera* communes of *zenana/khusra* who are the main interest of this research. That whole day was spent discussing with male pimps about the importance of castration/emasculatation to the social lives and earnings of *zenana/khusra* and the intra community conflicts between *jaddi pushti hijras* and *zenana/khusra*. The night was spent till 1 in the morning in one of the socializing late night taverns of *Chandini Chowk* observing happenings around and requesting suitable respondents to take us to their *Deras*. One of the *zenana/khusra* agreed and took us to her *Dera* after getting permission from *Guru*. In the close vicinity of this *Dera* are 9 other *Deras* of *zenana/khusra* out of which 5 have been covered in initial research. At the backside of *Baba Bullay Shah* shrine, all these *Deras* are located on the *Haji Fareed Road*. One focus group and 9 IDIs were conducted in the remaining 4 days which I spent with the community. After getting permission from *Guru* of the *Dera* I visited first, the remaining days and nights were spent there. I selected that *Dera* as reference point for research and moved around with my first key informant to other *Deras* in close vicinity to find and

interview more respondents. Due to time and resource constraints I had to leave first locale after 6 fulfilling days.

In Rawalpindi and *Kot Radha Kishan*, the scenarios were slightly different as I managed to develop very quickly some comforting and friendly relationships with two of my key informants. One of them was a *zenana* in his pre-married life who continues to develop strong links with *Dera* inhabitants even after getting married and having children. He still manages to take part actively in most of their social activities. He has friendly relationships with most of the *zenana/khusra* scattered into different one or two room settlements across *Kot Radha Kishan*. In comparison to Kasur, the *zenana/khusra* settlements are scattered in *Kot Radha Kishan*. There are some locations where a number of *Deras* are located in same surrounding areas and others less combined located. It was observed that the latter are in and near commercial areas such as a one room settlement in *Zenana Market (Darzi Mohallah)* and another double story settlement near railway station, whereas the more combined are mostly informal settlements of one or two rooms in the dark and lonely peripheries of the town. In *Kot Radha Kishan* a combination of snowball and peer driven sampling techniques were applied. Both centralized and decentralized settlements have been covered in initial research. *Handaal Chowk, Judge Mohallah, Zenana Market (Darzi Mohallah)*, and *Gandi Bazaar* were the four locales from where respondents were accessed and interviewed. Out of 14 *Deras*, 9 have been covered. One focus group and 15 IDIs were conducted. A total of five days were spent in the *Dera* of my key informant's *Guru* in *Handaal Chowk*. In Rawalpindi, a total of 11 days were spent in 6 of the 12 different locales where *Deras* were nestled. These six locales are not covered in peer-reviewed published research materials and in raw data which include *Dhoke Chaudrian, Dhoke Kala Khan, Raja Sultan Market, Pirwadahi, Banni chowk* and *Bakra Mandi* covering 9, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 2 *Deras* respectively. I did not spend nights with the communities in Rawalpindi as my residence is in Islamabad and it was relatively easier to cover distances to visit *Dera* locations each day without staying at nights. Key informants here were same as in *Kot Radha Kishan*. Combinations of snowball and peer driven sampling techniques were applied. A total of 30 IDIs and 2 focus groups were conducted. Formal initial research was not conducted for Mansehra. However, out of twelve days of fieldwork (November 2014), the first two days were spent accessing living places of potential respondents, setting sample frames, and observing. Key informant here was

my cousin who introduced me to a local musician who took us to the first *dera* located at *Cheriyaaan bazar* in Mansehra main *chowk*. After having accessed other *deras* and more respondents through snowball sampling technique the remaining research was conducted in the following days. *Tariq Khan plaza* (room no 4 and 5) (*Chakiyaan road*), *Danndi mohallah* in *Kashmiri bazaar*, flats in *Ishaq Khan shopping plaza* (along Abottabad road), Babu building (along Abottabad road) and *Kohistanabad mohallah* (near *Butt pul*) were the remaining five locales from where respondents were accessed and interviewed (individual and in groups).

In *Rawalpindi* and *Kot Radha Kishan* I did not initially know that I was introduced by my first key informant ('star') as a *kothi* (a woman trapped in a man's body but dresses and behaves like a man does) to his *guru*. After meeting her *guru* for the first time, she allowed me to stay at her *Dera*. I got to know much latter when I used to hear 'star' and her *guru* introducing me as a *kothi* to other *zenana/khusra* of *Deras*. I still do not precisely know the reason but most certainly it is not-so-very masculine appearance and softer conduct that made them believe that I was one of them. In Mansehra, too, the moment I first entered the *dera* and exchanged greetings with the *guru* (*Cheriyaaan Bazar*) she replied, '*Ey kothi ay*' (She is a *kothi*). Myself introduced as *kothi* proved to be very helpful in building rapport, in participating in most of their household and social activities, and most importantly in eliciting reliable data and in crosschecking it. Participatory requirement of ethnographic research is served through it. Additionally, the much romanticized feminist research approaches of building nonhierarchical relationships to not to objectify the interviewee and building 'reflexive, interactive, and reciprocal' relationships was aimed and that was achieved through participant observation in initial research. In such atmospherics it was easier to probe more while asking content mining questions during IDIs through the use of amplificatory, exploratory and clarificatory probes. Clarificatory probes much helped in exploring in-depth of their terms and language and in clarifying sequences of events. However, participant observation has often been criticized on the grounds that participant observer (in this case myself as *kothi*) may become so emotionally involved as to lose the objectivity of the research. But ethnographic research methods attempt to explain social reality in such a way that strikes a balance between objective nature of research and human subjectivities without bordering human perspectives and emotions. In literature as well, various accounts of researchers are documented who pretended to behave and act as the study subjects and inhabited

in the communities of research interests. Horton and Hunt (1999) refer to a white man, John Griffin who used artificial color to darken his skin for a study on African-Americans in the United States. He mentions that living as a black man brought astonishing disclosures to him in the context of 'black life' in the United States. A socio-cultural anthropologist Tiantian Zheng, also, lived as a bar girl in her ethnographic research on the professional issues of bar girls in post-Mao Dalian. Hence, participant observation is a 'sophisticated scientific methodology' which is much more than simply observing around and merely 'looking at things'. In the context of this research, preliminary observational studies helped in familiarizing with the respondents and in framing appropriate questions.

Recording data was highly desirable and most of the respondents agreed to it without hesitation but for hesitant respondents, quick notes of keywords, dates, and local terms were noted down on index cards and paper slips during interviews and field notes were written after interviews. Some of the information rich respondents who were reticent to answer while in-depth interviews were strategically placed in focus groups which helped in vocalizing them. With depersonalized discussion oriented generalized questions, the reticent respondents felt comfortable to take part in discussions. For this reason, IDIs were conducted before focus groups. A standard format of focus groups was followed, starting with general introduction of researcher and participants, followed by opening topics and finally discussion. Focus groups included 5 participants in Kasur, 7 in *Kot Radha Kishan*, and 6 in each of the two discussions in Rawalpindi. All focus groups were recorded with a digital recorder with the consent of participants. Focus groups in three locales were conducted in one of the *Deras* selected by the group participants. IDIs were conducted in the *Deras* of the interviewees. IDIs lasted for one to two hours whereas some focus group discussions took longer but most were completed within 2 hour time frame. While initial research objectives related to discourse, gender identities, early life experiences, societal perceptions, earnings, prostitution, transactional relationships, definitions of love, importance of *girya*, dichotomies and harmonies between love and money were covered. To some respondents, questions related to risky sexual behaviors were asked, however HIV/AIDS related questions and its links to emotional proximities in *zenana/girya* relationship were the focus of final visits to the selected locales. Initial research was conducted between October 2013 and February 2014 which is considered to be quite a ceremonial and celebrated season for these communities as most of

their ceremonies happen to take place in this season. This provided with rich participant observation and field sites for the research.

Table 9: In-depth Interviews (IDIs) during initial research

Locales	IDIs	<i>Deras</i> covered	No. of areas covered
Rawalpindi	19	25	6
City Kasur	7	5	2
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	12	9	4
Total	38	39	12

The areas covered from each locale have been mentioned in the previous section. Maximum *deras* and hence maximum IDIs were conducted from six *zenana/khusra* residing areas of Rawalpindi, and minimum IDIs from two *zenana/khusra* residing areas of City Kasur.

Table 10: Focus Groups during initial research

Locales	Focus Groups	No. of Participants
Rawalpindi	2	12
City Kasur	1	5
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	1	7
Total	4	24

Six participants took part in each of the two focus groups from Rawalpindi with maximum respondents from *Kot Radha Kishan* taking part in a focus group conducted in *Kot Radha Kishan*.

FINAL FIELDWORK

Final visits to the fields were conducted between November 2014 and February 2015. Using phased approach to selecting respondents only those respondents/participants were selected in the second phase who were more contributing towards research objectives. Mansehra is the only locale for which no such formal initial research was conducted but on the basis of the experience from initial research of other three locales, first two days were spent on sampling and conducting observational studies. The remaining ten days were spent living with the community. The analysis presented in the next section covers data collected during both initial and final research.

Table 11: In-depth Interviews (IDIs) during final research

Locales	IDIs	<i>Deras</i> covered	No. of areas covered
Rawalpindi	12	10	6
City Kasur	4	2	1
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	10	7	4
Mansehra	7	5	6
Total	33	24	17

Kot Murad Khan was not included in the final research. The remaining four areas from *Kot Radha Kishan* and six from Rawalpindi are the similar areas which were covered during initial research. The six areas covered from Mansehra are mentioned in the ‘Initial research’ section.

Table 12: Focus groups during final research

Locales	Focus Groups	No. of Participants
Rawalpindi	1	6
City Kasur	1	4
<i>Kot Radha Kishan</i>	1	5
Mansehra	2	11
Total	5	26

Out of the two focus groups conducted in Mansehra, five participants took part in the first focus group and six in the second focus group.

CHAPTER 8

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION OF ZENANA/KHUSRA COMMUNITIES

In this chapter socio-economic organization of the study subjects is covered. *Dera* being an essential part to their lives is discussed in detail followed by the importance of *guru/chela* and other relationships to the lives of *zenana/khusra* within the community setup. The importance of *saalgirah* (birthday functions) is also explained. Various forms of economic organization including *dhinga* (begging for alms), dance functions, *bidhaee* (getting paid for showering blessings on the birth of newly born babies or for the newly married couples) and prostitution are covered.

Social Organization

Dera, essentially, comes from a Saraiki language which is one of the widely spoken regional languages of interior Punjab. There are towns and districts in Pakistan and India with *deras* in their names. In Pakistan *dera* is used as a pre-fix to towns and districts indicating the occupants of those particular areas. *Dera* means settlement not necessarily meaning a permanent place for living. In Punjabi villages *dera* is referred to as meeting points usually for men to socialize. The *dera* settlements can be permanent covering larger geographical areas to small informal temporary settlements. For *zenana/khusra* communities *deras* are living places, socializing or meeting points and business centers.

Importance of *Dera*

Socialization, freedom, and reciprocity

Pooja: *Dera* is important because we come here--. All our friends visit us here, [we] enjoy here, smoke cigarettes, merrymaking, chat to each other, we cook, eat together, we invite our friends here, we receive invitations for functions. . . . The invitees come to meet us here. [pause] Our loving partners come to see us here, our *zenanay*

friends [*saheliyaan*] visit us, we give them company with warmth and hospitality, we do our private fun chat, rather than standing on the road somewhere outside or anywhere during heavy rains or in winters or in scorching heat. Fun is always within four walls and in private.¹⁹

For Pooja living in *dera* means a release from social pressures and obligations. Married for over ten years and a father to six children, he prefers to be called as ‘she’ by the name of Pooja. Masculine names have to be changed to feminine names after completely embracing *dera* life. There are reasons to it few stating the entrance into *deras* as the beginning of new lives with new names and most wanting to be famous by feminine names they always wished for but couldn’t had in their pre-*dera* lives due to resistances from families. Pooja is famous in her community because of her dark complexion and sharp facial features. She is admired for carrying *saree* with grace and when applied make up with *bindiya* on her forehead between eye brows she looks like a Hindu married woman making her famous as a *cheesi moorat* (beautiful *moorat*) among her seniors and peers. For these reasons her *guru* gave her a Hindu name. She calls herself a *zenana*, she feels proud of maintaining a balance between her two lives- the family and the *dera* life. She had been part of *dera* (which she calls *line* or *field*) before marriage. Her parents and wife are aware of her *dera* life. To them, it is a part of what makes her a better and complete person. When asked how she maintains the balance, she replied:

Pooja: Balance we balance-- I balance in a way that whatever expenditures at home. . . . Whatever they [family] need anything the physical, the financial, the emotional, and any problem it all gets solved and on time then no issue, no stress. Wherever I want to go I go, whoever I want to meet I meet, whatever I want I get. I manage it well. When I know I should be on point at home as a man I am there. And when I have spare time just for myself then I am a woman among my friends chatting and enjoying.²⁰

Unlike others she is not entirely dependent on survival options viable for *zenana/khusra*. Since she can easily switch between becoming a man at home and a woman at *dera* she earns through collecting, assembling, packing into bundles, and selling the seasonal harvests at *mandi*. She is masculine at home and feminine at *dera*, her switching gender roles have made her enjoy most of both the lives, both the worlds. She feels obligated to her family, she lives up to her family’s

¹⁹ Kot Radha Kishan, January 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

²⁰ Kot Radha Kishan, January 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

expectations through performing a provider role which gives her the confidence and a reason enough to enjoy and to be a part of her other life (*dera*).

Interviewer: You feel at ease with yourself at *deras*?

Seemi: I cannot explain what I feel when I visit *deras*, so relaxed so much--. What we say it, confidence yes-- We feel so confident, we do whatever we want to do in *deras*. Like our *guru*'s clothes are always there for us to wear and [to] look beautiful. We wear those, apply makeup, we dance, we cook, we make fun, whatever we do we do it on our will. Before that-- I used to live at my native village but never wanted to stay there for too long, with no friends around to talk to and share with. [pause] I am happy here atleast I can be myself without anybody to repress me and my feelings.²¹

Sassi: Guests visit us, *saheliyaan* come to meet us, male friends [*bailay sajan yar*] drop by to see us. . . . My *saheliyaan* are very dear to me. They respect me a lot, show a lot of concern towards me, my health, and well being. *Wiharhi* is my home town. How can I live there! I had no option except staying away from my home and earn. I have made my own house here.²²

A relatively fresh entrant into the *dera* commune is Seemi. With fair complexion and strikingly attractive smile she is high on what she calls the wish-list of her *chaamkay*. She is very feminine in her behaviours and mannerisms but dresses like a young man of her age does the reason being that she hasn't left her family as yet and for that she can not fully emulate femininity characterized by physical/bodily attributes. For her *dera* is an outlet from her repressing family and a herald of freedom, self confidence, and social collectivity. Her pre-*dera* life at a native village signifies her loneliness with no one to interact with and her post-*dera* life gives her a much needed freedom to live on her terms and to exude her femininity. Sassi despite functioning both as a *guru* and a *chela* feels lonely at times. She is one of the famous *zenanas* of *Kot Radha Kishan* because of her strong personality and connections with *jaddi pushti* (ancestral) *Khawaja Sara*. She is active in most of the *zenana* social gatherings and being a member of the Shemale Foundation (an organization for the socio-economic uplift of male-female transgender communes of Pakistan) most of the *zenanay* look up to her for their problem resolution. Leaving her home at a tender age of 14 and joining *dera* made her strong for struggle and economic

²¹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

²² *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

survival. She is responsible for the upbringing of her divorcee sister and her eight children, also for bearing the cost of a child custody case of another sister in addition to sending monthly amounts for parents. Above quotes highlight the importance of being who they are, the need to be in the company of people like them, and mutual reciprocity between them.

An extract from focus group²³

Moderator: For how long have you been part of this life?

Shazia: It has been fifteen years.

Moderator: Why *dera* is important to your life?

Shazia: You know people like us cannot live at [family] homes. Also, we are friends to each other. We all are soul mates--. To hell with boyfriends [*bailay sajan*], we cannot live without our *saheliyan*. How can a person live without a soul?

Pooja: Like anyone from *saheliyan* pays a visit, just like *Panga* has come to see me now.

Roopa: We can not live with our family *na*. We leave our family behind us. When we enter into this life they [their families] don't take us back then we have to fight for survival in this field living like [*khusras*] among [*khusras*] and our [*chelas*], if we die then our *chelas* will be our heir. . . . Similar beads will look beautiful in a thread connecting them together.

For Shazia living without her *saheliyan* is just like living without the soul mates. For Gori male-female transgender persons like her are like similar beads who will look beautiful when connected and united together in a similar thread, and that thread is a *dera* which provides a base for their social interactions and reciprocity (calling *chelas* as heirs of deceased *gurus*). Nussi refers to 'well being' and 'concern' to describe her friendships with other *zenana*, and Anjali brings in relaxed naturalism to conversation by pointing another *zenana* showing how natural it is for one *zenana* to visit another for chat or meet up, in need or help, and simply for exchanging pleasantries or greetings.

²³ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Family pressures, dera and struggle for survival

Kashish: We feel at peace with ourselves at *dera*. It is so peaceful here. We don't have to pretend like men, behave like men, be like men, which is a constant pressure for us when we are with our families.²⁴

Kajal: *Dera* is important because there are men who come to meet us, those men can not be seated among our mothers and sisters, the men to whom we try to hide our identities from. We cannot let them know about our families. If I am out with my brother to some market and one of my *tamashbeen* or *chahat mand* finds me there with another man who doesn't realize me being with my brother then he would say, "*Oe kanganay*, where are you going with this man!" [*Oe kanganay, kithay ja raha ay inhu le ke!*]. What will my brother think of me? What will he think am I up to for living? I have to live alone.²⁵

Nargis: It was not that urgent but I felt confiscated at home. Family expectations since childhood, "Sit like a boy, act like a boy, eat like a boy, talk like a boy, dance like a boy, sleep like a boy. Is there anyone in this room telling me how do men sleep?" They even had issues with my sitting postures, "Open legs while you sit, women sit with closed legs." As I grew older, pressure to get married mounted. I COULDN'T, JUST COULDN'T, AND I DIDN'T. I ran from there. What else could I have done! They were determined to ruin my and another's daughter's lives. I ran, it was not just the best but the only option available to me.²⁶

Interviewer: And this *dera*?

Nargis: What?

Interviewer: Is it important.

Nargis: It is.

Interviewer: Why?

Nargis: [I] had to live somewhere [and] I found solace here. [*Dera* is] just the opposite of my family home. [I] can not go to home now. [I] had to live some where till death. Now I know that at least I will not be fluttering from place to place in old age.

²⁴ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

²⁵ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

²⁶ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Resham: You know how poorly we are treated in our families. My family is kind to me but the relatives in family, people in village are abhorring towards us. They call us [*khusra khadla*] with disgust because of which we leave our homes and accept this life as our way of living and earning. What can we do!²⁷

Khushboo: We have to go back to our homes all by ourselves. [pause] We cannot take our male friends and *saheliyan* [to home]. This place [*dera*] is for them [*chammkay*]. We are living two lives, the one at home and the other at *dera*. . . . This is a separate place for us, any friend who wants to meet us can come here-- . At *melas* we cannot entertain them properly, no place to sit there properly. We bring them here, entertain them in privacy.²⁸

Munni: Because we cannot live amongst relatives and with family. We have such life styles-- Our language and living choices are such that [we] cannot live with families. The little things we share, the jokes we crack, so important to us so much so that if we don't meet each other we get frustrated. [It] becomes difficult to leave once entered into *dera* life. We cannot survive, cannot get along well with our families, they cannot adjust to our tiniest of things. . . . The walk, the language, the tone, the clothes, the conduct, if we don't meet our soulmates we find difficult to live even. It is within us, our minds that we cannot live with them [families]. We are not like them, they are not like us. We want to be associated with our own homes our own *deras*.²⁹

Khushboo, always dressed in black, is a married *zenana* with four children. For her *dera* is important for such private interactions which she feels her family will be objectionable towards if happened in front of them. She owns two room *dera* at *Handaal chowk* in *Kot Radha Kishan*; she spends her days there and goes back to her family at nights. Like Pooja she is living a dual life but she has yet to master the art of skillfully switching into dual gender roles. She is more feminine than Pooja, unlike later she has grown hair long, applies dark make up, and wears female clothes. Due to her overarching femininity no one employs her at *mandi*, the result of which is that she has to earn through dance functions and mostly through prostitution. Her quote shows the innate nature of their lives where relationships are transient and interactions better hidden from their families. Such pressures of being exposed about their hidden lives to family members and being molested if their clients get to know their real identities are visible in Kajal's conversation as well. She fears of the female members of her house being exposed to her clients

²⁷ Mansehra, November 2014, *Chakiyaan road Tariq Khan Plaza*

²⁸ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

²⁹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Dhoke Chaudrian*

for this she finds *dera* an important place to spend time with them. Kajal and Khushboo seem to be apologetic for who they are and for choices they had made in their lives. Nargis (a *nirban*), Resham, and Kashish are unapologetic over their decisions. For Nargis the constant family pressure of behaving like a man signified by the caustic comments (eating, sitting, acting, sleeping like a man) and a firm possibility of her family marrying her to a girl were stalemating enough to run from home. For survival she chose to live in her own *dera* for good which she finds a complete opposite from her family home. Munni's family found it difficult to adjust to her newly embraced life whereas Resham's family was less stringent but it was social abhorrence of a *Pashtun* society that led her to migrate to Mansehra.

Business center

Raheela: Look, this *dera* is a place where my friends come over. It is a place where most of my. . . . I need a place to entertain clients [*tamashbeen*] too. It is both a place to live and to run my business. I have to prostitute [*dhandha*] on *dera* as well that I cannot at my place.³⁰

Saeeda: This is our business center. We start our work from this place. We cannot deal our professional lives at family homes. The people who invite us to their functions will not visit our homes *na*, obviously they will come to our *deras* with their invitations. This place becomes our home and our business place. Our family will not take us back *na*.³¹

Apart from providing social security *dera* functions as a center for most of the economic activities of *zenana/khusra* communities. Their ways to economic uplift are halted by social discrimination and marginalization. The result is a combination and permutation of very few meagerly rewarding survival options including dance functions, beggary, and prostitution. Few amongst the respondents can afford to print their personal cards for advertising their dance skills. The standard advertisement card starts with a title usually stating *zenana/khusra* professional names followed by the depiction of various dance forms for different occasions (marriages, birthday parties and engagement ceremonies), the contact numbers usually printed on the left

³⁰ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

³¹ *Mansehra*, November 2014, *Kohistanabad Mohallah* near *Butt Pull*

side with *dera* address in the middle and a photo on the right side. They can distribute these cards among their peers and to their *tamashbeen*. The interested parties can call them on their printed contact numbers and visit their *deras* for advance payment. Of those who cannot afford printing cards, give their contact numbers to seemingly interested men while at functions. For Reema *dera* becomes an office during business hours starting from 12 in the noon till late evening and a socializing place after hours. Business hours activities include receiving invitations for functions, negotiating with the clients on payments, getting ready for *dhinga* and *bidhaee*, serving men who visit for sexual satisfaction, and finally receiving money in exchange of sex. Raheela lives on a rented single room upper storey flat located at *Handaal Chowk*. She had written her mobile number on the entrance door as her advertisement. She earns majorly through prostitution, and *dera* is the place where she functions most of her dealings including sexual acts. Saeeda, too, describes the importance of *dera* as a business unit. She adds that neither they nor their potential clients/invitees/organizers will prefer to visit them at their homes. Hence *dera* is essential as a starting point of economic organizations for *zenana/khusra* communes.

Guru Chela relationship

Guru is a term meaning a teacher and *chela* a disciple. To almost most of the respondents *Guru/chela* relationship is like a father/son relationship. *Guru* is considered in the community as a fatherly figure who deserves respect for providing name, identity, recognition, and social security to a *chela*. *Gurus* don't tolerate their *chelas* disrespecting them. *Guru* is a teacher, senior or junior, beautiful or ugly, no matter what her appearance is like when a *chela* has taken an oath to be working under her then respect is essential. Many a time, during fieldwork, I heard *chelas* discussing importance of respect to a *guru*. Many aspire to becoming a *guru* latter on in their lives. They think they will be respected by their *chelas* tomorrow if they are respectful towards their *gurus* today. Also, it is essential for their long run survival in the community as *gurus* are rich in contacts with the most desired *chaamkay*. A *zenana*, without a *guru*, is not even allowed to sit in a *dera* gathering. Nobody will ever accept her, nobody will want to talk to her or exchange pleasantries with her because she has no *guru*. If she scraps over something then

nobody from the community can defend her. Without *guru* a *zenana* has no identity and guardian; he will be considered a vagabond who is available for quick sex.

Pooja (who is also my first key informant) is a *chela* to Nargis for over two years. Her former *guru* Nomi (with whom Pooja stayed for fifteen years) sold Pooja to Nargis for five thousand rupees. Nomi claims that unlike most of the other *gurus* she had never asked Pooja for money or clothes not even on *eid* and *shab e barat*. It had always been up to Pooja to gift what she could afford to give (a hundred or a two hundred rupee note with a stitched female suit and a basket of fruits), she never pressurized Pooja to buy her expensive items as she realized that Pooja had family responsibilities to meet too. But it may not be as simplistic and not all *gurus* are as accommodating as Nomi claims she was with Pooja. Once, I heard Saeeda saying, “*Gurus* are like snakes that sting when they are hungry”, to which Shamshad replied:

Shamshad: Yes *gurus* do take wrong decisions for their *chelas*, they do talk ruthlessly when *chelas* refuse to do allocated domestic chores at *dera*, or when [*chelas*] don't look after their *gurus*, or when [*gurus*] are left alone, when their shares are not paid. And it's their right to be respected, to be taken care of, to be helped, to be paid. *Chelas* do earn a lot, enough to back their homes, and feed their families then why not their *gurus*? It is their right, if not in thousands then in hundreds at least.³²

Humaira: That is exactly how I see it. It is up to your liking, to your respect towards *guru*. . . . Ten, twenty, hundred, thousand, two thousand really up to you. If a *guru* dies of hunger then he will say, “Ok I have *chelas* then go and prostitute.” She really can do anything, she has her ways to get things done even if it doesn't work out then she will sell her *chela*. If *chela* had cost him twenty thousand then she will sell it in forty thousand.³³

The things most distasteful to *gurus* and hence can temper include not listening to them, not cleaning *dera*, not washing utensils, not earning enough, not meeting people of interest to them, not handing over monthly rents, and disrespecting in front of their peers. Shamshad said that she was outcast for six months from the community when she once abused her *guru* in a verbal fight. Her *guru* beat her with a wooden stick, her head bled and she was rushed to a hospital where her head had to be stitched to avoid bleeding. After this incident she was deprived of all social interactions and was disallowed to make a living (*kharcha paani*) through *dera* activities. Her

³² Mansehra, November 2014, *Cheriyaaan Bazaar* flats

³³ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

present *guru* (Saeeda) convinced *deray dar* (senior *gurus*) to bring her back to *dera* communes which they agreed. Saeeda paid Shamshad's *paisha* to her former *guru* and purchased Shamshad. Since then she had been associated with Saeeda's *dera* in Mansehra. Nomi, too, sold Pooja to Nargis over an argument when Pooja warned Nomi over getting involved with a wrong man.

Purchase and sale of *chelas* by their *gurus* is a common practice in *zenana/khusra* communes. A *guru* who wants to sell her *chela* circulates in the community the news of selling for amounts decided by the seller *guru*. The interested *gurus* will contact the seller *guru* to negotiate on price. Price bargains are very common. A seller *guru* can double the amount, if *chela* had cost her ten thousand, she will ask for more than twenty thousand so that after bargaining she can get twenty thousand. The *chela* who wants to leave her *guru* will have to pay the exact amount her *guru* paid on her purchase. Her *guru* cannot claim of higher price from her. But when her *guru* wants to sell her, she can claim what she wants. The interested buyers will apply tactics to allure a potential *chela* to join their communes. Usually, the more beautiful and talented *chelas* are in the wish lists of potential buyers due to greater opportunities of huge profits through beautiful *chelas*. Humaira, a *guru* and a *chela* from *Kot Radha Kishan* describes:

Humaira: She has some *chela* today, there will be another tomorrow, then a third a day after tomorrow then another will join. First they flatter *chelas*, before they take *chelas* under their oaths, "Hae you are my *Lakshmi!* hae you are my *Rekha!* you are my *Babli!*" and once *chelas* join they go like, "Now you tell me what is the issue? The matter? Where have you been boy? You don't come don't want to meet [single time palm clapping]". They degrade us. They fake love to *chelas* as long as they get paid. Having said that they deserve respect, they are our one of rare hopes for support and for survival. She is our fatherly figure in this line.³⁴

Then *jalsa* happens. It is a ceremony where in the presence of *jaddi pushti* male-female transgender persons (*kanchara*) a new recruit enters a new *dera*. A new recruit has to pay *chittai* to her new *guru*. It is a customary practice in the community according to which a *chela* has to pay two fifty or five fifty rupees to her *guru* to take her under new *guru's* kinship and inheritance. When a *chela* joins a new *gharana* she has to be obliged towards the head of the family, the head who paid for her, and who accepted her to be part of a new household. Like a good student, *chela* shows respect by paying some *gurudakshana* which include *mithaee*, *haldi*,

³⁴ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

doodh, *pataashay*, a new unstitched suit, a ring, and two fifty rupees. In return *guru* formally accepts her new *chela* and takes responsibility of her *chelas*'s well being and security. Sometimes *guru*, in return, hands over to a new *chela* jewellery as a token of love and acceptance. Saba told how happy she was when she first paid *paisha* for her very first *chela*; it was a new thing for her. She had arranged a huge function, gifted five hundred rupees to her *guru*, *maa* (mother), *shoorma* (brother), *shoormi* (sister), *guru chacha* (*guru*'s brother) and *maa khala* (mother's sister). As a return to this large heartedness a *chela* has to do the allocated household tasks on time, earn well, look after clients, show respect towards *guru*, take care of her *guru*, and pay her.

A *rasam* (custom) very common in Mansehra during *jalsa* ceremony is passing a black thread through a nose piercing of a *chela*. A black thread with one end tied to a needle pin is passed through inner side of a nose piercing and released from the outer side. After untying pin, a knot is tied to a thread. This *rasam* happens in front of all the invitees. They are the witnesses of the *chela* going under the supervision of a particular *guru*. The invitees give new recruit some money (the closer to the *chela* would usually give more than the other invitees). The amounts received belong to *chela* with nobody to claim over her earnings. This *rasam* is called *chooriyan*, as the money is meant to be spent on buying bangles and *mehndi*. This *rasam* is an expression of acceptance and generosity towards a new *chela* from the community.

Price bargains can lead to prolonged arguments. Since it is a closed community, information of purchase and sale prices get leaked very easily. Nomi, during my fieldwork in *Kot Radha Kishan*, claimed of one lac rupees of a *chela* who she purchased for ten thousand rupees years ago. When this information leaked within the community, it created quite a stir amongst the buyers. But she didn't agree to decrease a single rupee. She was right in saying that she had spent a lot on her *chela*'s training, so she deserved getting a higher price. She had sold in one lac because the *chela* was (and is still) high on demand at the functions.

A field note on price bargains

Kot Radha Kishan

Day 2 (January 16, 2014)

Morning, (10:30 a.m.)

Location: *Zenana Market*

Pooja (Nargis's *chela*), Qaseeda (interested in buying two of Nargis's *chelas* named Katrina and Shameem)

Pooja: Daughter I will take fifty four thousand from you/ [*me tay charwanja hazar putar lainrha issda*].

Qaseeda: / *Bismillah* I am going nowhere, only after paying for the two, I will take a leave [*Bismillah me bethee aan, inna dowaan da lekay he utha gee*].

Pooja: And who those two are? [*dowan da kinda?*]

Qaseeda: Badro will definitely come with her [*badro wi naaal ii ae gi wey*].

Pooja: Not Badro, Badro will stay at her home [*Badro ni naa, badro tey rae gi unday gaar*].

Qaseeda: I told you beforehand [*tenu awaz ay li me*].

Pooja: >Sharmeeli didn't agree on badro, NO, NO, NO, NO, she is Sharmeeli's *chella*< [*>Sharmili ne nhn awaaz NA, NA, NA, NA, oh ni Sharmeeli da si chela*<].

Qaseeda: Then do one out of the two either agree on a lesser price or sell both for fifty four thousand rupees [*tey fir qeemat ghaat kar ya charwanja wich donrhu dai menu*].

Pooja: From where have you brought in Badro to the whole discussion? [*Badro kithu agaee?*]

Qaseeda: Badro was understood, now you tell me are you going to agree on this deal or should I gather everyone to

tell that you and your *guru* are retracting? [*Badro tey aanrhi si honrh menu dass mandi ay ke me katha kara sab nu keh tu tey tere guru onrh mukhar raeya ay?*]

Pooja: No sister, okay I agree to it [*na way, shoormi chal theek hai phir*].

Qaseeda: Now for her, agree on thirty/ [*chal honrh is da trey tay man ja*].

Anjali: /Noway [*jaway*].

Qaseeda: I know market rates very well, don't exaggerate [*mainu market da rate pata hy wadh wadh boti kalaaman na kut*].

Pooja: I will let you know [*dassa gi*].

Qaseeda: Take thirty four from me today. Even thirty four is too much but doesn't matter [*ajj chaunti le ke jae chaunti wi ziada ay par koe ni*].

Pooja: Okay, I will [*acha way*].

Qaseeda: Don't forget to send Badro [*bhuli na badro nu bhejrha*].

Pooja: *Hae, Hae* stop it now [*hae, hae honrh bass kar ja*].

Qaseeda: I will not spare anything if she doesn't arrive here then you will see my daughter [*o na nikli na idhar kal tey me chadna ni kissi nu tu fir daikhee bacha*].

Pooja: Shut up [*karay kara*].

Other relations

Guru Maa

There is a mother also. It is important to have a mother in this line.

Pooja: GURU MAA is also important *na!* Family is usually complete when that motherly lacuna is filled. *Guru* is a father then there has to be a mother otherwise people in our community ask, “Who your mother is? So and so is my mother. So, be my daughter please, no way you are not trustworthy” [“*Teri maa kaun ae? Falaani meri maa ae. Aa tu meri dhi ban ja. Jaaway tu kisay di ni*”]. *Guru maa* is different form *guru*, she is very motherly, she looks after us like a real mother does. She gives us gifts, clothes, money, shoes. We start expecting from her whereas *guru* expects from us. I can get whatever I need form my *guru maa*.³⁵

They leave their families behind. So they start nurturing relationships with members of their community. The *soodi* (old *zenana/khusra*) becomes a *nano* (grandmother), another *soodi* becomes a *guru maa*, their age fellows are sisters, and a sister to a *guru maa* is a *khala* and a brother to a *guru* is a *guru chacha*. *Guru maa* is the most cherished of these relationships as she provides comfort to her daughters. There are *zenanay/khusray* who function both as a *guru* and a *guru maa*. Upon asking Shazia how she manages both roles, she replied:

Shazia: When I am a *guru* I take strict decisions like a father does otherwise like a mother that is when I am a *maa* to some *chela*.³⁶

Just like a *guru*, *guru maa* is to be respected by the *zenana/khusra*. There is more of an obligation and a duty to respect a *guru*, however in case of a *guru maa* the respect, regard, affiliation, and closeness comes from within. There are few necessary things to be followed in the presence of a *guru maa*. A daughter will not say or do anything that brings shame to her *guru maa* and she will not bring her *giryaa* in front of her *maa*, it is forbidden as a mother can not be exposed to other men. There is a respect to be maintained between a *chelas's giryaa* and her *maa*. A *chela* is allowed to socialize her *giryaa* with other members of the family but not with *guru maa*.

³⁵ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

³⁶ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Shoormi (Guru Behan/Guraee)

When two *zenanas* or *khusras* feel sisterly bond with each other and want to name their relationship then a custom called *dopatta wat lenrha* (exchange of *dupattas*) is followed in which two *zenana* will exchange their own *dupattas* with each other after which they will be termed sisters to each other. And, for a mother son relationship milk is poured in a glass, whoever *zenana* wants to be a mother to is offered a glass of milk; he has to drink half a glass while the remainder is to be finished by the *maa*.

The *zenanas/khusras* who are not related to each other through same *guru* or *guru maa* can still be sisters. It is really up to them whoever they feel are close to them just like true sisters. *Dopatta wat lainrha* is a custom which takes place in the presence of their *gurus* and peers. After exchange ceremony they both are called *shoormi* of each other. If both have similar *gurus* then they are called *guru behan* or *guraee*.

Nazli: If *guru* is same then they are already *guru* sisters. For this *rasam* all that is important is the heart. When I feel that there is another *zenana* from another *dera* who has a *guru* other than mine and If I share sisterly bond with her, if I help her in her chores and she in mine, if I stitch her clothes and she mine, if I share my problems and secrets with her and she with me, then we decide to name our bond as *shoormiyan*. After taking permission from *guru* I will call all my *saheliyan* at my *dera*, [i] will ask her to bring a shawl [*chadar*]. I will cover her head with my scarf [*chunni*] and she will cover my head with her scarf [*chunni*].³⁷

Saalgirah

Saalgirah is an Urdu term for birthday. Birthdays, in the lives of *zenana/khusra*, carry huge importance. It doesn't mean celebrating on the days they were born. *Saalgirah*, for them, is happiness, one of the reasons to be joyous for who they are, to feel confident being in their skin. The celebrations, mostly, occur at marriage halls which they book beforehand. Pre-*saalgirah* preparations are customary practices which are required to be followed starting from *chela* asking permission for the function from her *guru*. If *guru* agrees then a date is decided and *chela's guru ma, chacha guru, shoorma* and *shoormi* are informed about decided date so that the date, day, and time get locked not to be claimed by others. Some birthday functions are

³⁷ Kot Radha Kishan, January 2014, *Zenana Market*

celebrated at massive scales. The *zenanas/khusras* may get their invitation cards printed and those who cannot afford take packets of cardamom and *mehwa* (dry fruits) to visit invitees and hand them over a packet of each as a *nundra* (invitation). The guests will come to be part of her celebration. Somebody will gift her a thousand rupee, somebody five hundred rupees: whatever a *zenana* receives from invitees will be returned in double at their celebrations. As a part of preparation each *zenana* wants to look most beautiful by purchasing the most expensive dress they can afford. Money is given to a *zenana* celebrating birthday as a token or gift. If a guest has gifted her five hundred rupees then she will gift thousand or two thousand rupees at her guest's birthday. It is a sign of respect for a *zenana* to return atleast double the amount she was gifted. The money gifted may not necessarily be handed to the *zenana* host at the start of function. In most cases that money is earned through dance performances by *zenana* guests. The money that spectators throw over the *zenana* guests will be collected to give to the *zenana* hosts. Among the spectators are *chaamkay*, *tamashbeen*, *giryay*, and their friends who abundantly throw money notes over their beloved *zenanas*. The guests inform their *giryay* and rich *chaamkay* beforehand to throw money lavishly so that the *zenana* host gets huge amounts.

For most birthdays are celebrations similar to marriage celebrations.

Sunny: We celebrate birthdays like people around celebrate marriages. We want to celebrate as well, we want to be married to a man, “*Hae* I wish to look beautiful like a bride, my bridegroom will come, all friends tease me, we laugh, we play, we dance, we celebrate.” We cannot get married *na* so we celebrate our birthdays. We have to gift each other presents or money, for that *saalgirah* is also important like when you attend a marriage someone has gifted bride or bridegroom something, the other family has gifted something else [*falany ne inhan ne unhan nu nundra paya unhan ne inhan nu nundra paya*], similarly it happens in our community. We go, dance on a given number of songs, list the gifted amounts and come back to our *deras* after having a lot of fun. All of us try to look as beautiful as we can.³⁸

Sunny's similarities of a birthday with a marriage function are confirmed through fieldwork. The function, I attended, was in Green Hall marriage at people colony in Rawalpindi. The preparations including sitting arrangements, food catering, audio/video settings, and floral decorations observed were no less than a marriage function. The *zenana* host with her *giryay* standing at the reception welcoming guests and sprinkling red rose petals seems quite similar to

³⁸ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Zenana Market*

the man-woman couple welcoming guests at a marriage reception (*walima*). *Saalgirah* is essential for the distribution of resources within the community as well. With limited occupational options and social disenfranchisement *saalgirah* works as an effective way out for circulating money within the community as an expression of mutual sharing and reciprocity. *Saalgirah* is primarily a social organization turning into an effective economic organization as *khusra/zenana* economic activities are hugely impacted by their social interactions of reciprocity and socially structured marginality, hence most of their social interactions and economic organizations overlap.

Economic Organization

Dhinga/tola bazaar

One of the very old ways to earn for *hijra* community is through *dhinga* or *tola bazaar* (*tola* means a group of people and *bazaar* means market). A group of *zenana* in *sangat* (group) visit pre-allocated areas asking for alms from passersby at traffic signals or from shopkeepers. The areas include busy markets, commercial zones, thickly populated residential areas and traffic signals. The locales of Rawalpindi (included in this research) have been divided amongst *zenanas* or *khusras* (from similar or other locales) for *dhinga*. The respondents from *Banni Chowk* cover *Dhoke Chaudriyan* and *Bakra Mandi* (locales of this research), *Gulistan Colony*, and *Morgah* for a month. In the same month the respondents from *Pirwadhai* cover *Banni Chowk* and *Dhoke Kala Khan* (locales of this research), *Khanna Pul* and *Kali Tainki*. It will be predecided between the *zenana/khusra* of *Banni* and *Pirwadhai* to cover areas not similar to each other for a specified period of time (a month usually). The reason of not sharing similar locales is to provide a more equal opportunity to earn from most to least rewarding locales. It was observed in this research that the earnings from more commercial areas like Commercial Market, *Banni* and *Bakra Mandi* were greater than less commercial (*Dhoke Kala Khan* and *Raja Sultan Market*) areas. In *Kasur*, the *khusray* from *Khusharh Galli* do not allow the *zenanay* from *Haji Fareed Road* to *dhinga* in their locale without permission. Often during my fieldwork I witnessed the respondents from *Khusharh Galli* locking one or two *zenana(y)* from *Haji Fareed Road* as captive(s) for roaming for *dhinga* without their permission. Then the *guru* of the

captives will seek for mercy from their ancestral rich *khusras*, they will request to free their *chelas*. Only after new set of rules and negotiations the captives will be released. By the time I left the field it was decided that only those *zenanay* from *Haji Fareed Road* will be allowed to *dhinga* in *Khusharh Galli (Kot Murad Khan)* who have been sold to the *gurus* of *Khusharh Galli*. In Mansehra the earnings from more commercial and thickly populated areas (*Cheriyaaan Bazar* and *Dandi Mohallah*) were higher than the less commercial and sparsely populated areas (*Babu Building*). Additionally, there are small outcity areas, informal settlements and villages which the respondents prefer visiting over mainstream locales due to the fear of being recognized by and exposed to family. The amounts earned out of *dhinga* are very low rarely exceeding one or two or five rupee coins (*theepay*) which after having earned are collected in a money box. The box is broken towards the end of the month or after two months. The coins are exchanged by rupee notes from shopkeepers to divide equally amongst the *zenanas/khusras*. To Parvati *dhinga* can be rewarding if a *zenana* is skillful in convincing people of her problems. Usually females are more kind than males; they can be easily tricked for more money.

Parvati: Females can be tricked easily, they are more kind than men. Men are usually unkind. [They] bully us, abuse us with dirty language, engage in physical fights with us if we retaliate to their foul language. I will not hide from you, some men do not open their wallets until we show them our body parts, few offer us money in exchange for intercourse.³⁹

Masoom: . . . Yesterday I returned home empty handed. Nobody wants to see us begging and roaming at door steps of homes. Often we ask for work other than *dhinga, toli, paisha*. Few agree but offer less money, seven thousand, eight thousand. [We] cannot survive with too little. Current situations are really gross.⁴⁰

Kareena: . . . Last night I slept without a single penny earned. I had seventy rupees just to buy food and she earned one fifty rupees.⁴¹

Saeeda: . . . We go and earn fifty from somewhere, hundred or two hundred from another place. Like other people our daily expenditures are somewhere between eight hundred and one thousand, difficult to earn this much. . . . temporary earning [*hawae rozi*].⁴²

³⁹ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Pirwadahi*

⁴⁰ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Pirwadahi*

⁴¹ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Pirwadahi*

Pooja: On bad days not even hundred sometimes nothing at all.⁴³

Interviewer: Nothing at all?

Pooja: On empty days. Some days [i] have to go home empty handed whatever in pocket are spent also.

These are the respondents whom main source of income is *dhinga*. Parvati brings in the practical resistances to earn through *dhinga*. She speaks of men obstructing and denigrating her when she is out for *dhinga*, women, to her, can be tricked whereas men agree to pay only after sexual favors. Masoom despite wanting to change her mode of earning from *dhinga* to less condescending ways but the amounts offered to her are too less to fund her expansive responsibilities of family and *dera* lives. The remaining quotes are more explanatory of the impermanent nature of their lives with no real stability to their earnings.

Bidhaee/taarhi and Jorha

Bidhaee is often said on occasions of happiness as a congratulatory expression. For *hijras* across South Asia *bidhaee* is the occupational option in which *hijras* in groups visit a house on the birth of a newly born baby or a newly married couple. Nanda (1999) in her study on Indian *hijras* finds *bidhaee* as the most traditional occupation depicting a *sangat* of *hijras* of a specific area marking with a chalk at the doors of newly born or newly weds. That sign is an indication for other *hijras* from another area to not to perform to those houses as those had already been covered or would be covered. Hindu society regards *hijras* for their spiritual prowess because of their ‘neither man nor woman’ status. Hindu society fears of raging a *hijra* as it can lead to *hijra* cursing the family that people believe is synonymous to bringing God’s curse. Similarly, the *hijra*’s blessings will bring prosperity. They are specially invited to shower blessings on the birth of newly born babies and wedding couples to bring happiness and bonanza to their future lives.

As an occupational option *bidhaee* is also famous within the community as *taarhi*. *Taarhi* is a Punjabi word meaning hand/palm clapping. Palm clapping is perhaps the most meaningful of the community’s bodily expressions. Number of times the palms are struck against each other and

⁴² Mansehra, November 2014, *Kohistanabad Mohalla* near *Butt Pull*

⁴³ *Kot Radha Kishan*, February 2014, *Gandi Bazaar*

the sound with which the palms are struck convey varied emotions in different contexts. *Taarhi* in *bidhaee* is tantamount to happiness in which *zenana/khusra* will be invited to shower their blessings at/after marriage celebrations and pre/after baby born ceremonies. Anjali, while eloquently marking the difference between *taarhi* and *dhingra*, reveals that in *dhingra* they are uninvited whereas in *bidhaee* they earn huge even in thousands because they are invited as guests. They are invited to dance, to perform skits, to make people happy as a response paid well.

Qaseeda: Yes, we visit that family and collect our *bidhaee* from them, “*Bismillah* sister a baby boy is born to your house Allah has bestowed you with a boy so give us our *bidhaee*” [“*Bismillah baji apke ghar beta hua hai Allah ne apko beta dia hai tou humay bidhaee tou do*”]. This is what we do and *zenanay* like her [Anjali] don’t have to bother much because they have children we have to worry we are the ones who have to go houses, “*Bismillah* sister Allah will keep you happy” [“*Bismillah baji Allah khush rakhay*”] we have to say at multiple doors.⁴⁴

Qaseeda presents a less promising picture of *bidhaee*. Unlike Pooja her views seem to be more rooted in reality. Pooja brings in the dimension of ‘invited guests’ while expounding the differences between *bidhaee* and *dhingra*. Qaseeda, on the other hand, blurs the differences by saying in a rhythmic tone of a beggar asking for money from a baby’s mother. It can be substantiated from fieldwork that with the passage of time the tradition of *bidhaee* has diminished as compared to *dhingra*. In the more grounded locales of *Kot Radha Kishan* and *Mansehra* I observed that, despite knowing, nobody from the community went for *bidhaee* due to minimal possibility of being well paid or even paid because people consider them uninvited. Qaseeda being a *nirban* and being disowned by her family after castration has to rely on any possible way to earn. It is widely observed in this research that uncastrated men (*zenanay*) are in better economic positions than castrated men (*khusray*) for the fact that *zenanay* can switch gender roles smoothly, haven’t lost ties with their blood relations, are less feminine in their attires and appearances, and relatively more acceptable to the society.

Jorha is an Urdu word meaning clothes. In the context of Pakistani Pashtun weddings *jorha* is a ceremony of displaying to the guests gifted stitched and unstitched clothes and other accessories from both the bride’s and bridegroom’s families. Items gifted are called *warhi*. A girl’s *warhi*

⁴⁴ *Kot Radha Kishan*, February 2014, *Zenana Market*

will include gifts from bridegroom's family and a boy's *warhi* will include gifts from bride's family. To these functions are invited one or at most three community members to perform on live musical instruments-*dholak* (double-sided drum), *chimta* (musical tongs), *baja* (trumpet), and harmonium. They take musicians along to play music. Asha explains *gorha* different from *vidhaae* which is an important part of wedding celebrations of KPK whereas *bidhaae* of Punjab. It is up to the discretion of invitees to pay (or not to pay) generously.

Interviewer: Are you paid?⁴⁵

Shamshad: Usually two or at most three are invited so each one is paid accordingly. Few of the people are large hearted, they pay us well. Most are miser, they spend on other things [and] save money by not paying us generously.

Dance Functions

Dance performances (*chamkana*) had culturally been the most exuberant and lucrative occupational option for feminized men across South and Central Asia. In central Asia, public display of sexuality by women essentially through dance is culturally forbidden. But, satiating masculinistic desires of being amused and entertained through maneuvering bodily movements on music has historically been instrumental in training *batchas* (young boys) in music and dance throughout Central Asia, though Samarkand and Bukhara have been most popular (Murray 1997). *Batchas* were respected immensely due to command over their crafts and rich men used to spend generously on their choice of lover boys. *Batchas* were considered signs of status symbol and having one of them was considered to be an indicator of sexual prowess and pride to men. In influential gatherings full of crowd, *batchas* start dancing with delicately maneuvering facial and bodily expressions on lighter music. But with rising rhythm and mounting beats, the bodily movements became more aggressively suggestive at the backdrop of huge male applause (Murray 1997). The crowd amused more when boys used to be in feminine attires (wearing feminine clothes, hair extensions, bracelets, and anklets) and executing titillating bodily moves (throwing flying kisses and holding breasts, then pretending to throw to the spectators). *Batchas*, with a bowl of tea, would roam around the spectators, sit beside a chosen man, offer him tea who after finishing it would return bowl with silver coins or if man was a great admirer/lover he

⁴⁵ Mansehra, November 2014, *Kohistanabad Mohallah near Butt Pull*

would offer gold coin (Murray 1997). The songs orchestrated by musicians were usually love poems. Such a literal explanation interweaves three important elements: an element of sexualized bodies that actually are of biological males but conditioned to emulate femininity; an element of love, desire, and passion that spectators exude for the *batchas*, and finally an element of money which is extracted by cashing on both sexuality and love.

This public display of man-boy love had been socially disapproved and institutionally sanctioned in South Asia. In the 19th century, British district officers banned performances of *hijras* due to “shamelessness”, “obscenities”, and “money extortion”. Over the years overly sexualized dance performances to open public spheres have been banned in India. Campaigns against *devdasi* tradition (termed as “religious prostitution” where poor Hindu girls were disposed off to temples as wives of Gods where in order to add on to their incomes girls had to prostitute and dance) in the late nineteenth century, ban on *lavani* which is a combination of Maharashtra folk song and dance in 1940s and a dance bar ban in 2005 are some of the instances of institutional disapproval of public display of sexuality through dance. In Mughal era, enticing the hearts of high-class clientele through delicate classical dancing was associated with the upper class prostitutes whereas folk dances were used as tools by other sexual minority groups (including male-female transgender persons) for enthralling the low-class audiences. In the pre-partition days, gentry from Lahore visited *Shahi Mohalla*, which primarily included landlords and intellectuals (Brown 2005). With the settlement of the elitist factions from their ancestral grand homes to newly constructed houses, the glory of *Mohalla* dampened. After partition, the quick industrialization changed the social, political and institutional dynamics of *Mohalla* (Brown 2005). With the expansion of modern industries by local entrepreneurs, industrialists and investors along with growing middle- and upper-class bureaucracy, the new avenues for rendering the services of female and *hijra* prostitutes of *Mohalla* became plausible (Brown 2005). The professionals who for the decades serviced within the walls of *Mohalla* were dispersed to other cities upon the demands of their new clienteles. This phenomenon hastened in the 1960s and latter in late 1970s with proclamation of Ayub Khan about closure of red light area and with the Military Government of General Zia ul Haq that institutionalized *Hudood* Ordinance as an eminent part of

Islamization process (Saeed 2001). The prostitutes of *Tibbi Galli*⁴⁶ (which still is thickly populated with the poor *khusra* communes) were the most severely impacted as a result of ban on *Mohalla* activities in the regimes of both Ayub Khan and Zia ul Haq (Saeed 2001). The people of *Mohalla* were allowed to come back to their area when public protests against commoditization and commercialization of sex up roared in 1970s (Saeed 2001). The government regulated and police controlled timings were allotted (11 p.m. to 1 p.m.) to the residents of *Mohalla* to entertain customers with music and dance only (Saeed 2001). Such government regulations have adversely impacted the forms of economic organization of *zenana/khusra*.

Handaal Chowk in *Kot Radha Kishan* and *Babu building* in *Mansehra* are homes to the poorest of *zenana/khusra* communes. With the current security threats, increase in urbanization and education, and growing western values the traditional community occupations of *jorhaa* and *bidhaee* are diminishing. Dance performances may not always be rewarding as people disapprove of inviting *zenana/khusra* to their weddings for dance. As a result of declining market demand for their dance performances in weddings, they have expanded the range of the occasions and upgraded their dance skills for diverse audiences. They perform at *melas*, private functions and late night marriage gatherings both strictly for men. *Mela(s)* (a *sanskirit* word meaning a cultural or religious festival or a fair) is (are) seasonal. Most of the *mela* festivals are celebrated in the vicinity areas of *Kot Radha Kishan*; the one I attended was in *Pattoki* which is one of the smaller cities of *Kasur* district at a distance of roughly 50km from *Kot Radha Kishan*. In Punjab the festive season for *mela* is in winters from October till February each year. *Mela* is usually a cultural celebration integrating food stalls, music, dance performances, and entertainment of different sorts including palmistry, magic and puppet shows to death well stunts. *Zenana/khusra* fully clad and prepared to entertain the spectators, perform inside *mot ka kuan* (death well). The show starts with their performances. They, in a group of five or six, enter into the well, and dance on four songs. *Tamashbeen* (spectators) surround them from over the well and throw money over them as a gesture of appreciation, few vagabonds or rowdies lash coins to mock and hurt them. After having finished performances they wait for the bell ringing

⁴⁶ One of the streets of *Shahi Mohallah*, mostly populated by the poorest of the male, female, and transgender sex workers

which signals time to leave the well. They climb the ladder up to come out, stand on a wooden bench waiting for the next round of performances. In the meantime they touch up make up, rehearse for steps and drink lots of water. Cyclist finishes his performance and they climb down the ladder to dance again. There are usually three rounds of performances. The amounts they earn are the money thrown by the spectators which to my amazement were in thousands in most of the cases. After performances they enjoy with their *chamkaas* (regular male friends), those interested in prostitution search for suitable clients which is another source of earning and of those who bring their *giryas* (lovers) along make them spend a lot of money. Traditionally *hijra* groups take *miraasi* (musicians) to the functions. In Kasur few respondents emphasized on the importance of live music and talked at length about the skills of synchronizing dance movements with the live musical beats, though most seemed less interested on performing to live music. The reason is that the greater the number of people taken along the more the division of earned money. To Munni, musicians who are usually ten in number are *haddi baaz* (the ones who hide money). She finds equal distribution of money to each performer unfair because she thinks dancers are the highlights of any show and should be given more share.

Looking beautiful at a *mela* is also essential as it is socializing points for many *zenanas/khusras*. Many a times I heard them wishing to find a *sareela* (the best looking man) at a *mela* and since it can be lucrative for those hooking on men for prostitution so they want to look at their best. Those who have enlarged their chests look more feminine than those who haven't. There is quite a possibility of the earnings of less feminine being slashed by the more feminine ones. So in order to look more feminine they fill their chest area with doubled balloons filled with water. The pronounced chest area looks like a female chest with large breasts. Emulating femininity is priced high as most feminine looking receive more male attention and hence extract more money. Pooja, a skillful dancer, complaints of men who prefer beauty over talent. To her men should pay for delicate dance and femininity not for *chitti chamrhi* (white skin). Dance training is not necessarily elementary as most are fond of dancing since childhood and by the time they join *dera* they are prepared to perform at functions. All they need to learn though are *mudra* (movements of combination(s) of index, middle, ring, and little fingers with thumbs in classical dance), facial expressions and feet movements. Few in Rawalpindi and Mansehra learnt initials of *Pashto* and *Sindhi* dance from their *gurus* as learning these ethnic dance forms require a

different skill set of rhythmic sense and signature dance moves. The songs are mostly famous Pakistani Punjabi and Bollywood songs, old Punjabi songs sung by Noor Jehan are the hot favorites. The dance performances I saw were suggestive and seductive, the need of which was highlighted by one of the respondents as:

Nisho: It is liberating, I feel special and precious. All spectators [*tamashbeen*] liking me [and] my dance, I race their pulses, I make them go mad, I can do whatever I want to without allowing any man to do with me anything against my will. Is not it liberating! Then I enjoy dancing, going to *melas*, meeting [*milli julli daya*] friends, just enjoy it a lot.⁴⁷

The spectators are men, married and unmarried, young and old, drunk and undrunk all kinds of men are there. Alcohol intake is common. Women are not part of such gatherings. Men want to do things they can not do in the presence of their female members. They want to be entertained and shower hundreds and thousands of rupees on their favorite dancers. To Nadi, men want to have *shugal* (good time) and if dealt tactfully they can throw their golden chains and even wallets on us. Nadi's explanation can be a bit overstating however I, once in a private party in Mansehra, witnessed a man emptying his entire wallet on a *zenana*. The trick is to keep a sharp eye contact with a man who seems to be the most interested, to dance closer to him, to give him tempted smiles, and to make special dance moves (bending body down and moving hips round, placing middle finger of a right hand on a cleavage and slipping down to lower torso, biting lower lip with teeth, and jerking head right and left to sway long hair).

I conducted my fieldwork in Mansehra towards the start of winter 2014. Winters are not very productive for the community, they try to be part of most of the functions they can before winters become unendurably chilly. Functions tend to decrease so are the earning options in colder regions of Pakistan. Likewise in Mansehra where temperature drops considerably during winters, *zenanas/khusras* migrate to tropical areas looking for earning options. Just like weathers, their earnings are seasonal because festivals/fairs/functions are seasonal. When asked to a resident of Mansehra what she meant by season, she replied:

Farha: It means between *bakra eid* and *Moharram* the time between these two is like eid to us. You can call it eid of *moortain* but when winter arrives, like here in Mansehra then only twelve days of functions are left but once

⁴⁷ *Kot Radha Kishan*, February 2014, *Zenana Market*

temperature further drops then season will drop too. We will move to areas where weather will not be too cold where earning options will be more viable. Work will be booming in Karachi nowadays. In Mansehra it will nearly finish in ten days. I have plans to go to Mardaan then to Karachi during winters.⁴⁸

Prostitution

Nanda (1999) and Reddy (2005) observe prostitution as the most viable way for the *hijras* to earn a living. Poverty seems to be the only reason for male-female transgender persons to prostitute. This research observes that *zenanas/khusras* are socialized into such settings that despite having other occupational choices they could not help resorting to prostitution. There are reasons to this. First sexuality works as a catalyst for the many involved in flesh trade. Second the quest to earn easy money. Third internalizing the fact that their bodies are sexual objects to be commoditized. Forth helplessness few helpless due to sexual urges and most due to economic hardships. Fifth intimacy and quest for love.

Pooja: Reason is that they don't like going outside a lot. They prefer to stay at *dera*, whoever comes, in what number comes they adjust all. No need to roam around for money when they can earn staying at *dera*. . . . They don't leave anybody who comes, they don't let any of them to go without money, ANYONE from beautiful to ugly, from white to dark . . . Money is crucial, it has to be there. They [*zenanay*] say yes to money. They put forward their price demand, if agreed then fine if don't then, "Go away" [*karay kara*].⁴⁹

Sassi: They are not that helpless. They are but their problems can be no different from ours. They fear from hard work. What helplessness! It is tough for them to leave their cozy beds and earn through hard work when there is freezing cold outside. They prefer staying at *deras*, calling in five customers [*chaamkay*], and receiving one thousand in an hour, when this is an option then why to work too hard. They are scared of putting in effort [*dardiyaan ae khawariaan toon*].⁵⁰

Nargis: Few *zenanay* prefer it over other sources of income, it is fast, relatively easier, and quick money. [They] do by choice, they don't even leave a hundred or two hundred rupees offering customer.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Mansehra, November 2014, *Chakiyaan Road, Tariq Khan Plaza*

⁴⁹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

⁵⁰ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

⁵¹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, February 2014, *Handaal's Chowk*

Despite the fact that all the respondents/participants in this research had engaged in sex-for-money exchanges, prostitution is stigmatized and disdained even within the community. I conducted my initial and final research at *Kot Radha Kishan* in winters and Sassi's opinions about her most beloved *chela* had hardly changed over almost a year time period. *Kot Radha Kishan* is not too cold in winters; hence many *zenanas/khusras* from KPK, Sindh, and other cities of Punjab flock to make a living out of dance at functions and festivals of *Kot Radha Kishan*. Sassi's comments about her *chela* of not leaving a 'cozy bed' and 'freezing cold outside' signify that her *chela* despite having an option of earning through hard work opts to earn through shortcuts. Her claim of five men entertained in an hour seems a little too stretched, however, it was observed in detail through fieldwork that three-four clients can be entertained in an hour. The amount of one thousand for five clients (two hundred from each) is more or less similar when compared to the amounts earned by sexually active *zenana/khusra* prostitutes of other locales. Earnings through traditional occupation of dance can be much more but with minimum surety of being paid and maximum likelihood of being abused, most prefer to earn quick by prostitution. Pooja's take is more or less same with the addition of uninhibited explanation of clientele type-ugly, beautiful, white, and dark-depicting that those involved in prostitution as the only way to earn will yield to any clientele if paid to their likings.

Nomi: First sexual satisfaction, second money. Money is a bonus. They talk bad, high on explicit sexual things, sharing experiences, ways to tap sexual satisfaction, taking drugs, losing control, and engaging in mutual intercourse. All of it raises their lust. For these reasons I prefer to stay alone. I don't mix up with most of them or become part of their gatherings. I am telling you the truth. I fear that I may succumb to their talks. It usually happens, their stories can entice others to do the same which they do. Keeping various *giryas*, keep on standing near road sides, and finding multiple men younger, older, lean, fat, smaller, bigger. . . .⁵²

Roopa: Honestly, few are stubborn [*arhibaaaz*]. They are addicted to it. They cannot survive without getting laid by someone. They want it to be done to them daily. [pause] There are other *moortaan*, just two *deras* away they don't step outside... 200, 300, 400 is what they earn through prostitution [*paisha*], they say, "We don't want to go outside to be demeaned by men" [*asaan ni jaandiyaaan banda kulu khawaar honrhy*"], the one old [*suddi*] fatter one says that.⁵³

⁵² *Kot Radha Kishan*, February 2014, *Judge Mohallah*

⁵³ *Kot Radha Kishan*, February 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Nomi's comments are the depiction of socio-sexual settings in which *zenanas/khusras* typically function. *Dera*, peculiarly during evenings when it turns into a meeting point, provides a base for *zenanas/khusras* to indulge in talks heavily sexually toned. Often I heard them discussing bodily characteristics of their *chaamkay* (regular clients), pleasure from different sex positions, foreplay techniques which in turn raises the curiosity and excitement of exploring the unexplored. Multiple sexual partners is in part the result of this curiosity and in part of building sexual frustration. Roopa's selection of words 'addicted' and 'cannot survive without' convey a sense of urgency and insistence.

Noori: The first time, yes I remember--. Some men took advantage of my young age first time. They took me to some shabby hotel, torn my clothes, and then you know what they would have done. I was bleeding and they threw me on a road. I was half naked. It is very common in our line. At school, too, boys used to stop my way and take kisses of me forcibly. I got so upset that I decided not to go to school ever again. After I reached puberty I knew prostitution [*pann*] to be the only option for me.⁵⁴

Reema: We are not as bad as society think we are. We can lead a normal life if society doesn't pave us to the wrong path of destruction just for their entertainment. . . . I will tell you very openly that a *zenana* is not from men not from women, still a pedophile [*londay baaz*] keeps an eye on him, a [*londay baaz*] will spoil him. He will take him to some place, will give him some pills, do whatever good or bad with him, the result will be that a feminine man will be driven towards prostitution. His body will become receptive to titillation and bodily touch [*harkat*]. Most will join this life, he will become she, she will be part of adult gatherings, injecting drugs, drinking alcohol. . . . Her body will become prone to touch. She was innocent just like other kids in her childhood staying with sisters and mothers, hesitating to interact with men. *Londay baaz* will lure him through attention, food, and money. They may abuse him sexually then he will join us after observing us and our lives.⁵⁵

Noori, a victim of sexual abuse, for a significant period of her life, considered coerced sexual intercourse as the only form of sexual contact a person can have with another person. Repeated sexual abuse, at a young age, shaped her sexuality to the point that after reaching puberty she started working as a professional prostitute. She calls her body a commodity which yields huge favors to her. She claims of covering each road of Rawalpindi as a cruising site. Another *zenana* prostitute from Kasur named Neeli was repeatedly abused by her father after her mother's death.

⁵⁴ Rawalpindi, October 2014, *Pirwadahi*

⁵⁵ City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

At the age of 12 she found the incestuous relationship with her father too complex to grapple with. As a consequence to it, she ran from her hometown and joined *dera* commune. Early onset of sexual contacts in the life of a feminized man urges him to be in multiple sexual links with men which will eventually lead him to earn through prostitution. Reema's explanation of a *zenana*'s body becoming immunized to touch after being sexually abused coupled with alcohol and drug intake will make her more dependent on earnings through prostitution.

Massom: There are many, what I mean-- Helpless *zenanay* driven out of their homes abandoned and left out from families. They open *deras* and sit inside to earn through *pann*.⁵⁶

Shamshad: Others are helpless because functions are occasional especially during off seasons. Sometimes wait is too long, after one or two months comes a single function which may or may not be too rewarding. There is always prostitution [*pann*] when there is no function...⁵⁷

Reema: Reason nothing except helplessness. Few are helpless because of their bodily needs, few for money, most are forced into it, beaten up and raped.⁵⁸

Masoom in her remarks states helplessness as the main reason for *zenana/khusra* to prostitute. Helplessness is observed to be due to bodily needs or poverty. Existing literature identifies social isolation as an indicator of prostitution in transgender communities. This research confirms to the existing scholarship on prostitution as many respondents joined *dera* and hence prostitution after being socially secluded. Esha relates helplessness to unavailability of functions compelling *zenana* to prostitute and Muskaan relates to both financial and physical needs.

Qaseeda: Some do it by choice for pleasure, for attention, and for intimacy. Others are immune to it, cannot think of living without it. They go like, "I am a human being, my heart goes in favor of doing it. I can fall in love too." I have been in love with a man, this ongoing year is the ninth one. Sometimes, we fight to the extent that we don't talk. Recently, we had a fight and I am not with him these days, not with anyone nowadays, not a permanent one what I mean to say. Very few of us have life time partners. Most of us claim to have but that is not true. Ask them if they have those partners then why are they prostituting for few money? [pause] Having a special loving, caring, man is

⁵⁶ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Pirwadahi*

⁵⁷ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Raja Sultan Market*

⁵⁸ City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

extremely rare and if found it's perhaps the most precious thing in our lives. Commitment is rare in these relationships.⁵⁹

Nomi: So it is better maintaining a distance. I have always managed to maintain it. In Lahore, too, I was settled in a *dera* quite faraway from other *deras*. [I] never had to earn through *pann*, I was fortunate enough to earn through other means. Friendships, I like. They are personal, intimate, and reliable, much more than a few minutes' sexual contacts. Selling body for money, I don't like it. Just for money! That is lame. With money lust mounts.⁶⁰

A fairly recent literature and research is emerging to ask this question: What's love got to do with prostitution? As contradictory as it may sound but studies on South American transgender persons have shown the search of love as the reason for many to enter into prostitution. Studies on Indian *hijras* have also shown that social discrimination and marginalization leave *hijras* with minimum chances of social interactions with population outside their communities. In this scenario forms of economic organization are the only opportunities left for individual or group interactions with people (men) outside the community. Prostitution being a lucrative occupational choice becomes a hope of finding 'true love of a real man'. Nomi, while alluding to the difference between personalized and de-personalized relationships, thinks she is fortunate for being in a relationship which to her is intimate than distant and mechanical sex-for-money exchanges. It will be discussed in following sections that money is as instrumental in *more* personalized relationships as it is in *less* personalized relationships. Qaseeda's depiction starts by hinting towards few *zenanas/khusras* who seek for emotional relationships through prostitution, she, then, talks about 'not a permanent one' indicating that she is in temporary relationships for survival and finally juxtaposed the contradictions of those who prostitute in spite of being in permanent relationships. The relationships both Nomi and Qaseeda are talking about, though transactional, are 'precious' and 'reliable'. Whereas, in prostitution the interaction is short lived and perfunctory. The following excerpt⁶¹ from a focus group explains the relational dynamics of those who prostitute:

⁵⁹ Kot Radha Kishan, January 2014, *Zenana Market*

⁶⁰ Kot Radha Kishan, January 2014, *Judge Mohallah*

⁶¹ Kot Radha Kishan, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Queen: Usually they [clients] are quite. It is like when you go to a market you buy something and pay for it. Like a shopkeeper asking for money first then buyer giving price after having satisfied with a product, “Take this money, come on take off your clothes, do it, and go.”

Moderator: How much do you earn through *panpaisha*?

Queen: It has been a year being part of it. Now I don't have anything to do. I earn just to scrape through, just to bear my daily expenditures. After getting laid whatever clients agree with 100, 200, we carefully spend it. [We] spend hundred and keep the rest for rainy days. You can even check my pockets now I don't have anything.

Seemi: MONEY. Yes money, due to money. [pause] Our hearts want it to happen just with our special ones, with others it's just for money.

Queen's description of sexual exchange is like an economic exchange, where one party is a seller other a buyer, a seller after being paid gives the commodity (body) to a buyer. Seemi in the next lines marks the difference of money between the sex-for-money exchanges and transactional nature of relationships. To her, people like her, give in sexually to men (who they don't know) to fill financial needs, whereas with 'special ones' they are consensual and money may not be the only drive.

Meenu: A person directed me towards *paisha*. He observed femininity in me. I used to go to learn embroidery from his center. He showed greater interest in me than other of his students. This is what usually happens. Men approach us with affection and love and since we are so fond of male attention we easily get attracted towards whom after using us leave and we become prone to physical relationships with men. They spend on us, they pay us money in exchange of sexual favors. Such relationships fill our emotional appetite, meet our physical needs, fulfill our materialistic wants, and we become habituals.

Meenu's response to the reason on why she prostitutes is perhaps the most comprehensive. Her reply includes almost all the reasons aforementioned. The deceptive self-driven male interests towards *zenana/khusra*, their (*zenana*) budding likeness towards men, the sexual debuts at early age followed by physical vulnerabilities of getting into multiple sexual contacts, emotional, financial and bodily fulfillment these factors in isolation or in combination are decisive in shaping not just a *zenana*'s sexuality but also her dependence on earning a living through prostitution.

There are varied forms of male-female transgender prostitution with respect to cruising areas, soliciting cites, *dera* communities and other informal settings. In city Kasur, Steel *Bagh Morh* and small taverns in *Chandini Chowk* are the more visited sites for *zenana/khusra* prostitutes. To

most, *dera* communes are the business centers; hence turn out to be the formal socio-sexual place for most clients to seek sexual services. *Dera* brothels were identified in *Gandi Bazaar* of *Kot Radha Kishan* and *Babu building* of *Mansehra*. These are just like other *dera* communes, the rooms of which are rented to other *zenana/khusra* for prostitution. Two *zenana* friends, in spite living with their families, visit their *guru's dera* at *Gandi Bazaar*. The two bring clients or clients visit them. The three get ready in the evening waiting for the clients to choose one of the three. Whoever chosen will equally share amongst the three the money earned. The clients are men of age group ranging fifteen to fifty. Most are travellers from the nearby villages and towns, rich or poor urbanites, taxi or truck drivers, landlords, policemen, rowdies, criminals, peons, security guards and students. Respondents in all four locales talk about their preferences, few took pride in saying 'no' to rowdies who were willing to give thousand rupee for one time, others preferring to bring into *dera* or going along with the good looking men (*sohnrhay sohnrhay banday*) only, others preferring money over looks and health-related risks. *Zenanay/khusray* visit cruising cites to find potential clients from where they get picked by cars. They apply heavy make up, wear revealing clothes, cover them with black shawls, and stand near road sides at nights or at the corner of a busy market place or at bus stops, give signals to seemingly interested clients through winking and suggestive hand movements. Men stop their cars, agreeable prices are decided after that they either go with the men, or find some deserted place or to some cheap rented rooms of taverns or hotels. The cruising timings usually start from evening till late night, for those functioning through *deras* the business hours are from noon till evening. Customers prefer fully dolled up and fearless *zenanay* who are uninhibited while performing dance or providing sexual services. They can also find potential clients while at festivals and marriages. Respondents in *Mansehra* told that after having exchanged mobile numbers they get invitations to which they agree only when the *tamashbeen* agree on taking them to hotel rooms or homes. This may not hold true for the *zenanay* of *Rawalpindi*, most of them think that an open deserted place is apt to escape in case of danger and for quick sexual exchange. At functions, I observed interested men zeroed in on *zenanay* they liked the most, approaching them after the show to take contact numbers. Often they contacted after a day or two to ask for sexual favors, the ones interested would go preferably during the days as winter nights are dark and long in *Mansehra*. The more informal socio-sexual settings are interactions through friend circles. A *zenana* would introduce

another to her close client who, then, will introduce her to other men. Potential clients are even shared sometimes. For instance, in *Handaal Chowk* one *dera* is one door away from another *dera*. If Raheela (first *dera* at the start of *chowk*) sends a *cheesa chaamka* to Khushboo (fifth *dera* in a row), then next time Khushboo will send him to Raheela. It wasn't observed in other locales as most want to be laid by good looking men saying "If I won't she will and that too at a lesser price".

The number of clients entertained varies from *zenana* to *zenana*. Khushboo used to say '*rozi aye hai*' ('a client is here' -*rozi* is an urdu word meaning earning, in this context a source of earning, a client who is a source, in this case) each time there was a knock at the door. When asked how many clients a *zenana* usually entertains she replied:

Khushboo: Mostly ten. Few days are spent alone with no *rozi* but most of the days there is a knock at the door after every half an hour.⁶²

The time spent is correlated with the amounts paid. The *rozi* is divided into three groups. First one is a ten minutes *rozi* who agrees on paying 200 rupees. The next is a twenty minutes *rozi* who pays four hundred. The ones who offer more than five hundred are thirty (or more) minutes *rozi*. They are the ones who are high in demand from the community but low in supply from the clientele. The greater the amount the greater will be the pleasure and time allotted. The clients are mostly *active* males, although few reported of *passive* clients too, who want from *zenana/khusra* to hide their sexual orientation as passivity in intercourse is stigmatized and strictly forbidden for men.

Raheela classifies her clientele she entertains into:

Cheesa raees- A good looking rich man

Makhan malai- Gorgeous looking, may or may not be rich

Jaibaan katran alaa/Chindi chor- A pickpocket or a thief

Choosli- Emaciated- Ugly looking, may or may not be rich

⁶² *Kot Radha Kishan*, October 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Phakar/fukarh- Poor, of no use, good for nothing

Pannpaisha or *dhandha* (prostitution) as a survival strategy may seem to be lucrative. And it is for many in this field as few respondents earned between fifty thousand to one lac rupees during my fieldwork. In festive seasons prostitution can be a smart occupational choice to add on to incomes in addition to dance and *dhinga*. But once season is off, the earnings will fall considerably. There is no such real stability to their earnings. Social discrimination and isolation further bottlenecks their already-stigmatized ways to earn a living. Mindy's final comments towards the end of the last focus group are the true reflection of compromises they have to make and earn through options available:

Rita: First comes first if anybody from us says that she doesn't *pann* then she is absolutely telling a lie. It goes with our field. Rich, poor, Muslim, Christian, long, short I have been with every kind of person in my past. No one empties pockets without receiving something in exchange from us and you very well know what that *something* is. Even at function where we dance [we] don't get paid until we get laid by them. We have to indulge in suggestive talks with them, spend time with them after that we get our payments. It is not as easy as it seems to be like going, performing, receiving payments, and coming back. Usually men approach us after function very vigorously, get a strong grip over our hands, slap us, drag us through bare floors if we say no to their demands. At least, I cannot afford saying no because I fear losing a strong party. I need them; they don't need me as many others will be there to substitute me.⁶³

⁶³ Rawalpindi, October 2014, *Pirwadahi*

CHAPTER 9

Girya/Zenana Relationship

This chapter starts with the description of three scenes to explain relational dynamics between *zenana/khusra* and *girya*. The attempt, here, is to explore importance of money to the lives of *zenana/khusra* to the extent that they may commodify (love-based) relationships. This may not always hold true as it is explained in this chapter that if for most of the *zenanas/khusras* money supersedes love then for few of them love supersedes money as well. *Zenanas/khusras* as agents of change (though constrained by socio-economic discrimination) is also expositied through capitalizing on love and manipulating power structures. The importance of *girya* as a guard against violence is also described in detail.

Scene 1 (Mobile conversation of *Nadi* with her *giryas*)⁶⁴

N- Nadi

G2- Second *Girya*

G1- First *Girya*

[*N to me: Come here, he is calling me up, just listen to what is he upto*]

N: Hello.

G2: Hi, you don't greet *na* [*salam dua jee, salam nhn karda na*].

N: *Assalam o alaikum*.

⁶⁴ Mansehra, November 2014, *Dandi Mohallah* in *Kashmiri Bazar*

G2: What are you doing? [*ki kardeen ay?*]

N: Nothing, just taking rest.

G2: Really?

N: What else? [*tey or ki?*]

G2: You asked for a brush? [*brush mangwaya hai toonh?*]

N: Yes. Bring me a brush, a towel, and soap like a good boy.

G2: Only?

N: Yes, for the time being.

G2: Okay, anything else?

N: No, don't waste time on calling me without any reason, go and bring a brush, a towel, and reach *dera* as soon as possible, hurry up.

G2: I am coming from Kalandarabad [*a raya aah Kalandarabad toonh*].

N: From Kalandarabad or from Landi Kotal I don't know. I will not let you enter my door step if you appear without my things [*Kalandara bad toonh ya Landi Kotal toonh meriyaan cheezaan lay ke na aya andar ni warha gi tenu jaanda ay na fir menu*].

G2: Anything else? [*aur suna?*]

N: Bye.

((*Laughs*))

Me: Was he the first one?

N: No, no. He is the second one. Listen, now the first one is calling, listen to him now.

N: Hello.

G1: *Jaan*.

N: What?

G1: Have you taken breakfast?

N: Not now dear. Okay listen I will start using the sim you bought me yesterday from today, before that I will get up, take a long bath, will have breakfast then I will text you with the new number. You will be the first to whom I will send the message from new number.

G1: Okay, I will wait for your message, sms me soon.

N: Okay then, let me go now please.

G1: As you wish.

N: Okay.

G1: Bye.

N: Bye.

G1: Take care.

N: You too.

G1: Okay then.

N: Okay *jee*.

G1: You drop the call first.

N: No you first.

G1: No you.

N: OKAY, get off my nerves [*ACHA WAY, maghraan toonh lay*].

Scene 2 (*Billo's mobile conversation with her girya*)⁶⁵

B- Billo

G- *Girya*

B: How are you doing? [*ki hal ay?*]

G: I am out on bail [*zamanat o gae ay*].

B: ((*screaming in joy*)) What? [*ki hoye ei?*]

G: BAIL.

B: I LOVE YOU. Take a car, come to me [*cheti kaar gaddi ich aja*].

G: I will come to you too [*a jawaa ga tery kol wi*].

B: No, come to me NOW [*nhn, tu meray kol aa HONRHAY*].

G: I will in a while [*anda aanh*].

B: Promise me you will? [*ajae ga na paki gall ay?*]

G: Yes [*haan way*].

B: By what time? [*kinney bajay aye ga?*]

G: By evening.

B: ((*Screaming in joy*))

G: Anything else? [*or suna?*]

B: Such a long time since we met [*kinna koe arsa ho challa tenu waikhay*].

⁶⁵ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Dhoke Kala Khan*

G: *Hmmh.*

B: Look, you are talking to me half heartedly [*waikh lay fir gall ni karraya toonh changi tarha*].

G: No dear [*na way jaanu*].

B: Okay okay, come to me now, I don't know take a car and come NOW that i am telling you [*acha acha, chal aja mainu ni pata too HONRHAY aja gadi ich bekay mai tenu dass ri aan*].

G: I am about to sit on a bus [*honrhay beth raya aan gaddi tey*].

B: Tell me by what time? [*dass kinay wajay tak?*]

G: Evening [*shaami.*]

B: Today? [*ajj?*]

G: *Hmmh.*

B: Fine, bring 21 inches TV [*chal sahi, TV lekay awi ikki inch da*].

G: 14 not 21 [*Ikki ni choda*].

B: How many inches? [*kinmay inch da?*]

G: 14.

B: 21 inches, not 14 [inches]. Bring me a TV stand too [*ni choda inch da ni ikki inch da tey stand wi lekay ayi*].

G: Not a stand.

B: *Hae*, where will I place TV, over your head? Bring stand too, otherwise I will take fifteen thousand extra for stand.

G: I will see [*wikhaan ga*].

B: You won't, I will snatch [*khassa*] fifteen thousand from you for stand.

G: Okay *jee*.

B: ((*kisses*)) I love you.

Scene 3 (Nargis's first mobile conversation with her potential *giryā*)⁶⁶

N- Nargis

G- *Giryā*

N: Hello.

G: Hello *jee*.

N: How are you?

G: I am good *jee*.

N: I am still thinking about you.

G: Really?

N: *Haan naa*.

G: Why?

N: I couldn't take my eyes off you yesterday.

G: You, too, danced beautifully.

N: Can we meet?

G: I am here for few days.

N: We can meet then.

⁶⁶ *Kot Radha Kishan*, December 2013, *Handaal Chowk*

G: Yes please.

N: *Nuh.*

G: Why?

N: I will meet if you help me.

G: What help?

N: I am running short of mobile balance. *Jaanu* please send me a mobile card.

G: Not a problem.

N: 500 rupee card, not less than that, okay?

G: Okay, just sending you.

N: Thank you so much. We will talk for hours then, okay?

G: Okay *jee*. When will we meet?

N: Send me the card first then I will let you know. Okay bye.

G: Bye *jee*.

((*Laughs*))

Nadi, a *zenana* from Mansehra, started career in this line very young from Rawalpindi where she danced along with female dancers at functions. 'I looked so familiar just like them (female dancers), nobody could recognize me as a young boy', she takes pride in letting me know time and again. She doesn't believe in long term relationships, though she believes in friendships just to 'eat their money out.' Currently, she is in relationship with two *giryas* (G1 and G2 in scene 1): one (G1) who loves her and who she feels affectionate towards and the other (G2) who is in love with her and she is in love with his money. She finds maintaining long term relationships too taxing. She believes in becoming strategic while dealing her relationships. She believes that a *zenana* destructs her life if gets trapped in a man's love (*roothay me phas jae*). It becomes an issue for her and she will long for him for the rest of her life, 'Her longing will change into

frustration, frustration into anxiety, anxiety into anger, anger into depression, and you know what happens after that, this is what happens.’ Often she mentions of few of her beloved *guraee* who gave up their lives for their unfaithful *giryas*, always bringing into discussion about her *guru behan* who lost life in her arms after being acid attacked by her *giryas* who wanted to get rid of her. Others ruin their lives being in such relationships. With minimum concentration on dance, they lose out on earning opportunities becoming mentally depressed and drug addicts, consuming excessive cigarettes, causing physical damage even attempting suicides. Her own arms and wrists have burnt scars of cigarettes which she camouflages with makeup. She justifies on her commodification of relationships by saying ‘. . . there is no reason why I shouldn’t hate men they deserve bashing. I genuinely fell in love with a man when I just started. . . he saw me dancing in one of the functions. Upon finding me young and new, he thought I would be innocent enough to be tricked to money extraction and sexual relationship. My female friends already warned me about men, they helped me in ways to manipulate them. I applied same tricks, extracted twenty five thousand rupees once and thirty five thousand once more after which I left him. He wanted to exploit me, contrarily I exploited him.’

Giryas, performing a provider a role, is the most admired and the most wanted in the community, but it requires a lot of effort on the part of *zenanas/khusras* to convince their men to spend generously. Nadi believes that men can be tricked easily:

Nadi: I convincingly say to him, “Dear [*janu*] I am only yours I don’t look at anybody else, I am very happy with you but I will be happier if you continue fulfilling my needs. I will not look up to any other man except you.” You know very well these men can be so easily fooled; they will die if you talk sweetly--. I have learnt the tricks to survive in this line now. I have made one man crazy after me, yesterday night he bought me cell phone with a camera in it. He bought me a new sim and sent three mobile cards. Last night, also, he bought me four cigarette packets.⁶⁷

The one who buys her things is the G1 in scene 1; he accompanies her to the functions and spends lavishly on her. G2, on the other hand, is for bearing her monthly household expenses. She has introduced both to each other, however, she had hidden from G1 about her being physically involved with G2, where as G2 knows the relational dynamics between her and G1.

⁶⁷ Mansehra, November 2014, *Dandi Mohallah in Kashmiri Bazar*

Wiki thinks that G1 will be heart broken if he comes to know about her relation with G2. Maintaining secrets and concealing truths is very common among *zenanas/khusras*. They cannot afford speaking truth to men; they get involved in multiple relations with multiple men to meet their needs.

Nadi: I understand I can never be a girl in spite of being more feminine, delicate, and fair than most of the girls around. They will never marry me, so I cannot dream of them leaving families and living with us for the rest of their lives. Then I have to fight for survival too. Nobody will come to feed me. I have to do it myself. So, what I am saying is that they are willing to spend only if we are willing to fake romance. I can bet you that there is nobody better than us in faking romance.⁶⁸

Despite of ‘faking romance’ with multiple men, she is going to tie a knot with G1 by following a custom famous as ‘*pakki karna*’ or ‘*mithaee*’. In this ceremony, a *giryaa* openly expresses his interest in a *zenana* in front of *sae guru*, *guru maa*, *shoormi* and *saheliyan*. *Giryaa* brings two rings, one for a *zenana* and one for the *guru*, clothes, jewellery, and shoes for a *zenana dulhan*. It is considered, in many ways, similar to *nikkah* in a man-woman marriage but without legal paper work or contractual obligation. *Giryaa*, after presenting a gold ring to a *guru*, asks her, ‘*Guru jee* are you happy?’ Only after *guru*’s affirmation, *mithaee* is distributed and community members get to know that a *giryaa* is now a husband to a *zenana*. After getting married, a *zenana* lives like a devoted wife to her husband with her husband trying to meet all her needs (physical and financial) so that she doesn’t scrape through prostitution and *bhidhaee*. Conversely, in most cases, *zenanas/khusras* resort to prostitution on account of their needs and expectations being unfulfilled. Pooja argues that a *giryaa* husband shouldn’t condition her *zenana* wife to live in a specific way, also constraining her to earn means limitizing her already limited occupational choices. Many in the community talk at length about the importance of a man in their lives. Many responded sincere men as the real respites of their lives who they always show respect towards. But there are few who even after having their needs met and wants fulfilled, prostitute.

Pooja: Yes, but for prostitution [*dhandha*] she goes. I know few of them doing this. Their husbands are unaware, few of them are aware also. It is easy money. It becomes part of their nature and daily life. Their bodies become immune to touch. They need more of it. And above all MONEY, MONEY, MONEY. Their lust for money never

⁶⁸ Mansehra, November 2014, *Dandi Mohallah* in *Kashmiri Bazar*

goes away. They snatch it with both their hands and feet even. They say, “Its okay dear, if it’s coming then what’s the harm.”⁶⁹

Lust of money may not always be the factor for others to *pann* after marriage, the reason could also be the *need* (rather than *lust*) of money as the following excerpt from a focus group⁷⁰ explains.

Billo: He cannot fund our celebrations *na*, cannot fund all of the birthday expenses. What can be done with twenty five thousand rupees!

Kulsum: At *saalgirah* expenses are huge. How can I fund it with the amount he gives? He earns twenty thousand in a month, he has to feed himself too and now I am his added responsibility. He can give me say five thousand at most. I have to do something too; he is not going to hand me over all his income. He is married to me only, not with my *guru* and family. I have to send to my family, to *guru*, room’s [*koli’s*] rent has to be paid too, five [or] ten thousand rupees are not enough to pay rents alone. So, I have to find ways for earning.

Kulsum: The expense of make up is nearly fifteen thousand.

Billo: The make up which you see me applying costs atleast seven [or] eight hundred rupees which is equal to his daily income, he cannot give me all.

Kulsum: Our expenditures are more than our income.

Billo: That is exactly how I see it.

Moderator: And if he gives you enough to fund all your expenses?

Billo: Now he gives me ten [thousand]. If he gives me fifty [thousand] then I can think of not opting for other sources.

Moderator: And if you find another rich man?

Billo: [I] cannot leave him. I love him.

Kulsum: *Hae hae*, she will not let that rich one go. She will not keep him permanently though. You know what will she do? She will say this [*giryā* husband] to go to work and that [*chaamka*] to come to duty [*usko bol dia tum kam pe jao usko bol dia tum duty pe ajao*].

⁶⁹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, October 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

⁷⁰ *Rawalpindi*, October 2014, *Raja Sultan Market*

Moderator: Does that happen?

Billo: That I do double, double.

Kulsum: We are not domesticated women, we are professional ones.

Billo (from scene 2), a *nirbaan khusra* from Rawalpindi, is wife to a *giryaa* convicted to a jail on the charge of a murder. On his bail, not just she feels ecstatic (mobile conversation), also, she demands of a 21 inches television with a stand. Consumptive nature of these relationships is evident through her conversation described in situation 2. Asking for things of basic necessities and for conspicuous consumption from their *giryaa(s)* is very common. The things of basic necessity for many may be for conspicuous consumption for others. Likewise, in this excerpt, make up (which to many is for conspicuous consumption) is a necessity for Kulsum and Billo. The expenditures, however, on celebrations (*saalgirah*) are necessary to be backed. For that Billo needs money, this cannot be backed by the monthly income of a recently bailed out (but convicted) *giryaa*. For economic and social survival she chooses to earn through prostitution, though being married to a *giryaa*.

Dichotomy of love and money: Money supersedes Love

Nargis (scene 3), a *nirbaan khusra* from *Kot Radha Kishan*, is exceptionally feminine looking and therefore very famous in the community and among *chaamkay*. She fell in love with a policeman who she recalls treated her like a commodity. After being emotionally disheartened and psychologically upheaved with the break up with her violent and abusive *giryaa*, she decided to take revenge from men by manipulating their feelings to extract as much money as she can. When asked how she does that, she replied:

Nargis: They fall for us *na*. . . . Love is intoxicating and we emulate women so masterfully that they are left with no other option, to their increasing interests we demand expensive things like TV, cable, clothes, food from places we always wished to dine from but couldn't afford, then jewellery, bills, rents, all of that you know. Only after satisfying us they get satisfaction. Are you getting what I am saying?⁷¹

Interviewer: I think I am.

⁷¹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Nargis: I tell you, extract [*kadao*] first then show yourself to him, got it now?

Interviewer: Yes.

Nargis: And once satisfied they get disinterested. They want someone else. Then fights, arguments, battering, followed by separation, heart break, and finally new search, new man and new life. Money is more important in this field because they [*giryas*] are not dependable; they cannot be trusted for life long commitment. Not their fault, men are like that.

Her ‘new search’ is visible in scene 3 where she is trying to cash on budding interest of a potential *giryas*, who she met a night before at a private function, towards her. She is willing to meet him only after he provides her with mobile balance. The exchange of intimacy for materialistic things becomes organic to their lives characterized by loneliness, insecurity, and rejection. Hence commoditization of romance is a tried and tested strategy for most to fill emotional lacunas in their lives and more significantly to meet their money-related needs and wants.

Similar views were shared by others:

Resham: If I have to fake love I will. I have done many times. Faking love is fun, fooling men is a great fun, the ones who feed us, the ones who pay our room rents. I have one who is responsible for paying utility bills, another for makeup and another one for kitchen stuff, wheat, sugar, milk, the staples. We make these men run crazy for us, the ones who are poor [*phukarh*] we throw shoes at them. I love money, I sell everything I got by pricing [my] every gesture. Dance for money, love for money, adorn myself for money. I am not afraid in telling you the ugliness of our lives.⁷²

An extract from focus group⁷³

Pooja: What is the use of love in these times! If there is love then there should be money as well. Dear [*janu*], love cannot fill an empty stomach. Can love alone do any good to anyone? Look, in this line you are insulted, you have to showcase yourself, show your body, sleep with countless men, “Look I have this, I have that, and how lovely do I look! How feminine my parts are!” then at the end you get nothing out of it--. What is the use if no money? I need money without it I cannot feed my self, my family, my *guru*. Money is essential *na*. Love comes with

⁷² Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Pirwadahi*

⁷³ *Kot Radha Kishan*, October 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

responsibilities, no use of empty love every need has to be fulfilled, if men cannot then don't claim of being my husband, my friend, my *giryaa*. >Just come and go just like< [*>aam logaan di tarha a jistarah<*]

Moderator: Spectators [*tamashbeen*]?

Pooja: EXACTLY spectators [*tamashbeen*], but they are wealthy, the ones I am talking about are *phaku* the empty pockets. They cannot survive with us, cannot afford us, we don't like them. With unmet demands they are of no use to us, no love without money, THAT'S IT.

Misbah: Love, I feel like-- I think love is not a bad option if a man is really good looking, the one who our hearts like the most--. The most we can do is to have him invited to our *dera* for few days, not more than ten days, after which the time for the new one has arrived *na*. And why should we be subservient to any man? I don't like going mad. For what? For a man! I believe in one thing COME THEN GO. I am in love with money not with men.

Moderator: And what about you Arzoo?

Kashish: What is she talking about sitting inside our home? [*ay ki kalamaan bajan ayee saday ghaar?*]

((Laughs))

Moderator: Tell me please, since you have been in a relationship for fifteen years and he helps you too/

Zeenat: /Yes he does.

Moderator: So for instance, tomorrow, if he cannot support you financially what would you do? Will you leave him, stay with him or/

Zeenat: /Definitely, I will have another friend then/ [*zahir hai agay fir koe or dost banna laiwan gi*]

Kashish: /HAE ALLAH, GO AWAY [HAE ALLAH, JAA WAY].

Zeenat: If he will not look after me then obviously I will leave him to be with another one. They leave us, betray us, they can never be sincere. . . . If he leaves me today then I don't want to die of hunger tomorrow.

Nargis: We have ruined our lives; we can never be a man again. They are thirsty for beauty, for bodies, they dispose after using us. They go after another one. We, too, find another one.

Moderator: Has it ever happened that anyone of you has found someone that you never urged to find another?

Kashish: That we cannot, even if we want to. We cannot because we have to earn. They go to their homes after using us, they go to their parents, to their wives, to their children, at nights they sleep with their children and we here alone. For how long can we afford to cry for them! We cannot keep going like this. We have to leave one and grab another one; it becomes our need for survival.

Resham's and Nargis's take on such relationships is more instrumental and less emotional. '...dispose after using us...', and '...pricing [my] every gesture...' are indicative of the sexualization and objectification of bodies. Zeenat's comment of leaving her *giryā* husband if he fails to fund her expenditures in future, too, represents that relationships which were once cherished for utter commitment and genuine feelings have become a mere survival option. Kashish's prompt response (*Hae Allah*, go away) to Zeenat may, at first, be misjudged as her dissent. But soon she provides an explanation of their choices by bringing in the comparison of their and their *giryā*'s lives, '...they go to their homes after using...we here alone...' explains the innate relational imbalances between lives of a *giryā* and a *zenana/khusra* with the former (in most cases) already having a family life and later with only option of a *giryā* as her only emotional and financial strength. Pooja's explanation of differences between a *tamashbeen* and a *giryā* is also reflected in this discussion. *Tamashbeen* (sometimes also referred by the respondents as *chaamkay*) are regular/new or permanent/temporary clients who are with *zenana/khusra* just for entertainment (*tamashbeeni*), there is a classification of *tamasbeen* within the community according to their money, and the least favorite is the *phaku* who seeks to be entertained without spending. *Giryā* on the other hand is the most desirable: the one who looks great and willing to spend humungous. Reema explains her criteria while selecting a *giryā*:

Reema: Yes we do have our choice, our criteria. First he should be neat, clean, and educated. Second he has to be rich. We try to get our hands down to those with the most money, bank balance, and business. He must be good looking too. He must belong to a sound family. No matter how we look like and what we are, we want the best for ourselves. These are our likings, our preferences, our wishes, and our criteria.⁷⁴

Dichotomy of love and money: Love supersedes money

Seemi: Usually money is more important but there is someone with whom love becomes more important, with whom money becomes quite miniscule a consideration. Only when we fall for someone special we can bear their expenses. Not just money we buy clothes, perfumes, and other gifts for them. We love them.⁷⁵

Seemi believes in 'playing a gamble' by falling in real love multiple number of times. She was madly in love with her former *giryā* who used to beat her black and blue and used to have

⁷⁴ City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

⁷⁵ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Zenana Market*

coerced intercourse (*thorda*) with her accusing her of unfaithfulness. He used to condition her according to his likings. He didn't allow her to meet man unknown to him. He ordered her to stay away from *zenana sahelian* which to her was (as she expresses) 'petrifying' and 'claustrophobic'. One day he beat her because she went to market against his will. He compelled her to home, took out an iron rod and hit hard on her leg. '... [one time hand clapping] my daughter I couldnot stand on my feet for days. I took him to police station he begged me for forgiveness, so much hoopla (*barhi gal baat hue*) thankfully I got rid of him.' Upon knowing her decision of leaving him, he tried to kill her. He, with pistol in his hands, ran after her. Seemi took refugee in one of her friend's *dera*. She immediately called the entire *jaddi pushti guru* (ancestral *guru*), *deray dar* (senior *guru*), and her own *guru*. He along with his father and family were called in the *panchayat* (a local informal/formal institution of social control headed by the seniors of the village) where they promised of causing no future turbulence. After going through all, she still misses him. Every so often, she recalls the ways he used to look after her giving her monthly amounts for *dera* expenditures, buying her clothes, scarves, and shoes, handing over additional money for shopping, drinks, and food. But this material exchange wasn't one sided, rather there existed a mutual reciprocity between the two. '... sometimes he used to run short of cash, even I used to give him some, we used to take care of each other's needs...', she replied when asked about importance of money in *zenana/girya* relationship. To her love and 'respect towards her *dera* life' were important than any material advantage.

Kulsum: *Sonu* heart was important *na*. Yes, *sonu* love is more important *na*, whether it [money] comes or doesn't [we] don't mind. [pause] Money can be earned *na*, relationships cannot be.⁷⁶

Kulsum, a *zenana guru* to five *chellas* from Rawalpindi, is respected because of her seniority. She had been in serious relationships with two men in her life. The last relationship she was in was seven years ago, after that she had not fallen for any man. She stayed with him for twelve years. His family wanted to marry him off to a woman, much to his dissent she, still, managed to convince him for marriage. Since then she hasn't remained in contact with him. At times, she feels heart broken. Often, most during our late night conversations, she talked at length about her first meeting with him in *Manga Mandi*, near *Raiwind*. She was the one who first showed interest

⁷⁶ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Raja Sultan Market*

in him, after first two meetings he, too, started romantically advancing towards her. Upon foreseeing his advances, she responded with similar warmth, ‘... I used to watch him without an eye blink. He used to come to meet me, I used to watch him for hours with love then he got some signals you know that he is... you are getting *na*... then he also realized of his feelings for me... [he was] just a year older to me, we both were going through similar bodily changes [and] feelings, easily we fell in love.’ Soon they got physically involved with each other. He was responsible towards her needs (physical, financial, and emotional). He used to send money orders to her family when she couldn’t earn enough due to dearth of functions. Once she said that they got into physical relationship a lot before money exchange, ‘... the responsibilities, the loyalties, the support, the insecurities, the jealousies, the heartbreaks, the break up, all this happened much later.’ She reminds that he never asked for any undue favors from her, she felt comfortable with him unlike with other men who had ulterior motives. She considerably cut down on number of *tamashbeen* for *pann* after his *giryā* entered her life. She didn’t find any reason to prostitute as most of her needs were being met, and more importantly she felt a committed bond with him which she never wanted to end. She married him off to another girl. Since then she has been active in *dera* life. She has been earning through prostitution as well, she considers *pann* as the only occupational option left for a *wahshiya* (prostitute). She, now, considers love ‘uncontrollable’ but ‘heartbreaking’.

Munni: Honestly I love him a lot. I don’t love his money much that I told him about when we started seeing each other. He is very rich though. I told him a lot earlier, “I didn’t fall due to money. I love your beautiful face, neither your property nor your money, I love you only.”⁷⁷

Munni, a fiesty *zenana* from Rawalpindi, earns mostly through *dhinga*. She had been in a relationship with a man for nine years. For an extensive period of her relationship, Munni stayed with her *giryā* at his house in Lahore. Now, since she has moved to Rawalpindi, he meets her in Islamabad at five star hotels. She met him at a private function in Rawalpindi, where she was supposed to dance but since she couldn’t dance well, she stood in the corner of the room. He noticed and felt an instant connection with her. He wrote his landline number on a hundred rupee note and handed over to her. She called her the next day followed by meetings. Soon they

⁷⁷ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Dhoke Chaudrian*

realized love for each other and she moved into his house. He bought her a separate flat in Lahore. Heartbroken by the news of his marriage she left him. He still managed to stay in contact with her. Munni, in the mean while, got involved with another man but soon realized that he was a fraud. ‘... He was, what to tell you *Janat*, this world forget it, driven by selfishness, people here change like seasons, when new, they will promise of long term commitment... and when needs met ‘who are you? Do I know you?’ people here are like this. I don’t have interest in anyone anymore. Those who run after money do it all... the first one (first *girya*) had never done this to me he is very committed to me even I have never hesitated to spend huge money on him.’ She buys her expensive clothes and perfumes. He, also, meets her *dera* related needs and sends monthly pocket money. For Munni, money was and still is not the only reason to be with him.

An extract from interview with Raheela⁷⁸

Interviewer: He takes care of you?

Raheela: Yes, he looks after me, takes care of my needs a lot.

Interviewer: Like money=

Raheela: =yes, money, room rent monthly, clothes, sometimes utility bills too.

Interviewer: Are money needs more important to you when compared with love for him?

Raheela: I am more into love with him. I don’t have lust for money. I earn myself. I look after him too. We both help each other out. [I] lend him money when needed, he always pays me back. Money is no longer a consideration factor. He is broke these days, [he] hasn’t given a single rupee for say six to eight months. I am trying to meet ends myself.

Pooja: She feeds him too [*ay we usnu khawandi ay*].

Interviewer: If he decides to come out of this relationship tomorrow?

Raheela: Yes he can go.

Interviewer: What about you?

Raheela: Not a problem/

⁷⁸ *Kot Radha Kishan*, October 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Shazia: /She will fall from balcony [*ay balcony tu chal maar deway gi*].

((Raheela to Shazia: >KARAY KARA NI MAMA<))

Raheela: He cannot leave me. He is part of my life.

Shazia: You feed him a lot [*aan kunda inna toon charhaya*]. Why would he leave you! You spend so much on him [*itna tey kunda diya keh ki chorhay ga tainu*].

Interviewer: *Kunda?*

Raheela: Food, money, looking after him, his food, clothes, all needs. He cannot leave me now, he had an option but he did not. He never will, neither he nor can I.

Raheela, a jovial *zenana* from *Kot Radha Kishan*, is living a husband/wife relationship with her *giryā* for the last ten years. Taxi driver by profession, he is from *Kot Radha Kishan* and a father to six children. Sana claims of being in true love with him. She describes him as ‘*kajal*’ of her eyes, ‘color’ of her lips, and a ‘crown’ of her head. He visits her quite often. Her friends often reveal that she spends whatever she manages to earn on him. They also share that in the evening when he sees customers coming then he disappears from the site to come back again when she gets free. Raheela, on the other hand, argues that *dhandha* is just one of the ways of earning, not the only way. She, unlike most others, thinks that dance performances can be more rewarding than *dhandha* as she can earn a thousand rupee by two dance performances than entertaining four men in an hour. She considers herself different from *mooraty* who opt to majorly earn through *dhandha* and do not get emotionally involved with anyone. Raheela plans to stay committed to her man and will trick other men for money though he doesn’t like her exposing and showcasing to unknown men. As much as she tries to hide from him, Raheela says that he gets to know from different sources about men coming to her place. She, still, manages to create a balance between her personal (love) and professional (*dera*) lives.

Raheela: Obviously, this is my field. I am running my business and will continue running it because clients will visit a prostitute’s brothel so my *kotha* will always be opened for them. [I] will keep on welcoming the new entrants and saying bye to the departing ones but he [*giryā*] will always be with me.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, October 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Love for zenana, money for girya

Rita: Love stays for a week, the next week we get to know that same *moorat* [*zenana*] is getting involved with another man and her ex getting involved with her *saheli*. Money talks more than anything. With more love comes more money. Having said that few of my friends got so much involved with their *giryas* that they gave up their lives, those were foolish, they thought their men would marry them but they were involved with other *zenanas*, with other *mooratay*. This is unacceptable to us, we can share our men with women because we cannot substitute a woman but we cannot tolerate being substituted by another *zenana*. Upon knowing their *giryas*'s unfaithfulness few dancers took poison, one of my friends cut her wrist and one burnt herself. In these times a *giryas* eats *zenana*'s money. You will find one in hundred who will look after his *zenana* without any interests, who will pay her rents, who will send monthly money order to her family, who will buy her things, Very, very, very few. But I don't entirely blame men for this, *mooratay* are equally culpable. *Zenanay* let *giryas* have their money, they can be fooled easily, not all but many of them. When a *giryas* observes that her *zenana* has earned well from a function, he comes up with his demands, "Oh dear! Please lend me twenty five thousand I have to repair my car, give me ten thousand my son is hospitalized, your *bhabhi* wants to shop some clothes. . . [I] need more money as I have to contribute somewhere, I am running short on this month's committee, your money is mine my money is yours so let us share. My friend's father has passed away, I need some for charity, I have to go to a *jumarat*." If we share a husband-wife relationship with them then they should reciprocate with us the way we do to them like responsible husbands they must return the amounts which while taking they promised us to return back. >One month, two months, three months, no money< It is not about money, it is about trust which once broken can never be mended. Love was important when I was immature but now i know that this entire love thing is delusional. It is non existent, they fake love to us then get married to a pious girl selected by their parents, then come to us for sexual gratification, how can they be ours? Now I use them the way they use me. We don't listen to our families, we leave them behind us, embrace this life, fall in love, ruin our lives for love but when start dying of hunger we realize we are alone. The people who claimed of moons and stars noone is there for us then we do what we think is best in our interest. I know many *giryas* who live on the earnings of their *khusray*. Whole day they beg at roads and feed whatever earned to their *giryas*.⁸⁰

Rita's views divulge some important issues: the group jealousy existing amongst *zenanas/khusras* about potential *giryas*(s); the strategies applied by men to get hold over material entitlements, and the quest to be loved by men without material interests. Qaseeda, too, discusses the conflicts within the community regarding men by referring to fights amongst 'girls' when their men are tacitly attracted by their *saheliyan*. They fight with each other when their *giryas* husbands go to other *zenanay* to unburden sexual urges. 'Why did you hook up (*phumarh laya*) with my *giryas*? Why did you go to meet him? What your intentions are? What exactly are you up

⁸⁰ Rawalpindi, February 2014, *Pirwadahai*

to?’ she explains to describe the severity of situations when two *zenanay* confront. Kajal, also, expounds ‘jealousy’ and ‘insecurity’ as the reason for break up with her *giryaa*. Her own *guraee* betrayed her and got involved in a physical relationship with her man. Her friends envied her for having such a giving and good looking *giryaa*. They felt insecure of not having such a man in their lives and jealous of Kajal of having one. As a retaliation, Kajal faked involvement with other men, and flaunted her relationship in front of ex *giryaa* to make him feel jealous (*wah wah cheesi kaarni aan me fir.*). Also, she took revenge from her *saheli* by luring her *saheli’s giryaa* towards herself. Kajal made her feel jealous by narrating, on her face, the stories of how well her *saheli’s giryaa* treated her and how lavishly he spent on her.

Yasmeen, a trained dancer from Mansehra, has been in love with a man (father to four) for three years. She met him at a private function in Mardaan. She was a young adolescent back then and he was married with three children. She shared that he first expressed love towards her; she got entrapped in his web which she realized, much later, that he didn’t love her, he was after her money. Often during my fieldwork I heard she fighting (over phone) with her *giryaa* in Pashto language, the meanings of which were conveyed to me by her close *saheli* Sunny. The fights were usually over money related matters. As described by Rita, Yasmeen’s *giryaa* applies tactics to extract money from her by fabricating stories of being ‘broke’ and ‘helpless’. Yasmeen, as she expresses, is in ‘true love’ with him, she claims to have never asked for any material advantage from him. Her friend shares that he pays visit to Mansehra every month to collect money from her. She claims to have eaten Yasmeen’s seven to eight lac rupees in three years. Quite often she has promised her *guraee* to leave him but couldn’t live up to her promises. Her *saheliyan* have eyewitnessed her screaming loud in pain, slamming head against a wall, trying to cut and burn wrists when he doesn’t attend her calls or when he cannot take out time to meet her. She feels helpless and can never think of leaving him ever, ‘this heart is a crazy little thing that God has made... first it is indifferent towards an admirer, then it gets attracted towards that admirer and finally it becomes greedy... it eats the heck out of the person who loves genuinely. What I mean to say is that i spent every single rupee i earned on him, name anything i had not bought him, I agreed to do everything with him and still he remains unsatisfied.’

A relatively young entrant to Nargis's *dera* in *Kot Radha Kishan* is Kajal. She is in love with a man who is more interested in physical than emotional relationship with her. She claims to have gifted more presents to him than he had. She suffers from depression when after spending nights with her he pretends, next mornings, as if nothing had happened. She still expects of better future with him and wants to give him some time to realize her importance in his life. Her *saheliyan*, on the other hand, thinks that he will soon stop visiting her as he is after her 'body' than 'soul'. They also conclude that once she grows older, he will forget her. Occasionally, he brings her some items of household use but she, despite low earning, buys him expensive shirts and perfumes. '... he can meet my financial needs if he wants to. He is very rich, if he is in love with me only then he can do anything for me. If he asks me for one lac rupees today I will manage to arrange for him come what may. Even if I have to auction my expensive household items, I will. What for? Just for my love of him. This is the difference between him and me, the difference of the kind of love.'

Zenanas/khusras as agentic and strategists

Scene 1: Vigorously striking her palms against each other and screamingly calling her *saheliyan* to push her *girya* out of *dera*, Qaseeda, at once, looked ferocious and vulnerable. Few arrived within a minute or two encircling him around and palm clapping painfully loud. That scene seemed to have numbed his senses. With immense difficulty he recuperated from the state of trance, running towards the door, trying to escape, calling her with names and cursing.⁸¹

Scene 2: "Please Jannat, stand outside the door and knock when he arrives." As per her request I stood outside the door waiting for her to be finished with whatever she was up to inside the room. She was out in a minute or two murmuring in anger, "He thinks I am a fool that I will never get to know his mobile number again. Here is his contact number and a list of his friend's mobile numbers." Handing over his cell phone to me, "Please give it to him and don't tell him that it was with me."⁸²

⁸¹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

⁸² *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

Scene 3: Holding his hands in her own hands she replied, “I will never do it again *janu* but promise that you will shower me with money tomorrow. Look! I have bet my *guraee* that you will be the most generous of all and if you won’t then I will kill you. ((*raising her left eye brow*)) I will call your first [wife] to inform her about second [wife].”⁸³

Scene 4: “I think you have forgotten what happened last time, I will call *panchaiyat*, your family, everyone if you do it again.” To Munni, “You are a *zenana*, you can do nothing.” To her *giryaa*, “As if this *zenana* was unsuccessful last time.”⁸⁴

Scene 1 is an example of collectivity and togetherness indicating that if a community member is in need then other members will come to rescue. Qaseeda’s *giryaa* was at her *dera* accusing her of promiscuity and calling her with names. Qaseeda, being a devoted wife to him, couldn’t sustain her husband holding false accusations against her. In her anger she called her *khusra* friends to push him out of the *dera*. Usually three time palm clapping is interpreted as an expression of anger, disapproval, and abhorrence. The sound of clapping and the continuous beating can be uncomfortable to many. Her *giryaa* marginally escaped from the wrath of a group of *khusra*. After he escaped, the group laughed over his cowardice. This example is an illustration of the fact that agency can be created still being disempowered. The community which has to survive in the atmospherics of violence, abuse, and seclusion can scare a man with palm clapping which is considered to be a very ‘unmanly’ expression and mostly ridiculed and made fun of. Scene 2 is from Nargis’s *dera* where her *chella* Kajal grabbed his *giryaa*’s cell phone who dropped by to meet her. Every time when he pays a visit, he deletes his cell number from Kajal’s cell phone so that she couldn’t disturb him through missed calls and text messages. This time she already designed a strategy to keep a record of contact numbers of him and his friends without letting him know (illustrated in scene 2). Scene 3 is observed from a *saalgirah* party where a *khusra* called Humaira warned her *giryaa* of disclosing to his first wife about his *giryaa*’s second marriage (which he kept a secret from first wife) if he doesn’t generously throw money on her dance

⁸³ Rawalpindi, January 2015, *Saalgirah* at a marriage hall.

⁸⁴ Rawalpindi, December 2014, The researcher was not physically present at the locale to directly observe this scene; the scene was narrated by the key informant (another *zenana*). December 2014 is the time frame of narration of the event to the researcher, not of the actual event in this case.

performances in the coming function. Scene 4 was narrated to me by Munni's close friend Gudiya. This argument took place during my break from fieldwork though Munni narrated to me the background during my initial research. Munni is close to her *giryas*' first wife. Her man hid his second marriage from first wife and Munni. Munni guessed his changed behavior towards her and his hesitation to take her along to Lahore. After few months when she was in Lahore, she chased his car to some house where she caught him with his second wife red-handed. She informed his wife, and family. They got rid of his second wife who turned out to be a money extortionist. Munni, after this incident, tried maintaining distance from him but surrendered to her heart after few months. '... As if this *zenana* was unsuccessful last time.' is a reference to this background. Munni, now, uses this incident as a strategy against him whenever he tries to ignore her or denies of fulfilling his responsibilities towards his own family.

'We need a man': *Girya* as a guard against structural violence

Saeeda: Yes, for security. All get to know that there is a person closed to us, our boyfriend, otherwise everyone will try to hit on us openly, disregarding our resistances, tease us, force us, "She has no man, she is an easy target, *challo pay jao iss tay*." Without a friend there will be a queue of men outside [with] one making sexual innuendos, another showing money, third convincing us to get laid, forth dirty thief [*chindi chor*].⁸⁵

Reema: Most of us are raped [*ziaditi*]. They [road side rowdies] may catch us from roads. Slapping on our faces, five ten [men] raping us, misbehaving with us, bashing us after taking excessive alcohol, do bad worse worst whatever to us. For this reason we keep a permanent one [*giryas*] who is responsible for us, our well-being and security. We are deprived by the society, it doesn't let us live. Many are into prostitution because of helplessness so when she [*zenanay*] is out in the public without her husband, men may take undue advantage of her. Even when dressed as male, four [or] five drunkards will chase her, beat her, push her towards a motor cycle or a car pointing pistol towards her, forcing her to some deserted place. They will slap her, will pull her hair, will rape her and will leave her there all alone. Is this what you call a life? That is why we prefer to have a man with us.⁸⁶

Pooja: At times they [*tamashbeen*] force us to go with them after functions. Sometimes they forcefully pick us up to abuse us. But they do *tamashbeeni*, spend lavishly on our dance performances, usually after functions we are offered to get laid with them. The safer option is to succumb to their offers or escape from place tacitly or learn to trick them

⁸⁵ Mansehra, November 2014, *Kohistanabad Mohallah in Kashmiri Bazar*

⁸⁶ City Kasur, October 2014, *Haji Fareed Road*

and decline offer tactfully. If they agree you are lucky, if they don't [then] don't agitate them, just go. It is the only option.⁸⁷

Deedar: They don't beat us but they roughly drag us towards them, make us sit on their laps with force, kiss us without our consents but we cannot stop them. We try to endure it, we wait for the remaining time to finish, one hour, half an hour, we try to leave as soon as function comes to an end. Our *giryas* are with us NO PROBLEM, NO TENSION.⁸⁸

Sassi: Yes, open fires just for enjoyment. Can you believe there are some places-- I am telling you I went to perform at a private function with my *guru* to *Kangan Pur*, some place in the outskirts of that village. They [*tamashbeen*] were all drunk so much so that they started open firing, more alcohol more firing, more firing more alcohol, they paid us generously though, but it was perhaps my scariest night at the functions. I was so scared, I got tired, and could not take a break. I fear I could get killed if I stopped. I did not want them to rage at me. After the function, we packed up and hardly reached taxi that they snatched car keys. They wanted us to dance even more they said, "We wouldn't let you go." We danced for another hour; [we] were left with no other option. With great difficulty I found a man [ex *giryas*] amongst spectators through his help we managed to get out. He helped in arranging a rent car for us.⁸⁹

Apart from meeting money related needs and filling in emotional spaces, a *giryas* is also important as security against violence structured and institutionalized against *zenana/khusra*. '... *challo pay jao iss tay*.' in Saeeda's conversation can convey different connotations, but in this context her intent was to imply readiness of men to make violent sexual advances towards a *zenana/khusra* without a male foreman (in this case a *giryas*). The men making such advances can be from any socioeconomic background ranging from a rich man to a dirty thief (as described by Saeeda). Reema provides a more uninhibited background explanation of importance of *giryas* in a *zenana's* life. Most of the respondents have been sexually abused/raped in their lives. To rapists, the act is the display of 'power', 'masculinity', and 'fun' (shared by the respondents). *Zenanas/khusras* (again shared by the respondents) are raped because of their 'femininity' and 'powerlessness', the reasons which the existing body of literature on sexual violence attributes to rape. Combination of physical and sexual violence or physical violence leading to sexual

⁸⁷ *Kot Radha Kishan*, January 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

⁸⁸ *Mansehra*, November 2014, *Babu Building* along *Abottabad Road*

⁸⁹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, February 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

violence is again a dimension described by Reema and found in the literature on rape. Reema, hence, explains the importance of a man as a ‘need’ more than a ‘want’ in her life. Her conversation builds an atmosphere of fear, oppression, male dominance, and power hierarchy explaining that at the backdrop of such an atmosphere, presence of a *giryā* (a masculine man) in a *zenana*’s life can protect her from a rapist (another masculine man). Pooja and Deedar provide a situational analysis to the issue of sexual abuse. Both take performances at private or marriage functions as the events and male conduct towards *zenana/khusra* during and after the dance shows as the situation. Pooja shares with her personal experiences that consenting to the multiple sexual offers from *tamashbeen* is an option safer than showing resistance and getting raped in the end. Deedar is more tactful and puts up with her alcoholic *tamashbeen* in terms of allowing them to show intimacy but tries to escape after having collected money once the show is over. Usually they take their *giryā(s)* along for their safety. Sassi signifies importance of man with an instance of one of her ex *giryās* saving her from the violent and insensitive male audience. Open firing by men as an expression of liberty and masculinity was mentioned in Qaseeda’s interview as well where she explained one of her most dear and beautiful *guraee* died as a result of misfired shot at her heart.

Kulsum: Half of my life is spent, [i] don’t know how long I will live. Most of the days in extreme sorrow, few of them in sheer joy, very fond and precious memories of the past but most plagued with fear and sorrow. One day on this road, the other day on that road, surviving for what? For food? For money? “*Zenana ay, khusra ay, go away, you are nobody to us*”, family doesn’t want to be associated, hate us, disown us. I don’t remember when I was happy last time and what is there to be happy about? A policeman will come, bruise us with knives, beat us with rods, our *saheliyan* will condole us then what! We will start cracking jokes. Is this you call happiness? To hell with it! Police, rowdies coming in, dragging us through coarse roads, [we] bare footed, half dressed, half naked. One through anal [*vatal*], second from vagina [*chapti*⁹⁰], third into hands. . . . What a person goes through when fifteen men are forcing at a time! Just think of it. Ask a woman with whom two men do at a time, she cannot get off her bed for days and when the part of a body [anus] is not meant to be used [for intercourse] is forcibly used by fifteen men then you are smart enough to think what happens to it. Maqsood [her *giryā*] used to accompany me to places, now I am alone and I feel scared. It is a hard life.⁹¹

⁹⁰ A hole which appears after castration

⁹¹ Rawalpindi, October 2014, *Dhoke Chaudrian*

Kulsum, too, towards the end of her conversation, remembers her only *giryā* with whom she felt comfortable going outside. The extreme display of sexual violence by *dhangor* or *khawar* (police men) was not just observed in Kulsum's interview. Shamshad, other than explaining her violent clients beating and raping her, brings in involvement of police in money extortion and forcing for free sexual (penetrative and insertive) favors. She shares that police men order them to take men to jungles so that they can catch them and extort money out of the clients. She calls police 'the real culprits' as opposed to *mooratay* and *khusray* who are accused for such crimes though she confesses that she earns some money (only two or three hundred rupees out of a ten thousand rupees deal between a client and police men) for her services and police extorts the massive chunks.

An extract from Raheela's in-depth interview⁹²

Interviewer: Have you ever been abused?

Raheela: Yes I was, happens to me even today. After functions and *melas* they coerce me to intercourse and rape me. Sometimes two or three men, sometimes even more. At times, with my consent, most of the times coerced. After raping me they leave me all alone on my own in dark cringy horrifying nights.

Interviewer: Do they pay?

Raheela: Those who rape don't pay. They snatch whatever we have with us, money, our mobiles, our jewellery, anything they can, they want to have. We cannot retaliate they are greater in number, powerful than us and very brutal.

Interviewer: You said something about consent in intercourse, can you please explain when do you consent to intercourse at functions?

Raheela: *Dhandha* becomes our need. [pause] Sometimes we have to give in because invitees deny of payments for dance performances unless we sleep with them. We are left with the option of either getting raped for money or getting paid for giving in consensually.

Interviewer: ((*Gasp*))

Raheela: You look quite upset.

Interviewer: No, I am not. Just trying to absorb what you have told me just now.

Raheela: You, coming from that part of the world, have every right to judge me for the choices I have to make and I don't have the right to think of my survival when I know my body can be ripped apart by these monsters. Yes, I consent for sex because I fear of being brutally killed, everybody criticizes our consent nobody looks beyond it, and nobody realizes of our dissent in our consent, you know what I mean *shoormiyay*=

Interviewer: =I know *shoormi*.

⁹² Kot Radha Kishan, October 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

An extract from Kajal's in-depth interview⁹³

Kajal: Do it politely *na*, try to act as if you are tired, convince him [*tamashbeen*] that you will not be satisfactory. He may get mad, he may call other men in rage, and you will be raped not just by him by other men as well. I am not lying, there have been times when I had to make compromises, yes I have done it all but I was helpless many times. I declined in the beginning-- When I was new to the *dera* I got raped by a gang; it is common it happens a lot. Tricks, tactics, excuses will not work if it is in my fate to be abused. It happened to me twice. What a person can do at that time? They are twenty in number and I am alone! I cannot do anything to stop them, one will not rape, the second will commiserate, may be the third realizes of his ill intentions, but what about the rest? You tell me if you get trapped by violent men, they take you to some deserted place, you fear to be killed, insulted, abused, raped, ripped, or whatever worse you can think of what will you do then? I think your bravery will be in tolerating their atrocities [and] in maintaining complete silence to their ill doings.

Interviewer: You survived by tolerating and staying quiet?

Kajal: Yes, what other option I had?

Interviewer: And the after affects?

Kajal: [I] was very disturbed for days. It was worse the physical pain, swelling, bleeding, couldn't walk for 2 days, mostly at bed, passing stool was another issue, at that time I said to myself, "Wellcome to this filth." Then I refrained from going to *melas* organized by unknown persons, only to those [functions] where we were aware of organizers. I never went back to that place after that incident. *Sarakpur* near *Shekhupura* will never forget that place. Fear of physical and sexual abuse is always there but after being abused we fear of being killed. Some people in order to remove our identity kill after raping us, it happened to few of my friends [*saheliyan*], to my friend's friends [*saheli diya sahelian*] as well. They fear that we may drag them to the police station, we may defame them, we may lodge FIR against them so they kill. It is common; killing in deserted places is very common. Few kill saying, "Now they are used, no more of use to anyone else, get rid of them." I don't remember where they threw me after abuse. One of them was kind. I begged him, and he convinced others that I was innocent, that I was their brother, STILL THEY DIDN'T STOP.

⁹³ *Kot Radha Kishan*, October 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

CHAPTER 10

LOVE, MONEY AND AT-RISK BEHAVIORS

This chapter explains at-risk behaviors through two focus groups with one focussing on the risky sexual practices/sexual behaviors in the context of love-based *zenana* and *giryā* relationship and another focussing on the risky sexual behaviors due to prostitution.

Focus group in *Kot Radha Kishan*⁹⁴

Moderator: What about protection [*ehitiyaat*]? Condom?

Queen: We are watchful regarding that, for example we clean ourselves specially after getting laid so that nothing is left inside and we don't catch a disease.

Sassi: Madam Shama⁹⁵ handed over a packet of condoms to us.

Moderator: What with *giryā*? Do you use condoms with him?

Queen: Not with him. How can we? With love no protection [*ehitiyaat*].

Moderator: Are you sure that he won't be having relations with others?

Queen: We are very watchful [*assi dhayaan rakhdi aan*]. We prefer untouched men [*koray mard dai kol jaani aan*]. The one who is always with us not with anyone else.

Moderator: How do you get to know this?

Seemi: Listen to me, I will tell you dear when I know that my *saheli* is in love with a man, that man is a brother to us. He is our *laala*, if we find her man with anyone else we will let her know. We get to know about our men, our network is very strong. All of us the *zenanay khusray moortay* are very well connected.

Queen: I judge through his whereabouts like if you are my *giryā*, you live in my city. I know very well where are you, where aren't you. We check by ringing missed calls on his number time and again through which we get to know whether he is married or unmarried. . . . [We] keep an eye on his mobile during his stayovers with us, check a

⁹⁴ October 2014, *Handaal Chowk*

⁹⁵ A transgender activist in *Kot Radha Kishan*

list of saved mobile numbers, check the dialed and missed call numbers, the duration of calls just to know that whether is there any other *zenana* or a girl in his life or not? Meanwhile, if he stays true to us, gives us monthly expenditure, then we stay with them. We won't criticize if they continue giving monthly ten thousand [rupees]. My man used to give me a lot before now he doesn't, then I get laid for money. It's the truth I don't tell a lie. We rarely get a chance to meet up; I manage to get monthly expenditure from him whenever he comes over. He knows all my secrets, I know his all. Our relationship is getting older; it is no more what it once used to be.

Seemi: What else can we do? We are helpless; helplessness propels us to do many undesirable things in life. We will quit it if [we] have enough money, till that *giryas* and *panns* are my options for survival.

This focus group comprehensively covers important research domains of risky sexual practices among *zenanas/khusras*, their proclivities towards at-risk sexual behaviors due to emotional proximities, helplessness as an explanation of unprotected intercourse, and the highly contextualized explanations of getting assured that *giryas* is(are) not promiscuous. Similar themes were generated from focus groups of Rawalpindi and Kasur. The inclusion of this excerpt from one of focus groups conducted at *Kot Radha Kishan* is due to overarching themes covered in this focus group and the active participation of group members. Queen claims of using (not always though) condoms with clients. But as mentioned in the excerpt, that usage of protection with *giryas* is 'out of question'. '... With love no protection.' shows that with a *giryas* the trust, emotional attachment, and sexual intimacy increases the maximum likelihood of condomless intercourse which is not the case with clients. Most of the group members were amazed (and few offended) when I attempted to raise discussion on sex for money exchange with a *giryas* the reason being that such exchanges are with *chaamkay* and *tamashbeen* not with a *giryas*. If intercourse with a *giryas* is unprotected then important issue to address is the sexual practices of their *giryas*. Seemi claims to have never shown romantic or sexual penchant towards the *giryas* of other *zenanas/khusras* as she considers them her *laala* (brother). She further explains that the community's social grouping is very strong which enables them to stay well connected and informed about each other. Similar details were shared by the Rawalpindi respondents that they will get to know about their *giryas*'s whereabouts even when they are out of station. A *zenana/khusra* friend in Karachi, or in Peshawar or in any part of the country will give information to another *zenana/khusra* about her *giryas*. Queen, too, elaborates some strategies she applies to keep an eye on her *giryas* through monitoring a record and duration of dialed numbers from *giryas*'s cell phone. If she finds no such evidence of long calls, she is satisfied that her *giryas*

is not romantically and sexually involved with any other *zenana* or a woman. But she doesn't 'criticize' on his one-off sexual links with other female and male/transgender prostitutes as long as he provides her with money to meet monthly expenditures. Towards the end of her part she shows sign of distress and fear of losing him on account of her relationship with her *giryas* becoming 'old', which brings Seemi, again, to take part in the discussion. She finds herself helpless in not quitting on *pann* and hence getting into multiple sexual links not just with multiple *chaamkay* but with multiple *giryas* also. With *chaamkay* she extracts more using her sexuality and with *giryas* faking romance. *Zenanay/khusray* being in unsafe sexual links with *giryas* and *chaamkay* and then *giryas* being in unsafe sexual links not just with their *zenanay* wives but also with other female and male-to-female prostitutes create a highly susceptible socio-sexual environment from where carrying and passing on STIs⁹⁶ or HIV/AIDS can be high. Most of the *giryas* are married, unburdening compulsive sexual urges from various sexual outlets and then practising unsafe intercourse with their wives brings the families of *giryas* into the at-risk groups of acquiring and transmitting infection.

Focus group in Mansehra⁹⁷

Moderator: So, you don't work as street prostitutes?

Resham: No, no, no [*na, na, na*], We have these *deras*, we live here, pay rents, and we use condoms too.

Moderator: Okay so NGOs distribute condoms here, right?

Resham: Yes, the NGO people come with packets for us to use as protection. When we get in physical contact with anyone they instruct us to use condoms and use lotions.

Moderator: So clients agree to using condoms?

Resham: We try to, but it up to their wish.

Shamshad: Mostly visit us for intercourse without it [condom]. We can't do anything except accepting their demands. I know if I disagree he will go to her *dera* ((*pointing towards Nadira*)) at a one or two minute walking distance. He will offer to pay her more for condomless sex and she will agree. My loss will be her gain.

⁹⁶ Sexually Transmitted Infections

⁹⁷ November 2014, *Kohistanabad Mohallah* near *Butt Pull*

Moderator: But there is a risk in condomless intercourse.

Resham: I don't think there is any harm in it.

Moderator: There is, don't you know?

Resham: I know there is, no surety to how many people he has been in contact before coming to us/

Shamshad: /and he is unsure
to how many men we get laid to for money.

Resham: These are just talks, heavy talks. I have been here since my childhood doing *pann* for more than ten years. I have not seen anyone acquiring AIDS. Nothing happens to anyone.

Moderator: Till date?

Resham: I understand you are saying that a lot can happen to us. It should be understood [*samjahan ali gal hai*] that nothing had happened does not mean that it will never happen. A lot can happen; we can catch hundreds of diseases but we don't understand, don't want to understand it. We deny it.

Sunny: What should we care more for? An empty stomach or the fear of death by AIDS! What worse can happen to us? [We have] gone through so much that if caught with AIDS will fight it back. If not, then atleast will endure it.

Resham: And what we do is to get money, get the work done. Despite knowing we don't want to think of getting infected with disease or anything like that.

Moderator: Has anything happened to any one like bleeding, itching, rash?

Resham: We don't do it regularly that it bleeds but these issues are known to us because I think each one of us has faced it, at least I have=

Moderator: =What exactly?

Resham: Bleeding for the first time. [I] was 13 then followed by rash and red scars around rectum, even today when I do it simultaneously three or four times it gets hurt and swollen.

Moderator: You understand how dangerous it can be?

Resham: Yes we know but nothing had happened, don't worry.

Moderator: You know all about it but nothing happens, right?

Resham: We take care na. It will not harm us.

Moderator: Don't entertain too many men?

Resham: Try not to, at least not one after the other, with some gap.

This excerpt elaborates a different set of issues including knowledge about at-risk sexual practices, health repercussions of such practices, and prostitution as a survival strategy. Shamshad, during this discussion, applies a more pragmatic approach to the issue of unsafe intercourse; she explains that unsafe intercourse is preferred over safe intercourse by the clients. She, also, elucidates that since in a community *deras* are closely located, therefore if she disagrees to unsafe intercourse, other *zenanay/khusray* will agree to it at a higher price. She calls herself losing out on a potential client as her 'loss' and her friend's 'gain' if her friend agrees to the same client's demand of unprotected intercourse. Sunny, despite being equipped with the knowledge and importance of health-related risks of unsafe intercourse, chooses 'filling her empty stomach' over 'dying with AIDS'. Sunny's major source of income is through prostitution which is not always rewarding. She thinks that she will lose most of her regular and irregular clients if she demands the necessary condition of condom usage. Losing out on clients is synonymous to the loss of already-low earnings. She prefers to risk her life over safe intercourse. Resham, the most vocal in this discussion, doesn't lack important information of HIV/AIDS related risky behaviors. Still, she wants to ignore what worse can possibly happen as a result of practicing unprotected anal and oral intercourse. In another part of the discussion she informs that most within the community prefer oral over anal intercourse especially with clients and with *girya* anal over oral intercourse.

Oral intercourse is 'quick' and less 'labor-intensive' than anal intercourse, hence preferred by the most *zenanay/khusray*. Her information is substantiated by the field observation as well when I observed, many a time, a *zenana* non-verbally informing another *zenana* about the client's preference through 'thumb-sucking' which is an indication of oral intercourse. Very few times I observed them informing through 'making scissors out of first and middle fingers' (indicating vaginal intercourse) and quite often with 'making a circle using first finger and thumb' (indicating anal intercourse). One *Khusra*, in Kasur, shared that she liked to be treated as a woman (vaginal intercourse- she is a *nirbaan*) by her *girya*: 'He like a man, me like a woman.' She finds unsafe intercourse with her *girya* fulfilling, complete and organic, just like a wife feels

towards her husband. However, with clients she offers oral and anal intercourse preferably condomless to fetch more money.

Violence, from both *giryas* and clients, is reported which usually results in rough unsafe anal intercourse. Local terms like ‘*thorda*’ (coerced nonconsensual sex), ‘*ganni put lae mere*’ (my anus has been ripped), ‘*watar/vatal paarh gaya*’ (he ripped my bottom), ‘*wah wah baja gaya*’ (he forcibly did with me) convey connotations of use of force and violence in the context of *giryas/zenanas* sexual/physical relationship. As a result of multiple forced or consensual sexual links, participants reported anal rash, itching or irritation around rectum, pain while passing stool, sometimes bleeding, and swelling, although nobody reported of being infected with HIV/AIDS or with Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). The health related issues mentioned above can make *zenanas/khusras* vulnerable towards syphilis and gonorrhoea (STIs) and prevalence of such infections towards HIV/AIDS. Resham, like other participants, tries to not to give in to many men too often, but succumbs to her life hardships making her forget the importance of safe intercourse, vulnerable to violent men, and emotionally dependent on a temporary *giryas* who fakes love to her money.

Most of the respondents in Rawalpindi, *Kot Radha Kishan*, and Mansehra were observed consuming charas before entertaining multiple clients one after the other. Low quality charas called *garda* is smoked by filling inside *chuski* [cigarettes] within the community. Excessive consumption of *garda* (*warma*: charas) coupled with alcohol makes *zenanas/khusras* losing control over their senses and eventually on the decision of having safe intercourse with clients. The reason for consuming *garda* in abundance before concurrent sexual contacts with clients is to minimize the physical pain and in few cases to ‘have more fun’. With *giryas(s)*, on the other hand, alcohol is consumed only. One of the important themes generated through interviews and discussions was the extent of command or independent say of *zenanas/khusras* in their relationship with *giryas(s)*. Few of the responses (from In-depth interviews and focus groups) are as follows:

Hina: Yes, we share equal relationship. I convince him on a couple of things. I have made him sell two of his cars [*charkhe*] and eaten all the money he got.⁹⁸

Seemi: OBVIOUSLY, he must listen to us. I recently convinced him to buy me a gold set for my *saalgirah*. What is his use if he cannot buy [*zenana*] wife a good set!⁹⁹

Reema: I try not to persuade him when he doesn't agree with me on things. I treat him with respect and love just like a devoted wife. I cook food for him, wash his clothes [*kotki*], massage his feet, sometimes helps him out on expenses, and then he is convinced.¹⁰⁰

Hina, proudly, shows off command over her *giryas*, others might not be as commanding as she is nevertheless most *zenanas/khusras* share equal status in relationship with their *giryas* husbands. Seemi finds it as her husband's responsibility to buy his wife a jewellery set for a coming function and she feels confident to get one from him. Reema, too, convinces her man on matters he doesn't agree to at first but agrees later on seeing his wife's devotion and care towards him. They convince their *giryas* to buy them expensive items, to give them monthly expenditures, to send their families money, to stay faithful with them, to accompany them to the functions, and to do domestic chores, then a question that remains unanswered is: Why they cannot convince their men to having safe intercourse? Literature on African female and feminized men and Latin American male-female transgender persons has raised similar issues. The existing scholarship highlights challenging the models of agency and empowerment by recognizing highly contextualized case-driven approach to the ways sexual minority groups create agency despite most living below poverty line and despite most being socially secluded and economically discriminated against. For *zenana/khusra* communities resource extraction from *giryas* is liberating and empowering. They can channel their ways to secure them emotionally and materially still jeopardizing themselves into health risks through unsafe intercourse with *giryas*. It is observed through this research that *zenanas/khusras* don't want to be in safe sexual links with their men the reasons being emotional connection, sexual fulfillment, financial security, and unsafe intercourse as an expression of commitment. Existing programmatic strategies to control

⁹⁸ Rawalpindi, October 2014, *Raja Sultan Market*

⁹⁹ *Kot Radha Kishan*, February 2014, *Gandi Bazar*

¹⁰⁰ City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

the risk of STIs and HIV/AIDS must include human subjectivities and love into the discourse of HIV/AIDS in the context of Pakistan. *Zenanas/khusras* being the most HIV/AIDS vulnerable group and bridging channel of infection carrier from sexual outlets to general population in Pakistan requires more research input. Current control programs must target the vulnerable group in convincing *zenana/khusra* on using condoms with their *giryas* and in channeling their agency towards convincing their *giryas* husbands on safe intercourse.

CHAPTER 11

LANGUAGE OF LOVE

Varied emotions, varied meanings: Love in text, in subtext, and in context

Capitalism gave birth to feminization of love signified as sacrifice, devotion, care, and sincerity. As a result of expansion of capitalism and economic production, division of labor defined specified gender roles with men associated with economic activities outside homes and their partners (women/feminized men) confined within homes looking after and longing for men. However, in the following years, with the expansion of both partners actively participating in the labor force and occupying positions in the job market, the rigid typological classification of females/feminized men as giving and sacrificial and men as impersonal and unemotional was challenged the result of which is more fluid gender roles for all the genders. Flexibility of gender roles in a *zenana/girya* real/true love (free from materiality) is explicated by a *khusra* from Kasur:

Reema: It varies according to people, few men [*giryas*] are such that they take rest and want us to subservient them, others get all our work done while we take rest all day long. They are the ones who we wish for, they bring us kitchen staples, they meet our tantrums, they don't cause any pain to us, they say, "You just relax, I will do all of your work." They treat us well, if I fall sick he will do all the *dera* chores. It is my duty to look after the home, not his [duty] but the thing is that he loves me more than I do. Some days he doesn't even let me do anything and he does every work. He loves me, looks after me, and helps me outside and inside *dera*.¹⁰¹

'Looking after', 'giving me money', 'helping me out' are not just recorded in Reema's interview. Expression of love through *actions* than *words* is observed throughout the fieldwork in all the communities residing in all four locales. *Girya* helping *zenana* in her *dera* chores problematizes the conceptualization of capitalist love which views women or men inhabiting femininity as passive, secondary and subservienting. In the context of sexual minority groups, the communities most actively involved in sex-for-money exchanges are not always passive or objectified or sexualized. They can be the agents of change within the limited framework of socially

¹⁰¹ City Kasur, October 2013, *Haji Fareed Road*

sanctioned and economically conditioned structures. One of the ways for *zenana/khusra* to be self-controlled, regulated and active is through capitalizing on love.

Verbal and non-verbal codes

Rebhun (1999) argues that for closed communities or societies the expressions of intimacy, care, and concern towards each other is more non-verbal than verbal. *Zenana/khusra* being a homogeneous community, sharing similar life experiences, going through similar hardships, inundated by similar emotional subjectivities, facing similar structures, same language, discourse and occupational options communicate both verbally and non-verbally within the *dera* premises, however, outside *dera* the expression is through non-verbal codes. Resham (from Rawalpindi) once explained that during functions when they want to be fed they decide among them in their verbal codes to ask (and when to ask) for food. *Khailwa* (alcohol), *neerka* (milk), *khamara* (meat) and *panki* (bread) were the Farsi words I heard and understood one *khusra* saying to a *zenana* in an after-marriage private party at Mansehra. Similarly their verbal codes help them while negotiating payments. Non-verbal codes for instance raising a left eye brow (mischievous look), making a fist of a right hand and punching it on a horizontally positioned palm of a left hand (end of discussion), rubbing little finger of a right hand on a lower lip (wanting to touch up lipstick), rubbing little finger of a left hand on the lower eyelid of a left eye (wanting to touch up eye *kaajal*) are few noticed bodily expressions during the fieldwork. The expression of respect, devotion and care towards each other (*guru*, other *dera* relatives or *saheliyan*) is mostly verbal within *dera* communes and non-verbal outside *dera* communes, but with *giryas* the expression is mostly verbal. Non-verbal emotive expressions with *giryas* are reported by *zenanas/khusras*, more pertinently through dance performances to attract potential *giryas*. Untying long hair, pressing sides of a lower lip between tooth, wearing fitted clothes and long breaths are some of the observed bodily acts. Looking after their *giryas*, cooking food for them, washing their clothes, listening to their problems, providing emotional support are few of the acts of devotion reported by the respondents.

Typological classification of giryas according to zenana/khusra

Lotar baz/nakhuta: A greedy man who fakes love with a *zenana/khusra* for financial and sexual gratification.

Chaamkam: A reasonably good looking man who share physical relationship with a *zenana/khusra*. He doesn't pay in response to sexual intimacy but agrees to give her money for monthly expenditures.

Ful cheesa, wadalka: A very good looking rich man who in addition to meeting *zenana's/khusra's* basic needs buys her items of conspicuous consumption.

Serela: The most rich and beautiful *giryas*, tall, wheatish complexion, and sharp facial features (*theekha naak, theekhe aankhay*). He is the most desirable in the community.

After having applied Blau's relational typology it was found that *Serela* was the one with whom *zenanas/khusras* want to be emotionally involved with and hence belonged to the Blau's fourth stage of 'emotional'. However, many belonged to the 'staged' stage where romance was feigned for money. Few belonged to 'mixed' stage. Almost all desired for an ideal *Serela* in their lives, with few being fortunate for having a *wadalka* or full *cheesa* as their *giryas* and many being contented for having a *chaamkam girya*.

Levels to ideal love as defined by zenana/khusra

Dillagi: Asexual love, platonic love with a man.

Mohabbat: Real/true/committed love in which sexual intercourse takes place only after marriage.

Chahat (pyar): Lovers being in *chahat* are inseparable; love free from materiality and hidden interests. Lovers being in *chahat* share selfless relationship. Sexual intercourse between partners is viewed as to strengthen the relationship.

WAY FORWARD

The attempt in this research was to indigenize the framework of transactional sexual relationships. The public factors causing to rise private factors which in turn causing high at-risk behaviors among *zenanas/khusras* is explained in the preceding sections explaining socio-economic discrimination as the reason for making a living through meagerly rewarding types of economic organization and for socializing in a risky socio-sexual environment. The section on socio-economic organization shows the need and urge to socialize in (and through) *dera* communes, soliciting areas, cruising zones, *saalgirah*, *melas*, and dance functions not just for survival but for finding a suitable/potential *giryas* also. *Giryas* is found out to be important for both economic and emotional reasons. Love, in general, can be feigned or staged for financial security but can also be genuine, real, and selfless free from materiality and instrumentality. Hence the research assumption of ‘love and money are not dichotomous’ is proven where for most of the respondents love is a strategy to hold financial security, for others love as an emotion is so strong that if money is to be spent as a proof/validation of loving someone then all financial sacrifices will be made by *zenanas/khusras*. Another research assumption of ‘staging love for money being important for self-construction’ is proven by the scenes and analysis under ‘*Giryas/Zenana* relationship’ section. Agentic dimension of their lives in the context of relationships of *zenana/khusra* with their *giryas* validates that sexual minority groups can create agency instead of them being living in violence-ridden surroundings.

In the context of HIV/AIDS related risky behaviors, all the respondents who took part in focus groups were aware of the diseases they can catch but barring only one respondent from Mansehra, nobody else has ever tested for HIV/AIDS test. Also, the use of protection (condoms) with their clients was reported low despite knowing the importance of safe intercourse. And the use of condoms with *giryas* was ‘out of question’ with the minimum assurance of their *giryas* being ‘sincere’ and ‘monogamous’. With their clients, the decision on having a safer intercourse is sacrificed for extra cash because unsafe intercourse is priced high then safe intercourse. With their *giryas* the choice of unsafe intercourse is emotional and consented. However for few of the respondents/participants unsafe intercourse is a strategy to draw more material advantages from their *giryas*. In doing so, neither *zenanas/khusras* nor their *giryas* realize of both (target groups)

being promiscuous and sexually active. The risk of carrying and passing the sexually transmissible infections in the context of *giryā/zenana* relationship requires more research introspection. More specifically, the love and money dimensions which works as a framework to generate discussion on the issue under consideration requires more research efforts.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Few information-rich cases did not agree to take part in In-depth interviewing or group discussions. The addition of those cases would have added more richness to the data elicited. Availability of resources is another issue particularly in ethnographic studies. During research, more *Deras* could have been covered had there been more resources available. This study focused on *zenana/khusra* communities with thematic focus on *zenana/khusra* and *giryas* relationships. The inclusion/participation of *giryas* into the generated forms of data could have added more layered depth to data and eventually to analysis. But due to secrecy of these relationships this study cannot claim to incorporate all *giryas* of all *zenanas/khusras* who were interviewed. There may be a possibility of results being skewed towards narratives from *zenana/khusra* or towards what they interpreted and thought about relational dynamics with their *giryas*.

APPENDIX

Topic Guide¹⁰²

About zenana/khusra identities

Self definition

Castrated (*zenana*)/uncastrated (*khusra*)

Khusra identity (reason/s of castration, importance of castration to the socio-economic organization of male-female transgender persons, injection of female hormones, surgery, cost incurred, and recuperation period)

Zenana identity (feminine soul, change in physical attributes other than castration and breast enlargements, inhabiting female attires)

About dera life

Social security

Livelihood/survival options

Freedom/socialization

About social organization

Guru/chela relationship (importance, fatherly figure, relational hierarchy, strict code of conduct, and relational reciprocity)

Guru maa (importance of a motherly figure)

¹⁰² It is a more standard topic guide followed during this research. A few changes were brought into this guide for each of the locales, for instance *Jorha* was added as a way to make a living for the respondents of Mansehra. Upon observing the open responses to the questions on prostitution, a number of extempore probing questions were asked to the respondents of *Kot Radha Kishan*. During narrative phases, the respondents were not disturbed by asking questions related to any of the areas mentioned in this guide, it was during question/response phases that they were asked questions (main questions, follow up questions, probing and prompting).

Shoormi/Guraee (importance of a sister)

Jalsa/paisha (importance of paying a *paisha* for a new entrant, preparations and planning, scale of functions, amounts paid by *guru/s*, price bargains, and the main *Jalsa* event)

Dopatta wat lerha (importance of following a custom and the main event)

Pakki karna/mithaee (importance of following a custom and the main event)

Saalgirah (important form of socio-economic organization, circulation of money within the community, preparations and planning, scale of functions and the main event)

About economic organization

Dhinga/tola bazaar (reason/s, main areas covered, and the division of areas/locales)

Taarhi/bidhaee (reason/s, fading in comparison to other forms/types of economic organization, main areas/locales covered, and the division of areas/locales)

Dance functions (reason/s, variety of dance functions, public display of femininity and sexuality, and dance forms)

Panpaisha, dhandha, rarha, pann (reason/s, formal and informal sexual avenues, soliciting areas, difference between prostitution and transactional sexual relationships)

About transactional sexual relationships

Economic dimension (*girya* performing a provider role for a *zenana/khusra*)

Subjective dimension (*girya* filling in a lacuna of a lover/husband for a *zenana/khusra*)

Social dimension (*girya* as a guard against structural violence)

Girya/zenana relationship (trade-off between love and money, dichotomy between love and money, *zenana/khusra* playing tricks and commodifying love for material satiation)

About emotional proximities and at-risk behaviors

At-risk behaviors (reason/s, actual behaviors, and HIV knowledge)

At-risk behaviors specifically with *giryas* (condomless intercourse as an expression of love)

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