

AIPS Fellowship Abstract- Sameena Azhar

2023-2024

Gender-Based Violence against Khwaja Sira in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a global escalation in gender-based violence (GBV). International guidelines for GBV intervention are largely based on evidence from Western industrialized contexts and primarily focus on violence against women and girls, eclipsing individuals outside of the gender binary. Although khwaja sira, people who identify as a third gender, have existed for millennia across South Asian cultures, they nonetheless continue to experience intersectional forms of violence. Human Rights Watch reported that there were 479 attacks and 68 murders of third gender people in Pakistan in 2016. Given that most cases of violence against khwaja sira go unreported, these statistics are likely underestimated. Within Pakistan, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province has been a neglected area for social intervention on GBV. The goal of this project is to create preliminary estimates for the prevalence and type of GBV against khwaja sira in KP and to further examine the impact of these experiences of violence on mental health outcomes. To this end, the research team will use purposive sampling to survey 500 khwaja sira in KP regarding their experiences with GBV