



Will The Real Men Please Stand Up?

Stories of five men and their affirmative
Action against sexual violence
2012

A Rozan Research

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This creature we know as man is one big chaos
Of desires and thoughts
Even when lonely
He's never alone
For in his breast lies hidden
A tumultuous crowd.

GHALIB

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ABOUT ROZAN

Rozan is an Islamabad-based non-governmental and non-profit organisation registered under Societies Registration Act of 1860 on 22-12-1998. Rozan came into being 13 years ago and has evolved over the years from a small local NGO to a national NGO that is running six diverse programmes and units and working with a number of state and civil society actors.

Key themes for interventions that have been selected by Rozan are emotional health, gender, violence against women and children, and sexual and reproductive health of youth.

Rozan's mission is: *'To have worked with all people, especially vulnerable groups, to collectively strive for a society that is violence free, self-aware and accepting of itself and others'.*

Rozan currently has four core programmes, namely:

- **Aangan** (Children and Youth programme): works as a resource centre on the emotional health of children, focusing on child sexual abuse.
- **Zeest** (Women's programme): works on the emotional health of women focusing on issues of gender and violence against women.
- **Rabta** (Police Training Programme): works with the Police to create capacity and ownership to deal with issue of violence against women and children.
- **Humqadam** (Men's programme): conducts research on masculinities and works with men and boys in the community to mobilize them against VAW.

Two support units work alongside programmes:

Rozan Helpline:

Offers counselling through telephone, in person, e-mail counselling and counselling camps to children, youth and women.

Munsalik (Media and Advocacy unit):

Coordinates all advocacy activities of programmes and carries out media support and sensitization on Rozan issues.

Humqadam Program (Rozan's programme for men)

Work with men and boys has been an essential feature of all Rozan activities since its inception in 1998. Where some activities have sought to involve men as key allies, be it policemen or young male volunteers on the White Ribbon Campaign, others have addressed men's vulnerabilities such as working with male survivors of child sexual abuse and the male youth that call Rozan's counselling service, the youth helpline.

Rozan's extensive experience in working with communities on gender-based violence has highlighted the

need for work with men and boys as important stakeholders and partners in the process of social change. In 2008 Rozan, in acknowledgement of the importance of working with men and boys, set up a separate programme unit called Humqadam. Aiming to create spaces for men and boys to engage on gender issues, with a special focus on involving men and boys in stopping violence against women, the programme envisages three long term strategies.

1. Expansion of knowledge and resource base through research.
2. Transfer of learning and capacity building through networking and training.
3. Programme intervention and evaluation in community settings

Other Publications from Humqadam

- Understanding Masculinities: A formative research on masculinities and Gender-Based Violence, 2010.
- Partners for Change: A Mapping Study of Organizations working with men and boys on Gender Equality in Pakistan, 2011.
- Engaging with Boys and Young Men to Address Gender-based Violence and Masculinities: A Training Module for boys and young men, 2011.
- Rozan's work with men and boys in Rehmatatabad - an Evaluation Study, 2012.

FOREWORD

Men have the most visible presence in the public places in South Asia. Streets, parks, shopping areas, places of leisure, work and those of worship are all full of men who move with comfort and authority through these spaces. Further, there are very few temporal restrictions upon men's mobility. That is to say, men have mastery over both space and time, and when they do not, it is due to restrictions imposed by other men, rather than women. Simultaneously as men roam freely, there are restrictions upon women that are directly related to the freedoms enjoyed by the former: the *lack* of restrictions enjoyed by one gender also defines the constraints experienced by the other. Gender is, fundamentally, a relationship that illustrates the operations of power. And yet, till recently, masculinity – ways of becoming and being a man – was almost completely absent from discussions about gender. We saw men everywhere, but thought it unnecessary to investigate the ways in which men learnt to see themselves as having certain 'natural' rights while denying these to women (as well as those who did not measure up to certain models of masculinity). In the process, the various processes that make men powerful became invisible. This study of masculinities by Rozan is part of a broader effort by activists, academics, policy makers, and others, to make visible the relationships of power that we understand by the term gender. While the study focuses upon Pakistan its importance is global. For the understanding of gendered power and how it can be contested is a project that transcends political and geographical boundaries.

Men are usually identified as perpetrators of violence and yet this cannot be – despite popular perceptions – a biological predisposition. For, if behaviours we identify as masculine were purely biological, then a) we would not see the variations that we do see in masculine behavior, and, b) there would be no possibility of change, since biological attributes are fixed. The idea that masculine social behavior is precisely that – social – must underpin our efforts to both understand why it is that men behave in particular ways, and what steps are needed to change destructive and oppressive behavior. The latter idea suggests that given different social and cultural conditions, different ways of being men are possible. And that if we are to identify ways of being men that are not violent, oppressive and domineering – alternatives to existing models – then we must pay serious attention to the social conditions that could lead to such dispositions. What are the conditions under which men react with a sense of justice, concern, and courage, going against popular notions of how men *should* behave? This questions lies at the heart of this research-study by Rozan that seeks to intervene in the field of gender justice through serious attention to the cultural and social conditions that make men what they are. This is an extremely important project that ought to be undertaken by many more 'practitioners', rather than be treated as something that should mainly concern university academics and researchers. The study explicitly recognizes that the division between 'theory' and 'practice' is meaningless: actions aimed at addressing social injustice must go hand in hand with research agendas that inform us about the nature of injustice.

• O'Hanlon, Rosalind (1997). 'Issues of Masculinity in North India History', *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, vol. 4, pp. 1–19.

This study is a follow up to another that was carried out by Rozan in 2010 ('Understanding Masculinities') near Rawalpindi. The 'life history' method it utilizes – linking individual biographies to the broader structures of society – powerfully addresses two significant and related aspects in the study of gender. The first can be succinctly presented in the following observation by the historian Rosalind O'Hanlon. 'A proper understanding of the field of power in which women have lived their lives', Hanlon says,

demands that we look at men as gendered beings too: at what psychic and social investments sustain their sense of themselves as men, at what networks and commonalities bring men together on the basis of shared gender identity, and what hierarchies and exclusions set them apart. (O'Hanlon 1997: 1)

Secondly, given that men sit at the top of the power hierarchy of gender, Rozan's study wished to explore the cases of those men whom, it appeared, questioned masculinist and patriarchal views of the world. What are the characteristics of such men, and, do they offer glimpses into alternative models of maleness? The manner in which these questions are addressed by the study is both nuanced and of great significance to research and NGO activity focused upon gender relations and gendered power. What adds additional weight is that the study is based upon careful methodological and analytical considerations, including building rapport with the men who are the subjects of the research, and, the impressive interweaving of everyday events and utterances with broader themes and processes such as class, ethnicity and religion. However, while based on a great deal of empirical material, the study moves far beyond mere description to sophisticated theorizations of the nature of gendered identities and power.

The most valuable insight offered is how not to think in binaries and simplistic categories, a temptation that far too many such studies succumb to. In this, Rozan's agenda is indeed path breaking. The research – carried out among five men from different parts of Pakistan who had taken action against various forms of masculinist aggression – points to the complexity and instability of masculine identities. It avoids the easy conclusion that its research subjects are 'good men', having overcome their socialization, and that their 'goodness' can be measured through quantitative tools. This, indeed, has been the dominant tendency in many programmes of gender justice that seek to change men's attitudes and behaviours. Rather, while applauding the behavior of the men who have taken action in cases of masculine aggression, the study asks whether this indicates a fundamental change in their masculine make-up, or whether their actions might in fact, co-exist with traditional male attitudes. In a telling paragraph, it offers this important caveat and corrective to celebratory accounts of 'good' masculinity:

In the current study we found that while taking supportive actions for men and women who were sexually abused, men can remain in the traditional masculine framework where they are expected to be providers, protectors, warriors, cleansers of society and upholders of traditions, without necessarily challenging status quo or power distribution.

Three of the life histories support this argument. For these three men, 'legitimate' positions of authority were important, whether those were through ethnicity, public office, or family positioning.

Just as importantly, the study points to another aspect where the simple binaries of 'good' and 'bad' men need to be rejected: men who act against injustices against women may not have similar sympathies for homosexual men. It follows from this that there is no monolithic masculinity, and contexts such as sexuality, class, ethnicity, and religion are important in producing a hierarchy of masculine identities. However, notwithstanding the fact that men also suffer due to the demands of masculinity – some are less able than others to live up to them – it is rare for them to self-identify as victims. These are indeed extremely valuable insights.

While deeply interested in the processes of change and involving men in them, Rozan's research does not seek to identify 'ideal' men. Rather it speaks of the unstable nature of masculine identities and the complex nature of power relationships. A very significant contribution of the study is to complicate the idea that motivations are transparent: that an observer can unambiguously say why particular actions are undertaken. For those who work in the NGO sector, the importance of this way of approaching social life cannot be underestimated. For the NGO world is littered with examples of schemes for changing behavior that have failed because of simplistic assumptions regarding human behavior. So, for example, it is too frequently assumed that men have changed undesirable behavior because they wish to contest dominant notions of masculinities. And, just as problematically, this is sought to be 'proved' by pseudo-scientific tools that purport to provide quantitative measurements of change. Unfortunately, these are frequently little more than attempts to meet demands by funding agencies to show concrete results within specified time-periods. Even more disastrously, tools for measurement of changes in behavior (say, as a result of a particular NGO initiative) only promote a view of humanity which prevents an understanding of the complexity of social relationships and actions. It is to the great credit of this research by Rozan that it confronts this model of thinking and boldly suggests that the social change we seek cannot come about through making simplistic assumptions about society and the nature of power. Rather, those with a genuine interest in change must identify and understand the complex obstacles to it, and accept that there is no magical pill that will usher a more just world in the blink of an eyelid. It is the nuanced examination of the making of masculine identities – avoiding easy answers to complex social situations – that will ensure a long-lasting legacy for this study.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Studies on masculinities have been more forthcoming in South Asia over the last decade. There is now an acknowledgement in the field of gender studies and sexuality studies that understanding the construction of gender relations and patriarchy requires a re-thinking of the notion of 'masculinity' and its practice and construction. Increasing evidence suggests that effects of neo-liberalism, which connect to changes in the economy, social structures and household composition in many countries, are resulting in a 'new crisis of masculinity' and challenging stereotyped roles and gendered power relations. Examples of this include low attainment of boys' education as compared to girls, economic shifts leading to loss of men's assured role as breadwinners and increased incorporation of women in the labour force. In addition, new understandings of power relations have led to the emergence of terms such as 'hegemonic masculinities' and 'complicit masculinities' that better articulate the institutionalised and structural connections between patriarchy and the complex ways in which power is exercised in specific contexts.

With the realization that masculinities are more mutable, plural and fluid than we had previously been willing to concede, we are now beginning to accept that there are variations within men. This realization may always have been there within movements for social change in which men have always been present, however, this has become more apparent through the search for social and personal conditions that allow men to be different and to break away from hegemonic dominant patterns of masculinities. What is also clear is that these conditions exist prior to the social change project titled 'gender and development,' or the drive for 'male involvement' in gender work. These transgressions occur and take different routes through expressions of sexuality, choices of livelihoods, and in the case of this study, affirmative action against sexual violence.

Gender relations in Pakistan are marked by stark inequality with reference to access to education, health, political spaces and labour force participation. This inequality is evident in the high incidence of violence against women and poor implementation of protective and affirmative legislation and policy. Studies on masculinities have in general been extremely limited in the Pakistani context. In many cases 'gender' is still used as a synonym for women in the field of development; interest in masculinities is largely limited to work on sexualities and that too only within the context of sexual health and transmission of HIV-AIDS.

This study builds on our 2010 study, *Understanding Masculinities: A formative research on masculinities and gender-based violence in peri-urban areas in Rawalpindi, Pakistan*. Drawing on the findings of this study, as well as on experiences of working with men through various Rozan programmes to prevent gender-based violence in the last 14 years, an important set of questions emerged for the team.

- Why do some men take affirmative action to stop sexual violence while others do not?
- What motivates these men to take action?
- What is different about these men?
- How do men who take affirmative action cope with the consequences of their actions?
- Do men who take action challenge gendered stereotypical roles? Are they displaying alternative masculinities?

Study Objective

After a number of extensive discussions and a prioritization process, the following focus was identified:

To explore men's life experiences of taking affirmative action in cases of sexual violence against men, women, children and transgendered persons in the context of Pakistan.

Research Design and Methodology

It is important as a starting point to acknowledge the complexities associated with notions of masculinities. It is also critical that when studying these complexities we do so by using methodologies that capture these nuances. Based on the focus of the study, a Life History approach was selected. According to Cole and Knowles (2001) life history inquiry is about "gaining insights into the broader human condition by coming to know and understand the experiences of other humans. . . It is about understanding the relationship, the complex interaction, between life and context, self and place" (p. 11). This methodology mandates that lives must be understood within their respective and collective contexts and it is this understanding that is theorized.

The study began in June 2010 and we concluded our analysis in April 2012. Participants for the study were selected based on predetermined criteria: a) the participant has taken documented affirmative action against an act of sexual violence against a woman, man, child or transgendered person; b) the participant self-identifies as male; c) is over the age of eighteen; d) resides in Pakistan; e) is willing to participate in the study; f) can provide the time required to participate in the study.

A number of potential participants contacted us after an intensive process of indirect recruitment that involved circulating information letters on the study through NGO networks and keeping a dedicated phone and email address. We then screened them through an informal interview based on the sampling framework and selected participants we felt fit our criteria. In total we had five participants. The number of participants chosen was on the basis of theoretical sampling as qualitative studies as life history inquiries do not require numerical probability sampling. Our interest was on the richness of the cases.

The five participants belonged to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Punjab, Sindh and the Federal Capital. They include a participant who took action against sexual abuse of a young boy who later killed himself; a husband who supported his wife after she was raped; a volunteer who took action in a case of

violence against a woman from his area; an activist who supported a young boy who was raped; and a tribal man who assisted a young survivor girl and her family after she was abducted and sexually assaulted in Southern Punjab.

Our research team member spent over a week with each participant building rapport, accompanying them on their daily routine, conducting in-depth interviews and taking reflective notes. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed along with field notes.

Analysis

The process of analysis was an intensive activity which required moving back and forth between the transcript, notes and literature, building theoretical understanding, coding the data thematically, and then shaping the life histories into short stories. We felt the form of short stories was most appropriate as they capture the essence of the experience as well as the context, which is so important to the study. We adopted a peer review process to triangulate our analysis and ensure quality control of the findings.

Key Findings

- Our data challenges the notion of a stable definition of masculinity. We saw constant negotiations with ideals and standards, internal contestations and tensions. It is a hybrid that defies stereotyping and easy categorization into neatly labelled boxes of good men, bad men, abusers, gender insensitive or gender equitable men. The data reaffirms that masculinity and its expectations are constructs that men grapple with as they traverse their life journeys.
- Our data reaffirms the presence of hierarchies within masculinities. In the context of our study, men looked down upon boys who are easy to suppress or dominate and do not assert themselves; 'pretty' boys who need protection much like girls; or '*babu type loge*', that is, 'educated' and white collar men who are seen as not being able to defend themselves physically. This is also connected to their vulnerability to sexual and physical abuse.
- Exposure to violence in the lives of these men is a recurring theme, and incidences of violence in men's lives were present across the board with varying details yet a disturbing consistency. Many of the men faced direct violence within the home and school. The perpetrators were all men: fathers, uncles, teachers or other boys. The theme of violence occurs throughout the participants' lives in different forms, sites and contexts.
- Relationship with the father is important in shaping masculinities. All five participants shared moments where they idealized their father, and others where they expressed anger. Their descriptions reveal an interesting site of tension, where on one hand there is an idealization of the father's sacrifices in fulfilling his role as breadwinner or of being a person of principles and authority, yet simultaneously there is a rejection/criticism of the figure of the father for being violent or cold.
- There is some evidence of visible and conscious disengagement from the messages received by the father and the participants' current relationships with the women and girls in their lives. They seem to have

adopted contradictory positions to their male role models in this particular context.

- Connell's (2005) concept of 'complicit masculinity' – whereby "men received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance" (p. 832) – was reflected in the words and actions of some of the participants. These men continued to perform other masculine roles as they translated them into their lives, such as heteronormative attitudes like homophobia, maintaining certain gender-allocated roles such as being the breadwinner, decision-maker and protector.
- While taking supportive actions for men and women who were sexually abused, men can remain in the traditional masculine framework where they are expected to be providers, protectors, warriors, cleansers of society and upholders of traditions without necessarily challenging status quo or power distribution. Three of the life histories support this argument. These three men took action against grave injustice but it seems to have produced no strong contestation within themselves as men and the associated expectation from them of being able to protect and help those less powerful than them.
- There is a definite connection between being able to take an action to defend, or in support of someone who is experiencing sexual abuse and violence and the man's own social positioning / position of power. Two of the men were Naib (elected) Nazims; another cited his family's position and historical lineage; another is the head of a large company.
- The participants' relationships to the 'victim' and how they explain or talk about the person they helped yields interesting notions of vulnerability. For three of the participants, action was taken for those that were seen to be more vulnerable than themselves. This perception exists despite the fact that nearly all men have faced some form of violence in their lives, sometimes directly and sometimes vicariously. Even so, for them the victim is always the other and in one case, the patriarchal structure and the entire family.
- Affirmative actions taken by participants were not isolated incidents. For most they have been part of a series of on-going actions starting out in early childhood or student life. For some the actions have represented an awareness of particular structural injustices going beyond gender to other markers of social inequality like religion, ethnicity, feudalism and class. While there may be differences in the depth of their analysis, it is clear that actions are across a broader spectrum and not linked only to gender justice.
- Most of the participants, in some way or another, saw themselves as social activists. Our study suggests that the identity of men working in or associated with NGOs or public office is taking a contemporary shape where gender activism is coupled with male identity. This sector is evolving as a new professional space that allows for the emergence of a different kind of identity of men who take affirmative action.

Could we have done this study differently? Was the approach relevant? Given the resources and time constraints we hold that the methodology was appropriate and was able to provide us with the depth necessary to respond to our research questions. Had there been more resources and time we would probably have expanded the study to spend more time with each participant as well as interview significant people in their lives or even the survivors of violence.

Conclusion

The foremost conclusion is simply that the way men negotiate masculinities is a complex terrain: their lives and their gendered experiences reveal contestations and contradictions. The two realities of disengagement and yet being complicit exist side by side, exposing the shifting nature of masculinities within one person. The composite of a gender sensitive man or a man that will be involved within the gender project (both literally and ideologically) will be hard to draw if it is a framework that does not allow for contradiction and variation.

The tension-ridden relationship with the father figure also troubles a popular myth that it is predominantly the mother who shapes children's socialization into gender roles. It is clear from our stories that fathers and their actions had considerable impact on the lives of the participants even as they take positions counter to the father's values or actions.

The reality of violence in the lives of these men and how this violence is gendered not only in terms of who the perpetrator is, but also how they respond to it, is another important aspect. Witnessing and experiencing violence from childhood to adulthood seems to be a common and powerful influence in shaping character and motivating actions.

The study indicates the need to recognize boys' and men's vulnerability to sexual violence. It also reveals that physical forms of discipline can be excessive and brutal in the lives of young men. There is a need to explore and understand men's relationship to victimhood. It would also be important to understand this beyond the individual and see how distancing from pain – physical and emotional – feeds into the project of masculinities. These findings have very real implications for programmes that attempt to work with men on 'women's issues' and can serve as entry points to discuss other forms of structural violence embedded in our society.

All five men came from specific cultures and contexts shaped by class, rural-urban divide and some by participation in political processes. Their understanding of their affirmative action is embedded in the context of their lives, and is a reflection of the larger socio-political milieu and their own personal histories. For four of the men, their affirmative actions have been outside the personal space and in the political arena, for example challenging the local *jirga* (non-formal traditional dispute resolution mechanism) ruling or the feudal/*vadera* (local influential landlord) of the area, or challenging a colleague on sexist behaviour. Yet this may or may not translate into change at the personal level, where many espouse traditional notions of masculinity and power while others show evidence of domestic democracy. Tracing the trajectory of this shift in men's lives to becoming more equitable (from the personal to the political or vice versa) is complicated and may work in either direction; or the movement may be cyclical, as opposed to

linear.

Affirmative action by men does not, in our research, qualify them to be perfect, gender equitable, sensitive males. Their lives are full of experiences where they contest, reinforce or deviate from traditional hegemonic masculinities. This has two significant implications. First, there are contradictions within the nature of masculinities that are not firmly entrenched and immutable. Second, this contestation and negotiation is a constant struggle or at best an incomplete resolution. Where we find clear dissonance and distancing from certain kinds of masculine practices, we also find moments of alignment with traditional masculinities. In our search for the proverbial 'good' or 'bad' men we may miss out, as Cornwall (2000) says, "the range of living men and substitute a cardboard patriarch for the otherwise vastly complex array of situational subject positions that men may take up in different contexts and in different kinds of relationships" (p. 8).

Chapter 1

Locating Men And Masculinity In Activism On Gender-based Violence



LOCATING MEN AND MASCULINITY IN ACTIVISM ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Feminist and larger rights movements all over the world have traditionally focused their research and advocacy either on women or the state's position on the issue of gender-based violence. Their efforts have been to enable women to 'empower' themselves and to hold the state accountable for providing protection to women through legislation and services. Men and masculinity seem to have largely escaped focus and inquiry within this paradigm.

There is however a growing realization that understanding of men and masculinities needs to be deepened in order to address and counter gender-based violence. This is evident in the growing global policy debate in world conferences on women starting in 1975, where words such as 'partnership', 'engagement', 'working together' and 'allies' have trickled into our vocabulary for activism, advocacy and programming on gender. There has been a corresponding deepening of the scholarship on gender where studies on masculinities have started to explore men's experiences with gender and its connections with other markers of structural inequality.

Where men's outlooks and culturally defined characteristics were formerly the unexamined norm for science, citizenship and religion, the specificity of different masculinities is now recognized and their origins, structures and dynamics are investigated. This investigation has now been active for more than 20 years and has produced a large and interesting body of research. (Kimmel, Hearn, & Connell 2005, p. 1.)

There is now an acknowledgement in the field of gender studies and sexuality studies that understanding the construction of gender relations and patriarchy requires a re-thinking and deconstruction of the notion of 'masculinity' and situating these constructs in context.

We argue for more studies on men and masculinities in the field of gender-based violence for the following reasons.

First, gender equality is a long-term process of changing gender relations, and making them more equal, less oppressive and less patriarchal. Therefore it follows that the gatekeepers of the current gender order must be involved for this change to happen. Instrumental as the approach may sound, it clearly posits that gender equality efforts are simply less effective if they do not engage men, since they otherwise burden women alone with the responsibility for change.

Second, it is important to realize that men also carry the load of inflexible gender stereotyping and as individuals, suffer from gender inequalities, injustices and stereotypes in their own right. It is essential to recognize how inequitable gender norms are part of the socialization process for both men and women. These norms lead to inflexible gender stereotyping which impact men and boys, where

privileges such as autonomy, mobility, opportunity and power create a specific set of vulnerabilities and pressures for men (Greene, 1997). These could be distinctive vulnerability to child sexual abuse (Aangan, Rozan, 2007, p. 15), and risky behaviour such as unprotected sex and not seeking support for sexual problems and concerns (Barker, 2000). Boys and men can also be subjected to and victimized by performances of masculinity by other men, in other words, by acts of violence instigated by other men (Humqadam, Rozan, 2010 p. 12). For some young men, violent behaviour is perceived as inevitable and compulsory: an appropriately masculine and heterosexual response to conflict with substantial rewards (Reilly, Muldoon, & Byrne, 2004).

Third, increasing evidence suggests that effects of neo-colonialism which connect to changes in the economy, social structures and household composition in many countries are resulting in a 'new crisis of masculinity' in many parts of the world, thereby challenging stereotyped roles and gendered power relations. Examples of this include: low attainment of boys education as compared to girls, economic shifts leading to loss of men's assured role as bread winner and increased incorporation of women in the labour force.

Fourth, we also see that considerable social research in the last two decades has supported the idea that masculinities in addition to being socially constructed are not singular and fixed. We recognize now that many men may not fit into the mould of hegemonic masculinity which is characterised by male roles that involve authority, aggression, heterosexuality and control. Yet we continue to struggle with essentialist concepts powerfully invoked by custom, media, popular culture, and state in local and global settings, where men and masculinity is seen as a static privileged group. Hegemonic masculinity, as explained by Connell (2005), "embodied the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men" (p. 832). Thus it is not assumed to be 'normal' in the statistical sense, as only a minority of men might enact it, but it becomes normative and a culturally dominant idea.

New understandings of power relations have led to the emergence of terms such as 'hegemonic masculinities' and 'complicit masculinities' that better articulate the institutionalised and structural connections between patriarchy and the complex ways in which power is exercised and experienced in specific contexts. This research has allowed us to go beyond the simpler gender hierarchy perspective which "invokes the notion of male dominance" and the "consequences of men's superior social position" to the more complex structural inequality framework which looks at gender both as social differentiation and as social stratification (Holter, 2005, pp. 17-18).

With the realization that masculinities are more mutable, plural and fluid than we had previously been willing to concede, we are now beginning to accept that there are variations within men. The

realization may always have been there, for within movements for gender reform in the history of the Indian subcontinent, men have always been there albeit in smaller numbers. Raja Rammohun Roy's fight against *satidaha*, or the burning of widows on their husband's funeral pyre (Kumar, 1993, p. 9), Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's advocacy for the introduction of Hindu Widow Remarriage Act (Kopf, 1969), and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's campaign for women's education (Amin, 1996, p. 142) are just some examples of male social reformers who took up women's issues. There has been some debate among historians about the "intentions that led to the agendas of male social reformers, questioning whether the reforms were indeed 'for women' or whether women's issues – be it sati or modern education for women – were merely a terrain on which dialogues of male powers were articulated" (Chopra, 2007, p. 7). Be whatever it may, there is no running away from the fact that the social reform movement of the 19th century in the Indian subcontinent had far reaching impact on women's lives.

While we recognize the 'supportive men', there still has not been enough effort to understand the 'conditions' that allow men to be different, to break away from dominant patterns of masculinities. What is clear is that these 'conditions' that allow for disengagement exist prior to the social change project titled 'gender and development' or drive for 'male involvement' in gender work. Research suggests that these experiences could be close relationships with women who have suffered injustices, or an association with activism such as "pacifism, economic justice, green issues or gay liberation" or attempts to deal with their own experience of sexual violence and abuse (Stoltenberg cited in Flood, 2005 pp.461-462).

These ostensibly 'deviant' practices and transgressions occur and take different routes through action for social reform, expressions of sexuality, non-masculine choices of livelihoods, and in the case of this particular study, affirmative action against sexual violence.

The Case for Pakistan

Pakistan ranks 145 among 189 countries in the UN 2011 Human Development Index (HDI) annual rankings of national achievement in health, education and income. On the Gender Inequality Index, a composite index measuring gender inequality in three basic dimensions: empowerment (participation in political fora and education), health (maternal mortality and adolescent fertility rate) and labour market participation, Pakistan ranks 115 out of 173 countries and falls in the low human development category. The ratio of secondary education rate amongst Pakistani women is just 23% as compared to 46% for men. Pakistan's maternal mortality ratio, estimated to be 260 deaths per 100,000 births, is estimated to be one of the highest in South Asia (UNDP 2011).

Illustrative statistics given below provide testimony to the widespread practice of violence against women within Pakistan:

- A total of 8539 women became victims of violence in 2011 and there was an overall 6.74% increase

in reported cases of VAW in the country. The number and percentage of the cases of abduction and kidnapping in 2011 are 2089 (24%), murder 1575 (18%), rape/gang-rape 827 (10%), suicide 758 (9%) and 'honour' killing 705 (8%) (Aurat Foundation, 2011). It is important to note that these are incidences of reported cases alone and represent the tip of the iceberg.

- In a study carried out by the Community Health Department of Agha Khan University in 2007, the majority of women surveyed (80%) reported receiving beatings by their husbands and 57.5% had experienced such violence from their in-laws. (Ali, & Bustamante-Gavino, 2007).

Studies on masculinities in general have been extremely limited in the Pakistani context. With the exception of a few published studies, the rest are unpublished thesis manuscripts. A review of the literature reveals that work has focused more on constructing false dichotomies between 'poor exploited women' and 'bad men'. In many cases gender is still used as a synonym for women in the field of development; interest in masculinities is largely limited to work on sexualities and that too only within the context of sexual health and transmission of HIV-AIDS.

This Study

The study purports that action against sexual violence against women is 'deviant' or can be viewed as a disengagement from mainstream patriarchy and masculinity. Gender-based violence is one of the most blatant manifestations of patriarchy that cuts across class, ethnicity, culture and nationality, and has persisted since time immemorial. Violence, including the threat of violence, has been used by patriarchal ideologies as a means/tool to control and oppress women (Humqadam, Rozan, 2010).

This violence extends to other vulnerable groups like men who do not conform to sexual norms or do not live up to societal expectations about men in terms of physical strength and earning capacity, or young boys who are sexually abused. Extremely vulnerable groups in this context are transgender persons and MSMs (men who have sex with men), that pose a challenge to masculinist ideals about how men should behave and who, because of structurally embedded disadvantages, remain invisible.

Violence comes in several forms – domestic violence, rape, incest, sexual violence, sexual harassment, stalking, pornography, etc. – and continues to be rampant. Men are by far the primary perpetrators of violence against women, men and transgender persons, with rape and domestic abuse being very common. This is, in part, because under the patriarchal system of almost all societies globally there exists a culture of impunity around violence that explains this away as the norm and even promotes that this as acceptable behaviour (UNESCAP, 2007).

Men participate in this violence as perpetrators or sometimes as silent witnesses who, by their silence, indicate that this is a practice that is normal or legitimate. This is not to say that women do not stay silent or commit violence against women; many do and the motivations for those acts are also many. Here the focus is on those men that can be in a position to take action and do not. A possible motivation

for this complicity could be that the presence of violence further strengthens or maintains men's status as the dominant gender within a patriarchal system. Another could be fear, because there can be serious costs for challenging this practice as it can result in exclusion from the dominant group or even physical violence and ridicule. Then why do men challenge a practice that is after all a "paradigmatic expression of patriarchal power" (Flood, 2005, p. 464). This study looks at the lives of men who decide to take affirmative action, and contest this expectation of condoning or staying silent about this expression of masculinity.

The study builds on Rozan's 2010 study titled *Understanding Masculinities: A formative research on masculinities and gender-based violence in peri-urban areas in Rawalpindi, Pakistan*. Drawing on the findings of this study and experiences of working with men to prevent gender-based violence an important set of questions emerged for our team.

- Why do some men take affirmative action to stop sexual violence while others do not?
- What motivates these men to take action?
- What is different about these men?
- How do men who take affirmative action cope with the consequences of their actions?
- Do men who take action challenge gendered stereotypical roles? Are they displaying alternative masculinities?

These sub-questions helped us formulate the overall purpose of the research, which was:

To explore men's life experiences of taking affirmative action in cases of sexual violence against men, women, children and transgendered persons in the context of Pakistan.

The questions serve as the basis for the design of the study. Our vision is that the study will help Rozan and other groups like us to improve our understandings of masculinities and men, and through that, our intervention programs in the communities with whom we work. It is but one step and certainly does not claim to shed complete light on the complexity of this debate that we are just beginning to unravel, yet the step does take us further into the gendered experiences of men.

The following chapter describes the rationale and process for the research methodology used in the study. In the third chapter the main themes that emerged from the data are analysed; brief descriptions of the five affirmative actions are also provided. The concluding chapter looks at implications of this study in a broader context. Appendix A contains summaries of the five life stories: the full-length stories are currently only available in Urdu. The remaining appendices pertain to additional documents that were used in the study.

Chapter 2

Research Design



RESEARCH DESIGN

The design and methodology of a research study is determined by the research question/s that drives the inquiry. For the purpose of this study we have chosen a qualitative research method as we believe it is the most appropriate way to respond to our research question. Qualitative research allows insight into, and in-depth understanding of people's attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles. It emerges from the social sciences and the humanities, from disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, philosophy, history and education, and is now applied in a number of fields. As this study explores masculinities in Pakistan, with specific emphasis on the lives of men who have taken affirmative action in cases of sexual violence, it is appropriate that a qualitative approach be taken. Our purpose was to develop a broad understanding of the experiences of men and the contexts in which they take affirmative action, for which we chose a very specific qualitative approach: life history inquiry.

Life History Inquiry

Life history as a research method has its origins in a number of qualitative modes of inquiry including biography, autobiography, case study, narrative inquiry and ethnography. It is an approach that acknowledges personal, social, temporal, and contextual influences, as well as their intersections, to facilitate understandings of lives and phenomena being explored (Cole and Knowles, 2001). It is not "about developing reductionist notions of lived experiences in order to convey a particular meaning or 'truth'" but a "a representation of human experience that draws in viewers or readers to the interpretive process and invites them to make meaning and form judgements based on their own reading of the text: as it is viewed through the lenses of their own realities" (Cole and Knowles, 2001, pp. 10-11). It is this particular aspect of inquiry that matches the objectives of our research study.

According to Cole and Knowles (2001), in a broad sense life history inquiry is about "gaining insights into the broader human condition by coming to know and understand the experiences of other humans... It is about understanding the relationship, the complex interaction, between life and context, self and place"(p. 11). Lives must be understood within their respective and collective contexts and it is this understanding that is theorized.

Sampling

Our study shares the life stories of five participants who were selected according to pre-determined criteria:

- a) the participant has taken affirmative action against an act of sexual violence against a woman, man, child or transgendered person (whether successful or not);
- b) the participant self identifies as male;
- c) is over the age of eighteen;
- d) resides in Pakistan;

- e) is willing to participate in the study;
- f) can provide the time required to participate in the study.

Recruitment Process

A process of *indirect recruitment* was employed, based on an ethical choice to ensure informed consent and address power relations. Indirect recruitment implies that information about the study is circulated and potential participants make the choice of contacting the research team if they wish to participate; they are aware of the risks and potential contributions their participation can make. This is an extremely challenging mode of recruitment as it takes time and significant effort to get information out to as many potential participants as is possible.

In our case it involved circulating information letters on the study through NGO networks by mail and email and keeping a dedicated telephone line and email address for potential participants to contact us. The information letters were sent out in both Urdu and English. The letter gave a brief introduction about Rozan, followed by details of the study including the objectives and criteria for selection of the participants. The letter also explained steps involved in selection and study procedures including the ethical considerations and time and effort required from the participant (See Appendix B: Study Information Brief)

After initial contact with organizations and individuals we learned that most potential participants only identified cases of domestic violence against women. In order to clarify this further, we revised the information letter by simplifying it and providing more explanation about affirmative action against sexual violence and the types of possible actions.

The letter was sent to approximately 260 organizations and individuals across Pakistan. It is important to note that we drew on our network of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) for recruitment. Given the time and resource constraints, this was the most efficient approach to targeted recruitment since they were most likely to know people or cases where affirmative action was taken. However, this did limit our sampling frame to these groups and those associated with them.

Guidelines to respond to phone calls were developed and followed. Eight individuals (men) contacted the research team and expressed an interest in participating in the study. Twenty-nine organizations contacted the team via e-mail and telephone (mobile and landline). The initial list of potential participants was further screened through an informal interview based on the sampling criteria. The screening interviews were conducted on the telephone and lasted about 35 minutes on average (Appendix C: Screening Interview Guidelines and Appendix C-1: Case Summary Sheets).

In total, 21 individuals were screened including the 5 finally selected, 2 who refused and 3 who could not

manage time. The rest did not fulfil the pre-determined criteria for selection; 8 of these involved support against domestic violence and 3 had taken affirmative action that did not qualify in comparison with others, although was valuable in its own right. The reason for one refusal was reluctance to share the historical events of his life, while the other felt it might complicate his service conditions.

Case summary forms were filled out based on the screening interviews in order to finalise the selection of five participants. Once a participant was identified, he was sent a detailed letter on the study methodology (Appendix B: Study Information Letter detailed) and provided a copy of the consent form. (Appendix D: Consent Form). Participants were also informed of all ethical considerations. The recruitment process was on-going in the sense that data collection and selection was happening concurrently.

The sample size was limited to five on the basis of theoretical sampling, as qualitative studies such as life history inquiries do not require numerical probability sampling. Our interest was in the richness of the cases, and the smaller sample allowed for greater depth and detail.

Profiles of selected Participants

The five participants belonged to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Punjab, Sindh and the Federal Capital. They include a participant who took action against the sexual abuse of a young boy who later killed himself; a husband who supported his wife after she was raped; a volunteer who took action in a case of violence against a woman from his area; an activist who supported a young boy who was raped; a tribal man who assisted a young survivor girl and her family after she was abducted and sexually assaulted in Southern Punjab. On average, participants ranged from their mid-thirties to forties with one participant in his mid-sixties. Although literacy was not a criterion, all participants who approached us were literate. The minimum educational qualification among them was a bachelor's degree, and the maximum was a master's degree. All were married.

Ethical Considerations

Although there was no institutional requirement to develop an ethical protocol for the study, the research team believed that doing so would help cover all ethical considerations within the study. It was also useful since at present there are very few structures in place for NGOs to have their proposals reviewed by an ethical review board with an understanding of qualitative methodologies. Considerations included relationality, meaning an acknowledgement of the power differentials between researcher and participant, and to try to the best of our ability to challenge this hierarchical relationship; reciprocity and mutuality, that is, the right to ask questions and share each other's lives; and sensitivity and respect in the context of self-disclosure and exposure.

As an added measure, the proposal was also peer reviewed by an external researcher to ensure all ethical concerns were adequately addressed. The informed consent form clearly stated that confidentiality of the

respondent would be maintained in order to avoid any kind of harm that may occur due to disclosure of personal and/or professional information. Participants were informed of all risks, benefits and harms that may occur by participating in the research study. They were also informed about the role they were playing through their participation in the study, the way the data would be used, and the time requirements for participation. Once the respondent agreed to all the terms and conditions, he was asked to sign the consent form after reading it carefully. Signed consent forms have been kept for our record. In addition, given the nature of qualitative research studies, consent was taken on a number of occasions after the form was signed, during the interview period. This was to ensure that after building a relationship with the participants, they still remember that they are speaking to a researcher who will use the data for the study.

Methods

For life history research, data are usually gathered over an extended period of time using standard anthropological fieldwork techniques such as interviewing, participant observations and document or artefact selection. For the purposes of our study the core method was the in-depth conversational interview, supplemented with transect walks and field notes. Questions were modified based on the mood and the relationship that developed with each participant. We found conversational interviews were very useful as they allowed the participant to also take the lead in the discussion. The informality of the process also provided space for participants to move back and forth across their own life histories and built rapport between the participant and researcher.

Based on the availability of participants, our research team member spent over a week with each participant building rapport, accompanying them on their daily routine, interviewing them, and taking reflective notes. Participant observation played a significant role in exploring dynamics of the participant's personal life, for example informal sittings with participants' friends, and accompanying participants in their own professional or personal activities with their consent. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed along with field notes. (See Appendix E: In-depth Conversational Interview Guide.)

One of the challenges in terms of building rapport was drawing a line between the purpose of visiting the respondent and friendship that develops over time. As mentioned previously, it necessitated occasional reminders of the nature and purpose of the interaction. This difficulty in maintaining a strict boundary between researcher and researched is complicated by the need to develop trust that allows for disclosure, as well as the fact that self-reflexivity was an integral aspect of the study. The selection of conversational interviews, as opposed to structured interviews, posed a challenge during the writing phase, since they are non-linear and do not follow a strict chronology. Narrative structure needed to be created in order for the data to take the form of a coherent life story.

Data Management

Transcription conventions: Interviews were digitally recorded and copies of the data files were maintained in two safe locations in separate computer systems. In order to maintain safety of the records, we also recorded the data on CDs which were locked in a safe place. This precaution was taken in case the digital files were damaged or lost. Data were recorded at two levels: the digital voice recording of all the interviews, and documenting/note-taking during informal discussions, participant observations, and self-reflection during interactions with respondents.

All recorded data were transcribed in roman Urdu and typed in MS Word for analysis. The transcription was done by two main research team members, one of whom was directly involved in data collection as well. A short training session was held to help maintain consistency in the transcription. The team discussed and standardized commonly repeated words so that the reading of transcripts was not cumbersome. Pseudonyms were used in the transcript in order to ensure confidentiality of the participants and the survivors of violence. The details on code names were recorded in a separate document which is only available to the core research team for reference.

Analysis and Representation

Analysis in life history goes “beyond the narrative or the individual or the personal and places narrative accounts and interpretations within a broader context. Lives are lived within the influence of contexts as far ranging as cultural, political familial, educational and religious spheres” (Cole and Knowles, 2001, p. 20). Hence context is central to interpretation. Context implies the setting – physical, geographic, temporal, historical, cultural, aesthetic – within which an action takes place. It becomes the framework or reference point for understanding what people do. The method serves to interrogate the meaning and significance of the past as it influences the present and the future.

Analysis in life history is based on the fundamental assumption that the general is understood through analysis of the particular (Cole and Knowles, 2001, p. 13). Data are thematically interpreted and considered in relation to relevant discipline-based theories and represented in the form of detailed life history accounts. These accounts represent both the researcher's interpretation of research participants' lives and the researcher's theorizing about these lives in relation to broader contextual situations and issues. As opposed to functioning as a subject-object dichotomy, there is an intersubjective approach to analysis. The researcher self is visible in the research text, and is as vulnerable and as present as the research participants. Analysis is always connected to the researcher's own lens and life experiences, including cultural and situational perspectives.

The process of analysis was an intensive activity which required moving back and forth between the transcripts, notes and literature, developing theoretical understandings, and finally shaping the life

histories into short stories. We felt the form of short stories was most appropriate as they capture the essence of the experience and the context which is so important to the study. We adopted a peer review process to triangulate our analysis and ensure quality control of the findings.

Analytical Framework

Our analytical framework was guided by our research question. The analysis emerged at two levels (I and II) subsequent to each other. The first level of analysis was the beginning of an interpretive exercise where narratives were read and reread as they were transcribed. Epiphanies in the lives of respondents were identified in relation to the research question. Quotations that the researchers found exciting, interesting and intriguing were identified. We wrote notes about new realizations during the interview and commented on how the events or life story were connected to researchers' own experiences.

The second level delved deeper into the data, segmenting them into time lines. It was thematically coded according to when action was taken and how the main events of the respondent's life were connected to that specific time period. We also identified pressures and motivations to take affirmative action, and coping techniques used by participants. This level also looked at the respondent's relationships with women in his life. Linkages were made to how masculinity was interpreted, and how these interpretations could connect to Rozan's own work in terms of its strategies and approaches.

Triangulation through Peer review: The study was conducted by a four-member research team and one research supervisor. The team member responsible for data collection carried out the first level of analysis and shared it with the rest of the team. At this stage, audio recordings or transcriptions of some of the life histories were also shared with the research team. The second level of analysis was then developed through discussion, and documented. Level I and II analyses were shared with the supervisor for input.

Time line for the Study

The study began in May 2010 and concluded in April 2012. Some of the challenges of conducting the study were finding the right human resources, training the team, and retaining team members. Qualitative research studies require extensive training of the field team and there are very few qualitative researchers available in Pakistan who can conduct life history research. Staff recruitment began in May 2010, followed by two months of capacity-building on qualitative research and proposal development. The design was finalised in December 2010 after which an extensive literature review was conducted between January 2011 and March 2011. This was followed by developing screening guidelines, the ethical protocol, and interview guides. The information letter was sent out in May 2011. Initial screening began in June 2011. Once participants were identified, interviews were carried out over a four-month period between August 2011 and December 2011. Transcription and analysis were on-going between September 2011 and March 2012. Story writing also began at the same time as the analysis, from January 2012 to April 2012. The final research report was printed in Urdu and English in June 2012.

Moving from Analysis to Representation

According to Cole and Knowles (2001) in life history research what is important is that the inquiry process has a focus on the "storied nature of lives" (p. 20). It has an autobiographical element with explicit attention to the aesthetic through both the processes of researching and representation. There must also be a concern for honouring the individuality and complexity of individuals' experiences. Additionally, it is important to highlight the role of the researcher in constructing these storied lives, since interpretation is connected to the lens of the researcher.

As we wrote and rewrote each piece, each fragment became part of a larger whole contributing to our understanding of the experiences of the lives of our participants. This relates to Richardson's (2004) idea of 'writing as a way of knowing' and as a method of discovery and analysis. At the back of our minds was the idea of making research accessible and relevant. We wanted our audience to feel comfortable engaging with our work, not intimidated by it. We wanted our work to be taken seriously but also wanted its utility to be acknowledged. Writing in a storied form brings the audience into the experience of the lives lived, as well as to the context of those lives from which we draw our interpretations.

When we chose to write in the storied form of representation we also learned that "[b]y writing in different ways, we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it. Form and content are hence inseparable" (Richardson, 2004, p. 473). Neilsen(2002) also endorses this form of representation when she writes that "knowing and knowledge are fictions as much as fiction is knowing and knowledge" (p. 208). Writing in the context of this work has become a site for theorizing where the "telling and the told remain inseparable"(Minh-ha, 1989). There is no textual staging which is neutral or innocent as "writing is always partial, local, and situational and . . . our Self is always present" (Richardson, 2004, p. 480).

Each transcript was read several times to extract the events to be included in the story. In light of the analysis (level II), the story was framed by noting major life events that had linkages to the core research objectives. To represent the story in an interesting and engaging way for the reader, the research team opted to begin with the affirmative action at the beginning of the story in a single paragraph. This is followed by a brief introduction of the participant, to draw the reader into the text. The story unfolds with comments from the research team before the beginning of each important event in the participant's life. It covers epiphanies, important events linked to masculinities, affirmative action, motivation to take the actions, pressures faced, and coping techniques used by the respondents during the course of action.

The stories are produced in Urdu keeping in mind the prime audience of the research. The stories were shared with other staff members of Rozan for feedback and also shared with the respondents for any addition or deletion.

It has been a serendipitous process of inquiry as we engaged in conversations and wrote. What is most important to us is how that story is told. The rest is based on the trust that there will be a certain degree of engagement and respect while experiencing these stories. We acknowledge that this does not mean that everyone who reads the stories will embark on some direct action which is transformative for them, but they may begin to think differently. Our emphasis is on making research relevant and connecting with multiple communities through it.

This is also why we have chosen to have the study represented in Urdu and English.

“As researchers we need to get people wanting to join in, needing to care. Revisioning the narrative of research by placing dignity and respect as the guiding values in the relationship shifts the emphasis from objectivity and distance to a shared humanity of creativity in connection” (Cole & McIntyre, 2004, p. 260).

Reflections and Reflexivity

We believe that the reflexivity of the researcher and critical reflection on different aspects during the process of the study is not only a matter of improving the quality of the research but is also an ethical imperative. It helps to guide decisions around research design, methods and analysis. Such reflection also clearly delineates how the researcher has shaped the study and its findings, and provides an audit trail. Perhaps most importantly, it allows insight into how research functions as a learning process for those involved, and offers guidance to those who will continue the work beyond any particular study. Here are some of the reflections to provide a glimpse of the challenging process in our words:

- *Given the resources and time constraints we still hold that the methodology was appropriate and it was able to provide us with the depth necessary to answer the questions we identified. If we had more resources and time we would probably have expanded the study to spend more time with each participant and also interview significant people in their lives or even the survivors of violence.*
- *Representation of the participant's quotes in the flow of a story which was written in the first person with minimal changes was also a challenge as it tended to alter the formation and sequence of sentences, which was a challenge due to less time.*
- *After continuously reading and writing life events of a single respondent for a long period of time, saturation was experienced by some of us. To deal with this, other team members took the story to improve it, and the first member took a break by reading other interviews.*
- *The participants were from culturally diverse areas of Pakistan with different socio-economic and geo-political scenarios, less knowledge of local realities like political divisions etc. So it was a challenge to understand the positioning of researcher and researched itself.*
- *Rapport building to the level that the participant expresses meaningfully the events of his life remained a challenge. The time spent for rapport building varied with all the participants, depending partly upon the traditions of the area e.g. rapport building with a participant from Sindh was easier as compared to a*

- *participant from southern Punjab bordering Baluchistan.*
- *It was difficult to keep interviewing in situations when one feels vulnerable, like in the case where one of the respondents was from the Sindh Nationalist Movement who accused Punjab of all the injustices in Sindh. I am a self-identified Punjabi. He clearly disliked what the Government of Punjab's actions and policies have done to Sindh. Similarly one of the respondents was professionally more powerful than me. In these situations it is very challenging to disconnect one's self from these fears and focus on the research itself.*
- *During interviewing or transcribing data, events that bother the researcher in his personal life, like certain family disputes, might resemble those of the respondent; the fact may be reflected in the analysis of the data.*
- *In participant observation one may get a closer look at the behaviour of a person towards different vulnerable groups/persons, e.g. one boy was over speeding in a busy city of Sindh province and fell on the road at some distance from our car when my respondent and I were driving to the city. The respondent pulled over immediately, went to the boy, took his motor bike and put it on its stand. He asked the boy if he needed any medical help.*
- *4 of the 5 men are closer to my age and, like me, are linked to the NGO sector. This may have allowed easier rapport building.*

Chapter 3

Will The Real Men Please
Stand Up?**WILL THE REAL MEN PLEASE STAND UP?**

This chapter discusses the experiences of the five men who shared their stories with us. These five men have one thing in common: they have all taken tangible affirmative action against sexual violence against women, girls or young boys. Their stories are varied and clearly influenced by locales in which they abide. Some have opened up completely, others have shared but refrained from certain disclosures. Yet their stories are also similar as they struggle with various adversities that find common echoes in their lives. These are accounts of lived experiences of masculinities of five men whose lives, like women's, are also gendered.

In this chapter we focus on the main themes that emerged in the stories of these men. Some arose spontaneously as they narrated their life experiences – for example their relationships with their fathers or violence they witnessed as children – others were prompted by the focus of the study, namely the affirmative action taken. While absolute accuracy is not possible in translation, we have tried to preserve the meaning and context of the quotations to give a sense of how certain emotions, perceptions and experiences were articulated by the participants.

It was challenging to isolate the themes into categories as they tended to overlap and spill over into each other. The frames were guided by the way we planned our analysis, which looked at their lives chronologically, the references to masculinity within their narrative, and the affirmative action taken. We were also guided by the similarities we discovered within these stories that often served as crucial points for further analysis.

Findings are presented within these themes and include stories of their childhood; brushes with violence as victims and as perpetrators; the construction of masculinities as fragile, contested and hierarchical; the location of affirmative action within their lives; and finally, the moments where there is disengagement from dominant notions of masculinities.

Fathers and Mothers: The Shaping of Men

All five men were brought up in fairly traditional, conservative families. Fathers were the breadwinners and figured quite prominently as the ones who had control in the household. Almost all talked about their fathers as people they looked up to, out of respect and often in fear. Fathers were associated with power and, as pointed out in earlier research, it seemed clear that generational relations had a hand in shaping masculinities (Hopkins, 2006, p. 347). Fathers positioned themselves clearly as decision makers within the family. Akbar, from Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, shared his father's words, "Salute when the wearer of the cap is present, do not just salute the cap." Akbar's father likened his wife to the '*topi*' – cap or uniform – which symbolises authority, and in this case hollow authority. He referred to himself as '*topiwala*' or the rightful owner of the cap/uniform, the one who has real authority and control.

The mother was talked about as someone who complied with the father, and the father was mentioned as the one who taught important values to them as children. Shakir from Islamabad said: "We were encouraged to do manual work, in fact our father would tell us to sweep the street." Similarly, Shabbir, from Dera Ghazi Khan, South Punjab said "[We were told to] serve our guests ourselves, no matter which social class they belonged to. In fact, on some occasions we also had to sweep the space for guests ourselves."

They spoke of their fathers with respect and admiration. References to how hardworking their fathers were, and the sacrifices they had made in their role as breadwinners almost seemed romanticised. Mohammad Ali from Hyderabad, Sindh said: "My father worked very hard and went through a very difficult time. His work was to spread pebbles/stones on the railway tracks. He would take dry bread (*roti*) with him and when he was hungry, he would soak it in water and eat it."

Akbar said "On several occasions my father wouldn't have money to pay for transportation, and he would walk many kilometres; and if anyone asked he would say, 'I prefer to walk'. He was very honest; you can get an idea of this from the fact that we bought our [first] TV after his retirement." There were other stories of the father being a good provider, an upright person and someone to look up to. Akbar talked with pride about how his father married off his three sisters to men of rank within the government. "It is a fact, that is the reason our sisters were able to get a good education, and that all his daughters were married to government officers of grade 17. It is our sisters' good fortune that they found such good homes. My father's upbringing was very good."

This admiration was sometimes tinged with criticism however. In Mohammad Ali's case the criticism was quite sharp when he recounted his father's violence towards his mother.

Yes, his general attitude towards the entire household wasn't right. As an example he used to hit my mother. She, poor thing, was a very simple woman from the village, and after my father died, even though he had hit her, she would still cry for him. Yet several times, I remember, he hit her.

Shakir mentioned how his father grudgingly gave his approval to the news that he had become an engineer.

He wanted me to become a doctor, that would have been preferable to him, but I wasn't that interested in medicine. And I think he wasn't a very exuberant man in any case. He had a somewhat stern mentality, so his input was like that. There are some people, you know, who are happy [for you], and who will embrace you – he would embrace and be happy but even in that he would say something harsh.

SHAKIR

Shakir's house was in Samanabad, a reputable area of Karachi. The security situation in Karachi at the time was getting worse by the day: instances of robbery, sexual violence, murder and theft were becoming the norm, while the administration watched like silent spectators. Efforts by the police to maintain safety were negligible.

One night at around 2 o' clock, armed robbers broke into Shakir's house. They held the members of the household hostage while they stole the family's cash and household items. They then sexually assaulted Shakir's wife, gang-raped her and fled from the scene.

Shakir tried to understand and be supportive of his wife after this traumatic event. He began to spend more time with her, and adjusted to her changed personality with some success. He created space and opportunities for her to cope with the problems in her own way. Later, when she established a non-profit organisation against violence, Shakir assisted her in this endeavour.

Shakir also criticized and distanced himself from his father when he talked about how his father prioritized his principles over his relationships with his wife and children. In this instance we see a clear positioning which is counter to the values held by a father.

Yet the principles that he held, he lived according to those, but he couldn't make his relationships work, so that remained a kind of dichotomy. You have these grand principles, but if you don't value human relationships, ultimately your life isn't successful. Human relationships are very valuable. Principles have their own place. People will say he's a very principled man, but if he can't connect with people who are close to him, then the principles are only seen by those who are distant, and people who are close don't see much. Making human relationships work is very important. So I think that influenced my own relationship[s].

Others were more cautious in criticizing those who were abusive or negligent authority figures in their lives. Shabbir's father married again and although he hinted at a childhood lost and confidence shattered because of being neglected, he did not criticize him openly.

Obviously some of my father's attention was divided [after his second marriage]. Nonetheless, some attention remained from his side, some support. But the expense of our education used to bother [his second wife]. She tried to make sure that we remained cut off, meaning there should be no give and take between us. My father's attention towards us didn't remain the same as it was before. Obviously it does show up in one's personality – maybe some sense of neglect is created. If this sort of bitter experience hadn't occurred, I would have had more qualities, even more than now. I had some dreams – they also remained unfulfilled.

At another point Shabbir said, "It used to be my father's decision, our participation was very limited. In most cases we didn't get our way, so the hurt of that remains. It didn't go against my parents' honour, but they still didn't let me make those decisions."

Akbar mentioned how his father was unfair to his mother when she demanded her rights. When Akbar's grandfather died, his father gave away some property (land) to his brother (Akbar's uncle) who was unmarried at the time, as a gesture of support for him. As time passed and his uncle's wedding got closer, Akbar's mother and maternal aunt offered their gold jewellery to arrange for his marriage, and asked for the land as compensation. The uncle agreed in Akbar's father's presence and was married off in style. Akbar's maternal grandmother advised Akbar's mother to ask her husband to put the agreement in black and white as she feared that such a verbal agreement would not hold once children grew up and their needs changed. Akbar recalled, "When my mother asked my father to get signatures (thumb-prints) from his brothers to formalise the exchange, she was severely beaten."

These men talked about the violence inflicted by their fathers within the home, and of its different shades, from being physical to exerting economic control or restricting mobility. When talking about this violence or control, some did not condemn this outright, but hinted at it being unfair. Contrary to Rozan's earlier study (Humqadam, 2010) where we found young men either trivialized these acts of violence against women or denied them altogether, almost as if they could not 'see' them, here men were able to articulate these events in their lives. Through analysis of the act, they seemed to distance themselves from it to some extent. However, expressing anger or active condemnation of the father was difficult for them.

Thus these descriptions of fathers reveal an interesting site of tension. There is an idealization of the sacrifices made by the father in fulfilling his role as breadwinner or of being a person of principles and authority. At the same time, there is a rejection or criticism of this figure for being principled to the point of being cold, or being abusive and physically violent, or being unfair to a beloved mother in the matter of her right over her own possessions.

There is a clear affiliation with the mothers and an expression of sympathy. Three out of the five men had very deep attachments with their mothers irrespective of their position amongst siblings. In one instance there was admiration for the mother for enduring a lot of physical violence without retorting. The relationship with the mother was generally more supportive, within which they could express their feelings and find comfort. With the father the relationship centred on respect for a figure that symbolized authority, demanded compliance, taught values and could be violent.

These men seemed to have adopted positions in their lives that were contradictory to their male role models but at the same time seemed to admire and respect them. In four cases, men clearly deviated from the father's inequitable role and attempted to find alternative ways of behaving with women (Ikram with

his sisters; Mohammad Ali in his attitudes towards women, his first love and then his first wife; Shakir and Akbar in their relationships with their wives). Four of the five mothers had not worked outside the home. Four of the wives had worked outside the home at some point in their lives, all in the non-profit sector in social development.

Even as this may be a sign of changing times and more space for women in the public sphere, it still presents these men with novel domestic relations. It seems that the resistance to, or distancing from dominant masculine ideals is not necessarily stemming from positive, strong, female role models (mothers) within the house, or 'gender sensitive' fathers, as some research (Rogers, 2004, p. 2) seems to suggest, but reflects a conscious counter-positioning as will be discussed in the section entitled 'Disengaging from the Dominant'.

Men and Violence: Victimhood and Perpetration

The study includes respondents from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Punjab, Sindh and the Federal Capital. It reveals that exposure to violence in these men's lives is a recurring theme. Incidences of violence in their lives have been found across the board with varying details yet disturbing consistency.

Many of the men experienced direct violence within the home. There were stories of being witnesses to violence against mothers, sisters and siblings within the home. The perpetrators were all men: fathers, uncles or older brothers. Three of them talk about their fathers beating their mothers up. In the context of Pakistan, this is not uncommon: a recent study on violence against women in Pakistan showed 66% women – two-thirds of women aged 14 and above, whether married or single, in a nationally representative sample – face violence in the home (Andersson et al., 2009, p. 5). Violence also extended to emotional and economic control and restrictions in mobility of the mothers by their fathers.

Mohammad Ali: "My father used to beat my mother a lot."

Akbar: "When my mother asked my father to get signatures (thumb-prints) from his brothers to formalise the exchange, she was severely beaten."

Ikram: "Over very small things – like when food was served late or things like that – my father would hit her. You know, the way our old traditions continue."

Exposure to physical violence within schools is a theme mentioned by two of the men. They elaborated on the kinds of extreme violence that they faced in their school life in detail.

The school that Shabbir attended was one where the majority of the students belonged to the Sunni sect of Islam. During the prayer break, the Sunni students offered group prayers together, while those belonging

to the Shia sect, like Shabbir, prayed in the mosque outside, or in their classroom. After prayers, Shabbir would go and play in the grounds behind the school building until the rest of the students were finished with their prayers. Some of the boys who were avoiding prayers would also play there.

One day the headmaster came there, and he caught all of us. He was furious. I couldn't tell him at the time what the situation was, and I was also terrified, even though, you know... If I had told him [that I was Shia], it's possible I wouldn't have got that beating.

Ikram and Akbar both talk about how younger boys are often sexually harassed and teased by older boys and men and abused sexually.

Ikram shared: "It also used to happen in schools at the time, that younger children, or the boys that were the pretty kind – such things have been happening with them. They are enticed or forcibly taken away and made victims of abuse."

These narratives highlight school practices which often use physical violence with boys as a means of discipline. They also indicate that boys' vulnerability to sexual violence in schools is a reality. The experience of violence in the form of armed hold-ups within the home and street robberies continued in adult life. Shakir related one such experience.

The situation in Karachi was very bad in those days. There would be daily instances of robberies. We used to think that we have no jewellery or any such thing that people would want to steal, but then it did happen one day. It happened again later, when I was coming from Lahore airport. They took my bags, stole all my luggage and went.

There are also stories of brushes with sectarian violence. Ikram recalled an incident from Gilgit-Baltistan.

Conflicts between Shias and Sunnis happen frequently here. On one occasion, one group murdered six people from the other group. We were in a place nearby. When a car of people from the same group was driving by, we stopped it from going further, and had them wait in a safe place, so those people were saved.

IKRAM

The body of a young boy was found in the River Kunhar near Chilas in Gilgit-Baltistan. There were signs of severe injury, as though he had hit his head against the rocks. The preliminary investigation revealed that he had been a student of Class IX; some of his class-fellows had sexually abused him, after which he committed suicide by throwing himself in the river.

Instances of sexual violence such as this were common in the region, but after every such instance, a pall of silence would fall over the community. Perhaps the people wanted to protect their honour by not drawing attention to these events. They were unwilling to take any sort of legal recourse.

Ikram was also a resident of this area, but he did not find it acceptable to remain silent about such issues. He drew attention to this case in the local media with the help of the boy's family. He also filed an F.I.R. for the case and held a large protest in the city to create awareness about such incidents, as well as pressurise the administration.

Similar forms of violence were present in the university as well, to which Ikram alluded: "One group had control in the university. If any boy were to behave in this way (immorally) they would take him away and he would be badly beaten. They had proper torture cells – they would chop off legs and such."

Mohammad Ali narrated an incident where, while he was Nazim, he was asked by a friend to beat up another older man. He did so. He later regretted it, and still seemed to carry the guilt for it.

Forms of violence are also shaped by cultural practices in a particular setting. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for example, enmity is a common phenomenon that may last for generations. Akbar mentioned one incident in his life that pulled his family into this vicious circle.

They thought they could come hammering at our doors and assert their clout, but Allah intended differently. When they didn't accept (our offering of peace), we went up to the roofs of double-storeyed houses and fired our weapons. Allah gave us respect and we were not beaten or defeated.

Responding like a man to violence is a persistent demand of the local culture and fitting into the local ideal of the male role requires an eye for an eye. Akbar revealed a constant internal negotiation. At one level he distanced himself from the incident by stating that it was unfortunate that he was carrying a gun at the time of the provocation – a gun that had been given in exchange for money that a friend had borrowed. At

another, he thanked God that he was able to emerge victorious.

The encounters with violence have led some to be prepared for violence at all costs. For example both Akbar and Shakir still felt threatened and protected themselves in different ways that are influenced by their social class. Akbar had been able to protect himself in self-defence in the past by resorting to violence; this was a situation where he and his clan were involved in an open gunfight. He admitted to feeling threatened even now. Measures he took to protect himself involved asking friends' advice on safety issues and checking out a place for its safety. He did not carry a gun and seemed to exude a sense of bravado, saying that his life was in God's hands. "The bullet that is intended for me will surely hit its mark. What Allah has intended is bound to happen." Shakir took a more proactive stance as he had the means at his disposal to secure himself and his family from the threat of violence. He shared some of the security measures he took, such as alarms, guards and carrying a gun.

Violence remains a recurrent theme. As victims and as perpetrators, it seems to run through these lives with disturbing frequency. Each man has his own story of witnessing violence from the home to the school yard, to political and social violence, from domestic violence to rape to armed robbery. Yet its particular contours and forms, and the responses to it, are shaped by their positioning in terms of age, ethnicity and class.

Living up to Masculinities: The Slippery slope

Re-creation or negotiation of masculinities is experienced in view of different social settings. Men seem to "move between a range of different subject positions in their everyday lives, positions that are inflected with and constituted by other dimensions of difference" (Cornwall, 2000, p. 12). Where many men may aspire to, and thereby sustain the hegemonic ideals of masculinity, a closer look at men's lives reveals that the grip on these ideals is slippery and fragile. For many men, actions and choices may lie outside these notions.

One participant talked about how his father changed his attitudes regarding the freedom he allowed his children and wife when they lived in a relatively less conservative locality in Swat. Upon returning to their ancestral town however, he became more rigid. Similar findings have been observed by Jaji (2009) where men have been forced to renegotiate notions of masculinity and control, especially control over women and children, because of changed life circumstances (p. 21).

The relational nature of masculinities follows naturally from this argument. When we accept that the power and privilege accorded to men is socially constructed and not biologically or equally conferred amongst men, we must also recognize that all men are not equal in privilege and in power. We must therefore acknowledge the relations between these different types of masculinities.

In providing a distinction between patriarchy and masculinity, Srivastava (2009) posits that

"patriarchy refers to the systemic relationship of power between men and women, whereas masculinity concerns both inter and intra-gender relationships." Thus, not all forms of masculinity are "equally valourised" (p. 5).

We find evidence of a hierarchy within masculinity in our study too. The ones not valourised are 'the *shareef, kamzor larkay*' (decent, moral; weak, delicate boys) – boys who are easy to suppress and dominate, who do not assert themselves, and who need protection, much like girls (as suggested by Ikram). Others are 'the *babu type loge*', educated and white collar people (as mentioned by Akbar), who are seen as being unable to defend themselves physically.

Akbar related an incident where he, his brothers and uncles were assaulted by a group of men.

They were up to their teeth in weapons. It was there that my uncle said that those who fire their weapons don't talk, but we (Akbar's family) are showing respect by asking you to sit down [with us]. Otherwise we can retaliate. Those people (the group who had assaulted them) had thought we were "*babu*" types of people, who they would slap twice or thrice and then we'd run away. We'd run off to our houses and they'd come hammering at our doors, and in this way they'd assert their clout. Allah had intended differently.

AKBAR

Zafar, a sixteen-year-old boy, was brought to the local hospital in Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He seemed dejected and afraid. His father, Shafiq, said that a boy from the community had sexually assaulted Zafar and the medical reports corroborated this fact. Shafiq wanted to take legal action but did not know how to proceed. Cultural traditions in the region meant that one did not draw attention to such incidents in order to protect one's honour.

Akbar, a resident of Swabi, was well-known for his volunteer work. When he heard about Zafar from a friend, he immediately went to the hospital. He offered his support and had a detailed discussion with Shafiq about what steps needed to be taken. He assisted in filing an F.I.R. based on Zafar's medical reports, and later arranged for a lawyer for Zafar; he also provided financial assistance for the case.

The term '*babu type loge*' implies that these men, because of their education, are lesser men who have a compromised masculinity. The word 'babu' goes back to colonial times when it was used to refer to an Indian government official who spoke English. In a study by Hopkins (2006) we find similar perceptions around how education can lead to emasculation, where he mentioned the perception that Asian educated boys are considered effeminate as compared to African boys (p. 338). It is important to note that these assertions of differences between men come from men themselves.

Powerlessness and helplessness are emotions that are frequently described by these men. Where these moments of helplessness are more easily articulated and visible as children, they continue as a theme even in adult life. In our life history interviews, men experience helplessness in the face of unfamiliar or difficult situations during their lives. We find vacillations in their role as men, whereby they can be traditionally authoritarian and controlling at one point but very submissive at another.

Akbar described his helplessness when his engagement to his much loved maternal cousin broke. "Nothing was making any sense to me. I had a high fever at night and these people took me to the hospital. I cannot express how difficult those days were for me." In this case Akbar let his father and older brother take the decision to break off contact with his maternal uncle's family despite his obvious distress.

Mohammad Ali expressed feelings of helplessness when his uncle forced him to marry his daughter. "I was forcibly married off to my [paternal] uncle's daughter. I was fifteen or sixteen years old at the time. Our circumstances were such back then that we were enslaved to this uncle; there was nothing we could do."

For Shakir, the sense of helplessness occurred after his wife was raped. "[I] did nothing after that incident. What could I do? There were many such occurrences in the city in those days. If we had informed the police, they would have found out more details about us and they would have troubled us."

In Shabbir's case, a kind of helplessness was experienced in the context of his discomfort with talking to women. "When I had to hold a meeting with them (women), or if I had to ask them anything, I would feel very hesitant. There was absolutely no confidence. I didn't even look at them when talking. It used to be extremely difficult."

The responses to this sense of helplessness that makes them feel like lesser men, and that challenges their idealized if not reality-based standards of masculinity, are varied and hard to predict. Sometimes contradictions exist within the same individual who reacts with anger and violence on one occasion, and with passivity and acceptance on another. However, what is clear is that these differences between men create tensions; tensions that may push towards a need to re-assert one's claim on masculinity, sometimes through violence. In a study by Groes-Green (2009) we find a similar argument that "economically worse

off men exhibit subordinate masculinities which express themselves through dominance, violence and sexuality in relationships to female partners" (p. 7).

When the 'babu type' people were attacked, Akbar related that they resisted fiercely, even killing one attacker. By recalling the incident Akbar took pride in conforming to the traditional male response to such situations which revels in victory and inflicting physical harm and injury, and also minimising wounds to the self.

[The assailants] hadn't come to kill, they had wanted to dishonour. They had wanted to dishonour and leave. [They thought] these are 'babu' types, government servants types, how can they compete with us? But Allah gave us honour. We don't have honour (laughs) but Allah gave us honour. Our honour was protected. We were not beaten. Granted that two were injured on our side, and six were injured on their side – not six, but five were injured, and one died. The man they had brought as a lion, died like a cowardly jackal.

Shakir's inability to respond to the injustice against his wife led him to be ready at all costs. He clearly stated that he was no longer a pacifist but ready to react. He felt that a man who continuously faced physical and violent threats and did not respond was 'stupid'.

You become conscious of your activities to see what makes you vulnerable enough to be at gun-point. Secondly, you obviously become much more proficient with weapons because you say okay, each time someone points a gun to your head, takes your car, takes your belongings, breaks into your home – it just changes the equation and the only way to deal with it is to either deter it, or, if you get the chance, deal with it. This is the way it changes your mind-set – how you view this thing – [it changes] this idea that violence can be eliminated by being a pacifist. Because you say we were such pacifists, we never owned a weapon. I said I will never use a weapon, I have been non-violent. This was before; but now if you ask me I'll say yes I have a gun and the bullet is chambered. One isn't so stupid that one doesn't see that the situation has changed from what it was. You go through proper training, you learn the judgment, you learn the skills and you learn the handling. You change from being a pacifist. You say, now I'm not a pacifist. Because we are drowning in it. How long will we keep our eyes closed?

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Also interesting is Shakir's assertion that he did 'nothing' at the time his wife was raped, even though he helped his wife and supported her through the aftermath of the rape and its trauma. He supported her in taking a course of action that, in his judgment, may not have been the best way to proceed and continued to help her in her aspirations. Shakir's perception that he did nothing points to the customary notions of masculine redress, revenge or action that would qualify as an appropriate response under such circumstances.

The men in this study constantly negotiated with dominant ideals and standards, internal contestations, and tensions. They present a hybrid that defies stereotyping and easy categorisation into neatly labelled boxes of good men, bad men, abusers, gender insensitive or gender equitable men. Masculinity and its expectations are constructs that they grapple with as they traverse their life journeys, which are influenced by their personal histories, culture, ethnicity, class, location and religion. What is clear is that living up to masculinities is hard. Articulated experiences and feelings allow glimpses into the fractured sense of self that needs to be reclaimed, sometimes through violence and sometimes through a counter-positioning, as discussed later.

Locating the Affirmative Action in Men's Lives

A core research question was to understand how these men constructed their affirmative actions, and how they explained the actions they took against sexual violence often at great costs and danger to themselves. Sometimes these risks were tangible, such as a threat to life or property, while sometimes these actions led to contestations and tensions within. Did these actions constitute a stepping away, a distancing from popular notions of manhood or did they play out within a framework bolstered by certain notions of masculinity?

In a study carried out by Rozan – Understanding Masculinities (Humqadam 2010, p. 24) – young men saw themselves as a group that needs to protect and uphold society's traditions and morality. Most expressed this primarily with reference to the women in their family, especially the wife and sister. The role also extended to keeping the neighbourhood clean and free from 'evil'.

In the current study we found that while taking supportive actions for men and women who were sexually abused, men can remain in the traditional masculine framework where they are expected to be providers, protectors, warriors, cleansers of society and upholders of traditions, without necessarily challenging status quo or power distribution. Three of the life histories support this argument. For these three men,

'legitimate' positions of authority were important, whether those were through ethnicity, public office, or family positioning.

Ikram talked with pride about how many of the men in his area join the army and were good fighters. He mentioned that many of the martyred soldiers in Kargil were from his part of the country. For Ikram, leadership was important and he constantly linked it to his family and ethnic roots. Moreover, he talked about the act of sexual violence against men as the most heinous act, far worse than other forms of violence; in this he was clearly hinting at what he believed was the 'unnaturalness' of male-to-male sexual contact.

When Akbar talked about his affirmative actions, he said, "Previously I would just work for other people; when I had the resources, the strength, then I was better able to help others."

SHABBIR

In Dera Ghazi Khan, Southern Punjab, a sixteen-year-old girl was abducted by the local *zamindar's* (land-owner) men in the village of Qaim Din. She was held prisoner in a neighbouring locality and was subjected to gang rape. The girl's family filed an F.I.R. against the *zamindar*; in retaliation, the girl's father and brother were arrested after being falsely implicated in a legal case. The *zamindar* later agreed to withdraw the case, but only on the condition that the kidnapping charge would also be taken back by the girl's family.

Shabbir Ahmed was a well-known social and political worker in this tribal society. When he heard about this incident he decided to support the girl's family, even though this meant opposing an influential land-owner from a powerful tribe. He worked hard to ensure that the girl's father and brother got legal assistance.

After withdrawing their charges, the girl's family wanted to initiate another case for her safe recovery. Shabbir helped them address legal complications by taking the matter to the High Court. He drew media attention to the case with the assistance of his lawyer friends and pressurised the police to handle the matter justly and take action against the *zamindar*. The police succeeded in rescuing the young girl from the outlying area of Bait Ali Sultan nine months after her abduction.

Shabbir emphasized a position of authority when he said,

I would also notice it among my clan during my childhood – maybe that is where the interest developed – that one should be in a position of some standard, where people's problems could be solved and there was some status as well . . . be it an official, or some political post etcetera.

For the three men cited above, the action is taken against grave injustice but it seems to have produced no strong contestation within themselves as men nor the associated expectation of being able to protect and help those less powerful than them. In Ikram's case, it seems to be bolstered by society's abhorrence of sexual contact between members of the same sex. Despite external pressure and sometimes considerable threat, and they have resisted in various ways. One could go so far as to argue that taking affirmative action in some of the cases identified is a reflection of masculine traits and not a shift from the norm. In some cases men are playing the role of protectors of women and those who are vulnerable like women (*'kamzor'* and *'shareef larkay'*). We cannot see affirmative action by men on incidents of sexual violence and abuse to be mutually exclusive from their retaining stereotypical notions of masculinity – such as being warriors, protectors and leaders.

However, when one of them takes an action to support transgender persons, a contestation is exposed. Where Akbar clearly empathizes with this group, he is deeply conflicted within because of his own unease with them, their life style and their perceived separation from religion. This is further intensified by public censure that includes questions being raised about his credibility as a social worker. This internal contestation and external pressure leads him to decide that he will not work with this group again.

For all five men there is a definite connection between being able to take an action to defend or support someone who is experiencing sexual abuse and violence, and the man's own social positioning/position of power. Two of the men were Naib (elected) Nazims, another cited his family's position and historical lineage, another is the head of a company; all seem to possess a graduate degree with some possessing higher qualifications.

Moreover, actions taken by four of them have been a collective act, supported and bolstered by friends and other likeminded people, some as part of rights-based groups. This is not to take away from the value of the affirmative action: it is clear that the affirmative actions have entailed a fair amount of personal threat and danger. However it is significant that these individuals have created or been involved in processes that have allowed them to seek support and affirmation from a peer group.

Numerous studies have argued that masculinity is not about one particular pattern or configuration and that multiple masculinities exist (cf. Connell, 2000; Cornwall, 2000). Masculinities are influenced by

geographical location (locality), class, culture, and personal histories/experiences.

Having respondents from diverse cultures and locations and class we see the variations in their framing of affirmative actions and associated motivations. Akbar talks about his motivation for affirmative actions as a desire to help those less powerful by linking his work to Bacha Khan's Movement in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and a Pashtun cultural tradition of helping others called *azizwali*. For Shakir it is about the value he places on relationships and how that has been shaped by his father's inability to prioritize them in his life. Race and ethnicity are what attract Ikram to social causes and create a need to protect others. Mohammad Ali's involvement with a separatist nationalist movement which struggles for the rights of his people allows him to challenge a local jirga (non-formal traditional dispute resolution mechanism) ruling, and for Shabbir, becoming a leader and earning respect by standing for the 'poor' or deprived is important.

Their relationship with the 'victim' and how they explain or talk about the person they have helped also reveals complex notions of vulnerability. For three of the men, action is taken for those who are seen to be vulnerable – i.e. for women; pretty boys (*'khoosurat larkay'*); and those who are seen as helpless or constrained (*'majboor'*), including transgender persons (*hijras*) as compared to the men themselves. In an incident at Shabbir's office where his male colleague undermined a female worker by not following her instructions, Shabbir intervened in favour of the female staff-member. He told the male worker about her professional and educational superiority in this context, and asked him to follow her instructions. He did not say anything to the woman however.

Shabbir and Akbar dealt with the victim as part of the family unit who had been 'dishonoured' and not so much as an individual. Shabbir even uses the word 'victims' referring to the entire family of the girl who had been abducted and raped. This has obvious implications for the kinds of dynamics that will exist in a helper and recipient relationship. In addition to creating a very skewed power equation that sets up the victims as those without agency, it also views the injustice or travesty against which the action is being taken in a very masculinist framework where the crime is against the entire family or clan that has been dishonoured.

However for two of the men, the 'victim' was accorded agency, and decisions made by them were respected and supported. Mohammad Ali stayed with the victim through difficult times and sometimes through unfortunate life decisions including a relationship and marriage that lead to further problems, while Shakir was clearly led by the 'victim' and supported her empowerment. Shakir valued the agency of the 'victim' enough to support her in her desire to address the issue at a personal as well as social level. In both these cases, these men seem to have been able to step out of the traditional binding of viewing the sexual violence as a crime that needs to be addressed on masculinist terms by reclaiming 'honour' through revenge, or by protection that, in essence, may end up controlling the 'victim' more and making her further vulnerable to decisions about her life being taken by others (in positions of authority).

It is significant that topic of sexuality in the context of their personal life is missing from the narratives. It does not get discussed even when love interests or marriages are shared. In our earlier study with groups of young men (Humqadam, Rozan 2010), sexuality was a topic that kept finding its way into young men's conversations. In addition to their curiosity and anxiety about sexual matters, many talked about sexual abuse in childhood. In the current study however, men have chosen not to highlight this aspect of their lives when sharing events in their lives which they considered were important. This absence is particularly noteworthy in the context of victimhood or vulnerability, as any unpleasant or exploitative experiences they may have had were not considered motivators for actions they took later in life. In other words, a perception of the self as 'victim' was not part of the narrative framework of their lives.

Affirmative actions taken by these men are not a series of isolated incidents. For most, they have been a series of on-going actions that began in early childhood or student life. As a schoolboy Mohammad Ali spoke up against school teachers and authorities who were showing films to children and not teaching during school time. He complained to the local jirga and the practice was stopped as a result. Ikram talked about going to the governor as a college student, and getting reserved seats reinstated in his college for people from his area.

For some these actions have represented an awareness of particular structural injustices that go beyond gender to other markers of social inequality like religion, ethnicity, feudalism, and class. Mohammad Ali said,

I watch the National Geographic Channel, Discovery, Animal Planet whenever I get the chance at home. The ways animals hunt, and the ways that they manage to escape is a battle for survival. So when I look at humans, you know, it's the same law of the jungle; the one who is strong, his strength rests on the foundation that he hunts those that are weaker than him.

At another point he referred to his indigenous and localized belief systems as counter to the more 'extremist' versions of religion. "The people of this region (Sindh) you know, they are Sufi kinds of people; this religious fundamentalism is very alien to them. Now people have come from outside and made us extremists, our youth. But basically the true spirit of Sindh is Sufi."

At yet another point Mohammad Ali referred to caste injustice.

I had written a story... Once when I was returning from another city, two young girls got onto the bus. The conductor made room for them to sit despite the rush (crowds). When I got off the bus I noticed that the two old "bagri" (a lower caste in Sindh) women who had got on in the same city as me were still standing at the back [of the bus].

MOHAMMAD ALI

In a jirga (non-formal traditional dispute resolution mechanism) in a village adjacent to Sukkur, Sindh, the vadera (local influential landlord) issued the verdict that nineteen-year-old Fatima was to be forcibly given away to her uncle's son, to marry or do with as he pleased. The jirga was convened at Fatima's parents' request, who accused her of wilfulness: she wanted to marry of her own choosing and had thus dishonoured her family.

Fatima had been engaged in her childhood to her cousin, who was Head Constable in the police. When the news of Fatima's plans reached her family members and fiancé, they deceived her into attending the jirga. After the verdict, her cousins (the fiancé and his brothers) kept her locked up in their quarter for two months where they physically abused her and raped her daily.

One day she found an opportunity and managed to escape. She immediately contacted people she knew for help; these included her co-workers Mohammad Ali and Gulzar Malik. She told them that she was severely injured and in hospital, and that some local people had brought her there. When her colleagues arrived and saw her terrible condition, they arranged for urgent medical care. Her x-rays revealed that the bones in both her legs were broken. Mohammad Ali wanted to inform the police but at that point Fatima asked them not to.

With the assistance of a human rights organisation, they arranged for Fatima to go to a hospital in Karachi after emergency medical care. Mohammad Ali and Gulzar Malik then met the local District Police Officer at Sukkur several times, and held protests to demand justice for Fatima. They later also filed an F.I.R. at the police station.

For some the motivation stems from a need to help others weaker than themselves. It comes from a desire to protect those groups that are deemed helpless without an understanding or questioning of their own positioning and privileges within social inequality. For example, Shabbir talks with angst about how the burden of cleaning the guests' sitting area fell to him and his brothers, even as he refers to women and 'servants' as the ones who should be held responsible for such tasks. For others it may be a deeper structural analysis of power as shared earlier. For all, while there may be differences in the depth of this analysis it is clear that actions are across a broader spectrum and not just linked to gender justice.

Livelihood and workspace are important in any study of masculinity and these become even more important when they create spaces that allow an alternative discourse on masculinities to emerge. One study analysed beauty parlours as a critical space to question the assumptions about the links between masculine identity and work (Ahmed, 2010). The study on male domestic workers and the "muting" of masculinity within that workspace is another example (Chopra, 2006).

Our study followed predefined eligibility criteria whereby the respondents were identified by contacting

NGOs, CBOs and individuals (mostly working in the development sector). Four of the five respondents are involved with, and linked to the formal rights movements and NGOs/CBOs. This allows for a novel exploration of a new legitimate space for men to act as activists against sexual violence. Ikram, Mohammad Ali, Shabbir and Akbar are working with small organizations on issues of injustices, rights and violence. Our fifth participant, Shakir is indirectly linked to such organizations as his wife works for an organization that focuses on issues of violence and abuse.

The identity of men working in or associated with NGOs is taking a contemporary shape where activism is coupled with male identity. The issues men work on during day to day activities in this sector constantly intersect, influence and contour their 'self'. Joining NGO forums where speaking against injustices is a legitimized phenomenon and where support from other likeminded persons is readily available, this sector is emerging as a new professional space. This space, in turn, allows for the emergence of a different kind of identity of men who take affirmative action.

Disengaging from the Dominant: The Push and Pull

Certain conditions exist that contribute either to shape traditional masculinities or serve as resistance to perform them. Literature has argued that this may be a forced re-negotiation of roles (Groes-Green, 2009, p. 11, & Jaji, 2009, p. 8) whereby men, because of their socioeconomic status or in refugee camps, 'permit' women to be in roles that they otherwise would not allow. We argue that this may in fact be a conscious choice. Histories influence individuals to contest popular notions of masculinity and there are moments where individuals disengage or distance deliberately. This is visible when men in our study have chosen to be different kinds of husbands or fathers sometimes in direct contestation of the roles they saw playing out in their childhood.

Ikram talks about the violence in his school and how he has deliberately used a different method of disciplining with his own children.

If you want to guide children, then instead of physically torturing them, we should explain verbally. In my own house, with my two daughters, they sometimes do these sorts of things so I explain that this is not disciplined [behaviour], so I sort of say this to them, listen, this isn't done this way. I have tried to never strike my daughters.

As previously cited, Shakir talked candidly about his father's inability to prioritize relationships in his life and how this had been crucial for him. He adopted a different attitude in his own relationships as a consequence.

There are cases where men have taken progressive roles which challenge gender stereotypes. Akbar is a Naib Nazim, and his wife is a councillor who works outside the home. He performs domestic chores such as looking after children or cooking when his wife is away.

Wherever I am, I get home before 2 o'clock. I get home for my children. I have them change their uniforms. If I have to go somewhere, I tell my wife beforehand that I won't be home today. I also cooperate fully [with my wife] in the evenings, I get *roti* from the bazaar as well. If there are guests, in those circumstances I help as much as I can.

Akbar faced criticism and taunts from friends for his wife being on the local council. At that time he, being a head of the council, brushed off this criticism by saying, "Allah has given me honour and only he will sustain it". It is noteworthy that Akbar's wife ran for elections at Akbar's father's suggestion. This had been something that Akbar had previously wanted but had refrained from bringing up due to the fear of his father's traditional conservative approach of keeping women within the home.

Shabbir took a stand within the family that girls would be educated.

My older brother's son – my nephew – he, you know, even though females are not highly educated in our family, but do have Matric or F.A. degrees – so he still thinks that females should not be educated. He has a sister – my niece – and when it was time for her admissions, he started to raise objections; like she shouldn't be educated. So things like these happen in the household. [The nephew] tried to reason with her in terms of morality and even used force sometimes. So I made him realise, in a way, that she should study. It was a prolonged discussion, after which he finally accepted and my niece got admission.

Mohammad Ali first succumbed to his friend's request to beat up an older man on account of some enmity and then decided to leave this group of friends as he felt terribly ashamed of his act.

[My friend said] I've been in a dispute, they are such-and-such people, so I need to take revenge. I still regret that a lot, till today. He was such a good friend of mine, so I said all right, it's no problem, just tell me what you want done. He says, there's nothing to do, just clobber him, he needs to be sorted, he's done this to me and that to me. There were quite a few disagreements, he had filed a case and all, and had been a witness against them. I deeply regret it today, but I did it. We went at night – we went and knocked on their door – he was wearing a vest. As he stepped out, you know, both of us started beating him up without a

thought. We beat him up quite a lot – I was the Nazim – he ran to the police and all but nothing happened for the poor man – but I regret it so . . . because I didn't know him from before – he was a poor person . . .

I had said, friend, this is what's done in friendship, in comradeship, your enemies are my enemies, just say the word – things like these – I got carried away by his words. I still say, if a friend is going through a difficult time, then no matter what my state, I'm even ready to die for him – but one needs to think about these things, about whether the friend is doing the right [thing] – one shouldn't do the wrong thing. I still feel ashamed of what I did. . . . After that I slowly distanced myself from them. He phones sometimes, and we make polite conversation . . .

Mohammad Ali was heartbroken when he was told that his beloved was getting married to someone else and yet seemed to harbour no ill will towards her and decided to walk away. There are stories of how some of these men have taken actions within their domestic lives and relationships that are widely different from their surroundings and from the norms of that area. In fact they contradict what they have seen play out in their lives and within their homes. All these are articulated as events that hint at conscious choice, a struggle, and a deviation from the norm.

In challenging traditional norms, men faced pressures including threats from culprits and criticism from family members and friends. Shabbir's brothers taunted him for volunteer work, and Akbar's work with transgender persons was looked down upon by his friends. They encountered resistance and discouraging behaviour from institutions like police, health and the legal community. Another facet of such pressures is internal. Shakir felt the pressure of maintaining a relationship with his father after his separation, Mohammad Ali mentioned his apprehensions while supporting the young woman who had been raped.

Many of the coping techniques remained in the traditional authoritarian masculinity framework, which exhibits an inclination to use or seek the support of power. This includes aligning to powerful groups in the area, banking on electoral presence, seeking support from friends in associated jobs like lawyers and media persons, and emphasizing 'ruler clan' identity. Akbar addresses such pressures by treating it as a destined/Divine happening. His belief that ultimately everything is in the hands of Allah relieves him from the fear of external threats and taunts from friends and family. There are also examples of less traditional coping techniques. Mohammad Ali admitted to crying at his mother's grave many years after her death whenever he felt upset; he listened to music by his favourite singer Lata Mangeshkar, read history and literature. Shakir relied on relationships and family to sustain him.

Yet in all these stories we find strands of a narrative that hint at a complicity, an acceptance, willing or unwilling, to traditional notions. Connell (1995) refers to a "relationship of complicity among groups with the hegemonic project. Masculinities constructed in ways that realize the patriarchal dividend, without the tensions or risks of being frontline troops of patriarchy" (p. 79). Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as complicit masculinity (Connell, 2005, p. 832). Men who are complicit in this regard may respect their wives and daughters, are never violent towards women, do the housework but will resist challenging mainstream patriarchy or a giving up privileges associated with it.

It is important to record that some of the respondents also continued to perform other masculine roles as they translated them for their lives; this includes heteronormative attitudes such as homophobia. Referring to different injustices against which he works, Akbar said,

If anyone experiences violence, and if any boy [or] man has mistreated his wife, sent her to her parents' home, or not given her rights, we speak out for them. This (referring to the rape of a young man) is after all a male; for males we would do anything. What they (the abusers) have done is an act that goes beyond unacceptable.

For some, as mentioned earlier, it translated into not being able to relate to the victim as playing a role in their affirmative action. Victims were lacking agency, and seen as 'others' who were unable to stand up for themselves and needed the more 'powerful' to help and guide them.

In our study, Shabbir held very traditional views about his wife's role. He was thinking of a second marriage but holding back due to his own experience of being neglected as a child when his father re-married. He was then the same age as his daughters now. He also clearly mentioned that being a man, it is not good to speak of one's sorrows or difficulties in front of others and that one should face everything by oneself.

Shakir honestly shared how he had, in some ways, maintained separate rules and opportunities for his son and daughter. The girl had been given relatively less space and freedom when it came to education and choices to study overseas.

I think I have kept [differences between my son and daughter]. Because that is why we keep our daughters more closely protected, we watch them. We do that for sons too, but to a lesser extent. We give more freedom to our sons. I think, like we sent our son abroad when he was nineteen, saying go and study – we couldn't send our daughter that easily – because we have this traditional system of ours. And because we have to see that the son and daughter still have to somehow adjust and fit into this environment.

In Ikram's case, a late marriage was connected to being able to make a living to support a wife – in a sense he was non-conforming in order to conform.

When I began my career in social work, I had tried – because when you get married sooner, then obviously when you are married your requirements increase – so that's why I deliberately said that I'd get married a little late. So that I could sort of establish my system fully, because that would make it easier to manage things later on.

Identities are constantly defined and re-defined. There are moments of alignment with being a Baloch man, such as when Shabbir says with pride that his family does not dishonour the tribe by playing musical instruments or dancing. There is also a rejection of tradition when he later talks about Baloch norms that need to be challenged, such as restricting women's mobility and education.

Consistently through the data we see this dance of a stepping away from and then a reclaiming or accepting of tradition and stereotypes. Even as there is a visible disengagement and epiphanies that establish a dissonance, there is a reversion and a tendency to hold on to masculinist ideals.

Chapter 4

The Search For A Different Man



The search for a different man

What conclusions can we draw from the experiences of these men and their fascinating lives? Some of the points raised in the previous chapter may be useful for students and researchers on issues of gender; other conclusions stated below have practical implications for practitioners and programmers. These are to do with how we approach the growing interest around male involvement in the gender project and the design of programmes on violence prevention or gender equality. Essentially we see both groups as connected: what the research reveals or learns, practice must understand and use and research must be informed by practice. Hence while we have highlighted certain implications for programming and new research areas, we see this separation as artificial and argue for a closer connection between these two ostensibly disparate fields.

The foremost conclusion is that men's experience and negotiation of masculinities is a complex terrain; their lives and their gendered experiences reveal contestations and contradictions. The two realities, explored in the previous chapter, of disengagement and yet being complicit exist side by side and expose the shifting nature of masculinities within one person's life history. Choices are made that allow a splintering and distancing, and choices are made that allow for burrowing in and settling into grooves that are familiar.

The composite of a gender sensitive man or a man that will be involved with the gender project (both literally and ideologically) will be hard to draw if the frame does not allow for contradiction and variation. This is a sobering reflection for many well-meaning programmes that are now being implemented with a view to work with men and boys on violence against women. Such programmes may have short term 'targets' that do not allow for this fluidity. However, this is not to take away from the promise of the developing identity of men working in, or associated with NGOs where activism is coupled with male identity.

Another key finding is the reality of violence in the lives of these men and how this violence is gendered not only in terms of who the perpetrator is, but also how they respond to it as young boys and then as men. Witnessing and experiencing violence at the hands of another man from childhood to adulthood seems to be a common and powerful influence in shaping the self and motivating actions. Verbal abuse, physical abuse, domestic violence targeted at the self, the mother and other family members: each participant has his own story of witnessing violence. Sites and types of violence extend from the home to the school yard to political and social violence, from domestic violence to rape to armed robbery.

The socialization and shaping of these men, during childhood and later in life, is interspersed with brushes with violence. Violence or the threat of violence seems only a hair's breadth away. Its existence is real and palpable. In a minute they can be victims, in another they can be perpetrators; sometimes in self-defence and sometimes goaded on by other men. Either way, as men they articulate the need to be prepared for it.

Some will regret its use, and others will find pride in their ability reclaim a sense of manhood that was threatened.

The study points to a need to recognize boy's and men's vulnerability to sexual violence. It also reveals that physical forms of disciplining can be excessive and brutal in the lives of young men. The data highlights the need to explore and understand men's relationship to victimhood. Victims, for these men, are the 'othered', defined as 'helpless', 'weak', 'stupid', or 'decent'. For men to acknowledge victimhood and pain associated with it requires the relinquishing of a particular perception of masculinity that many are not yet prepared to do. Yet, they clearly are victims: of rape, as witnesses to violence within homes, of physical beating in schools, in sectarian conflict, violent nationalist struggles and armed robberies. This does not take away from the fact that they can be complicit in this violence too. These experiences must be understood as important drivers of men's responses to violence against weaker groups, and of their awareness of power and its abuse. In empathising with the victimhood of others, one's own associations with feeling helpless and powerless often come into play and can serve as a barrier if this experience is uncomfortable or unacceptable.

What is also apparent is the bravado with which this violence is faced and how the threat to self and body, and even wounds are minimized. This study suggests the need to understand this beyond the individual; to see how men's distancing from pain – physical and emotional – feeds into the project of masculinities shaped by tribes, sectarian groups, and/or nation states, whereby men's bodies are seen as essential sacrifice to protect identities, weaker groups, and land. As such, unpacking victimhood and understanding these larger strands can be a powerful way to challenge the masculinity project.

Moreover, we see that standards of masculinities create tensions within the apparently homogenous category of 'men'. Multiple and interconnected sets of unequal social relationships also shape identities. Men's relationship to patriarchy is complicated where there is privilege but there is also a clear cost.

These findings have very real implications for programmes that attempt to work with men on women's issues, and use a lens that only displays the privileges associated with men's lives, without attempting to connect with men's own experiences of not just victimhood but also the shifting experience power and authority. Such connections can serve as entry points to discuss other kinds of structural violence embedded in our society. At best, it can be an opportunity lost; at worst it can serve to further strengthen the stereotype that sees all men as powerful and privileged, and fortify men's role as protectors and women's position as one without agency. It is important that men's role as protector is challenged otherwise we will create further spaces for protection that allows for paternalism.

The complex relationship with the father, and the fluctuation between intense admiration and questioning

and distancing from the actions of the father, also debunks a popular myth that it is predominantly the mother that shapes children's socialisation into gender roles. It is clear from our stories that fathers and their actions have considerable impact on the lives of these five men, even when they take positions counter to the fathers' values or actions. This too has important implications for work with fathers as significant influencers in the lives of men and their socialisation into gendered beings.

All five individuals came from indigenous cultures and contexts shaped by class, rural-urban divide, and some by participation in political processes. Their understanding of the affirmative action is suffused in the context of their lives. It appears to be an amalgam of the larger socio-political milieu and their very personal histories. Many of the men within our study located their affirmative action within their own culture and found support and meaning for their actions from within their own local frame and idiom. The need for more research that contextualises the production of, and resistances to masculinities in different cultures, as well as the need for this research to support specific programmes and their content is imperative.

For some, affirmative actions have been legal action and resort to public protests. For others the influence has led to institutional change or support lent to a partner. For some it has been channelled into the work they do through non-profit organisations. For all, these actions have represented an awareness of particular structural injustices going beyond gender to other markers of social inequality like religion, ethnicity, feudalism, caste, class and so on. While there may be variations in the depth of analysis, it is clear that actions are across a broader spectrum and not linked solely to gender justice. This is an important finding and has implications for social programmes of change that are formulated too narrowly (e.g. exclusive focus on gender in sensitisation workshops).

There is some debate on how programmes for social change have argued for change in personal lives and not taken into consideration the political change in social and economic institutions that must follow (Greig with Edström, 2012). For most of the men these affirmative actions have been outside the personal space and in the social and political arena, for example challenging a local *jirga* ruling or the feudal/*vadera* of the area, or challenging a colleague about sexist behaviour. Yet it may or may not translate into change at the personal level, where many espouse traditional notions of masculinity and power. Tracing the trajectory of this shift in men's lives to becoming more equitable (from the personal to the political or the political to the personal) is complicated. It may work in either direction and the movement may be cyclical as opposed to linear. What is clear is that the personal and political must be linked.

In conclusion, it is important to reiterate that affirmative action by men does not, based on our research, qualify them to be perfect gender equitable, sensitive males; their lives are full of experiences where they contest, reinforce and deviate from traditional hegemonic masculinities. There are contradictions within the nature of masculinities that are "diverse and mutable relational identities" (Cornwall, 2000) and not

firmly entrenched and immutable. These contestations and negotiations are a constant struggle or at best an incomplete resolution. Where we find clear dissonance and distancing from certain kinds of masculine practices we also find moments of alignment with traditional masculinities. In our search for the proverbial 'good' or 'bad' men we may miss out, as Cornwall (2000) says, "the range of living men and substitute a cardboard patriarch for the otherwise vastly complex array of situational subject positions that men may take up in different contexts and in different kinds of relationships" (p. 8).

These stories hold promise as they reflect the lived experiences of what it means to take action, as well as fractures in stereotypical patriarchal structures that we assume to be firmly entrenched. These are moments of disengagement that need to be acknowledged, celebrated and shared as they strike a blow to the project that is masculinity.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A-Life Story Composites

AKBAR

Born in 1965, Akbar lives in an urban locality of Swabi city. He is the youngest of two brothers and three sisters. He attended primary school in Swabi and spent his early childhood in Swat when his father was transferred there for 11 years.

Akbar's father served in the police at a junior cadre. He was an honest and hardworking official and often walked for miles, not having enough money to pay for public transport. He was a strict man and placed restrictions on his family especially Akbar's mother; he would be physically violent with her as well.

Akbar loved sports from an early age, and hockey was his passion. He captained his school and college teams, and later played at the district level and won numerous medals. A life without hockey was unimaginable for him. At the college level Akbar volunteered for activities such as arranging medical camps and tree plantation. He was also an active member of youth political forums.

Shortly after Akbar graduated with a degree in Commerce, his family had a horrifying experience which redefined the course of Akbar's life. Due to personal enmity which started as a minor misunderstanding with a fellow tradesman, Akbar, his brothers, father and uncles were attacked by armed men. Akbar's family responded in kind and killed one of the attackers. Akbar was also shot in the incident and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. After his release he discontinued studies as he had to hide from his enemies for almost four years, and then started working at the shop his father left him.

His social work involved distributing food and essential household items among internally displaced people due to military action in Swat and the Waziristan area. In collaboration with other social sector organizations he also worked to challenge sexual violence and trafficking of women; he helped collect information on sex workers in the area for a local NGO intervention, and worked on problems faced by transgender persons.

Akbar was active in local politics and was elected Naib Nazim (Deputy Mayor) of his constituency where he served for four years. During this time Akbar's wife was also a councillor and worked alongside him. Akbar's motivation for volunteering on social issues stemmed partly from Bacha Khan's "*Khudai Khidmatgaar*" (Servants of God) movement and Pukhtun traditions of mutual help like *azizwali*. As he dealt with cases of violence and other forms of social injustice, Akbar often received threats from enemies as well as from perpetrators of crimes. Financial uncertainties were another source of pressure. He has continued to handle these pressures by believing that everything that happens is because Allah has ordained it to be so. At times he withdraws from the situation at hand and turns to watching movies and listening to music.

He lives in a joint family arrangement with his elder brothers in their ancestral house. Akbar has two daughters and a son, and his wife currently works in an NGO. Akbar's time is spent working at the shop, managing a small volunteer organisation, and as a member of numerous district-level development forums where he speaks on social issues and maintains pressure on government functionaries to be more accountable to people.

MOHAMMAD ALI

Mohammad Ali is a 38 year-old social activist who grew up in a remote area in interior Sindh. He was the youngest of three brothers, and had three sisters. His father, Kaleem, was a labourer in the Pakistan Railways and found it difficult to provide for his family. Kaleem was an aggressive and controlling man who would often get violent with his wife and children. After years of struggle, Kaleem was able to set up a small grocery business at Khanoo.

Ali's older brother Saleem was a sensitive, charismatic individual who loved literature. He would write articles in newspapers, and had a wide circle of friends in the village and beyond, through pen-friendship. Ali loved Saleem more than his other siblings, and was proud of his fame since his articles appeared alongside those of well-known columnists in the province. After a conflict with his father, Saleem left the house forever. This loss was deeply disturbing for Ali, and he spoke of his brother with much affection and sadness.

Family life changed drastically for Ali during his early adolescence when his father died. Ali's uncle took over the business and property, and tormented the family in many ways, like forbidding them from using the shared entrance of the house. Ali was forcibly married to his uncle's daughter in exchange for his sister's marriage to the uncle's son. Ali was unable to sustain this relationship and later divorced his cousin. His sister, who was physically and emotionally abused in her marriage, was divorced in retaliation.

As a youth Ali had fallen in love with another cousin. Even though she reciprocated his feelings, they did not try to forge a relationship because of cultural barriers. She was married to someone else, and when Ali heard of this, he cried and felt deeply hurt. They never met again. Despite the number of years that have passed, Ali still felt a sense of connection to her.

Ali began to earn by selling grams at his school, then went on to selling sweets and confectionary and eventually set up a small shop of his own. Although he had to give up formal schooling because of the difficulties in the family, he continued studying as a private candidate and took his exams regularly. Ali was always a confident individual. Once, in a public town meeting, he complained about teachers showing movies to school children instead of teaching. Police officials, and key community members and administrative officials were present at the time. He persisted despite the community elders' attempts to snub him; eventually the police officer who was heading the meeting took action against the teachers.

While at the shop, Ali would read articles, stories, and other literature that his brother Saleem had left behind. He went on to graduate with a degree in law, and a Masters in Sociology. His extensive reading changed the way he thought about social injustice, and he continued to speak out by regularly writing articles for the leading local newspaper. He was supportive of people in need; his activities included helping people seek justice, organising public meetings with local authorities, and challenging *jirga* systems. One of the ways that Ali copes with the stresses of life is by repeating the phrase, '*teen din*' (three days) – that is, all difficulties will only last for three days. He is a fan of Lata Mangeshkar's music and listens to it for solace, and he finds comfort when he cries at his mother's grave.

Ali has been affiliated with a small local NGO for the last two years, where he is involved in different

¹An alternate dispute resolution mechanism.

development-related projects. He continues to volunteer for several other networks and NGOs working on social issues, especially violence against women. Ownership of a few shops in the village and a small piece of land helps him meet his financial needs. Ali has now remarried, has three children, and lives in the city.

IKRAM

39-year-old Ikram lives in Gilgit-Baltistan. His forefathers ruled the area for years, and some of his cousins are political figures in neighbouring districts. He was brought up in a joint family system and as an only child, was given a lot of attention by his uncles, aunts and other elders in the home.

Ikram's father was a conservative man. Growing up, Ikram would often witness him being physically violent towards his mother. Ikram's early education was at a local government school where the teachers used severe forms of physical disciplining. It was also at this school that he learnt about older boys sexually abusing his class-fellows. Ikram came up with a strategy to protect the more vulnerable boys by forming a group that would stay with them.

His higher education took him to other parts of the country: he completed his F.Sc. in Karachi, and then went on to a public university in Lahore. In both places, Ikram was involved in student politics and leadership activities. Violence remained a theme that he was witness to, whether as the armed sectarian violence of Karachi, or the darker side of student politics in Lahore. Being part of his regional students' alliance, he became the leader of the students' party, and was instrumental in getting reserved seats reinstated at his university for students from his part of the country.

On his return to his native village, he set up a small library to encourage reading among the villagers. He had never wanted to be a government servant or take on a regular job since, to him, that implied subservience and went against his nature. He wanted to be free to resolve people's problems as a leader, as his ancestors had done.

Ikram was always drawn to the history of his ancestors, and had written an article in a local newspaper about this in his youth. He was proud of his ethnic lineage as many people in his area enlist in the military, some of whom have also been martyred. His motivation to do work for social justice stemmed from his family background as well. He believed "*khidmatgar*" (service) made a person a real leader, and people remembered leaders for their deeds. He was inspired by social activists like Abdul Sattar Edhi and Prince Kareem Agha Khan, especially the latter as he has done visible and significant development work in the region of Gilgit-Baltistan.

Together with a few of his friends, Ikram started to work on social issues. He helped resolve complex family issues among local people, was chairman of the Zakat and Ushr² Committee of the area, and appeared on forums related to social issues. He was awarded a gold medal and declared social worker of the year by the Social Association of Pakistan. As he belongs to ruler caste of the region, he seldom faced a direct threat from perpetrators or culprits.

Ikram delayed his marriage until recently, as he felt he should first be in a position to fulfil the emotional

² Government charity scheme based on Islamic injunctions which collects proceeds from people above a certain income bracket to distribute among the poor and needy.

and financial demands and responsibilities that come with marriage. He still lives in the joint family system, and his wife works for a non-governmental organization.

SHABBIR

Shabbir Khan, a social activist in his late thirties, lives in the Dera Ghazi Khan District of Southern Punjab that borders Baluchistan. He is from the influential Baloch tribe and takes part in local politics. His father was a school teacher who was also active in politics.

When Shabbir was seven years old, his father married a second time and Shabbir and his siblings were neglected as a result of these changed circumstances. Certain norms were nonetheless emphasised in his upbringing, including taking care of the guests in the *daira* (a special place for guests which is separate from the residence).

Primary school for Shabbir was in his local village but due to his father's political victimisation, he was frequently transferred from one school to another. In his elementary school he experienced physical violence at the hands of his teachers, as well as the recognition of a sectarian (Shia and Sunni) divide in the school.

He discontinued his formal education after matriculation (10th grade) and took all subsequent examinations as a private candidate until he completed a Masters in Sociology. Shabbir dreamt of a job where he would have an office and the authority to serve people in need.

As a traditional Baloch, Shabbir never liked to participate in music or dance. Because of the complete separation of males and females in his domestic and educational life, he was also uncomfortable among women and found it difficult to interact with them. Over time interaction with women in his professional life has become easier. His own wife was elected twice as General Councillor in the local bodies' elections.

The work that Shabbir has done in terms of social justice includes supporting the family of a victim of sexual violence by taking the case to the High Court through the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. He has also taken action to protect teachers of non-formal schools against harassment and violence, and assisted the parents of a rape victim by demanding *suo motu* action by the Supreme Court. He arranges press conferences, and ensures coverage regarding complex and proscribed social issues.

Providing support to survivors of social injustices entailed different pressures for Shabbir, including threats and criticism. He faces criticism from his family for working free of charge for others, often spending from his own pocket.

He copes with these pressures by not going over the disturbing incidents in his mind and draws confidence from the fact that he possesses a well-respected family background (electoral presence, tribe); he tries to align with powerful groups and gets support from friends. His belief that he is supporting someone in need or a victim also gives him strength.

The factors that continue to motivate Shabbir to speak out for victims include his dream of becoming a

leader (Khan), his belonging to an influential tribe and recalling Bhutto's examples given by his father.

Shabbir, his wife and two young daughters live in the city of Dera Ghazi Khan. He hopes to provide his daughters an excellent education and dreams of them becoming civil service officials.

SHAKIR

Shakir is a 65-year-old professional engineer who lives in Islamabad. His mother was a teacher who left her job to stay home and raise her children, and his father was a government official. Shakir had an older sister and brother, and the family had always lived as a nuclear unit in urban areas.

Shakir's father was a man who never compromised on the core principles of his life; for his children he emphasised hard work and working with their hands, no matter how strange it looked or felt. Honesty and a spirit of competition were also encouraged among the children. Both parents were vigilant about their children's mobility and did not allow them to stay outside the home after sunset. As a child, much of Shakir's time was spent with his maternal and paternal cousins. His parents were separated when he was in college, and his father died some years later.

Inspired by one of his close relatives, Shakir longed to become an engineer from an early age. His dream came true when he received admission in an engineering college after winning a merit-based competition. Shakir and a few of his friends set up a youth group at the college that helped new students' admission processes. Later, this non-political group was able to raise funds to provide free photocopies of important notes, and also launched a magazine to which students contributed articles.

After successful completion of his studies, Shakir went to the United States of America for higher professional education. Initially he faced hard times there and took on odd jobs such as mopping floors. Since he was a committed individual, he was eventually able to take advantage of an opportunity that allowed him to study as well as receive training. Apart from professional eminence, the rigorous training taught Shakir about numerous issues pertaining to justice-based institutions and the rewards of hard work. He was awarded a distinction in the training and was team leader for a group of engineers from different countries.

Shakir got married when he was 25 years of age, and the couple had a daughter and a son later on. The family stayed in the United States for several years before they moved to Pakistan. Soon after shifting to Pakistan, Shakir's family experienced an armed robbery in their home, where his wife was the target of sexual violence. Thereafter, he remained prepared for such occurrences and made sure his house had guards and security alarms.

Shakir supported his wife as she strove to overcome the trauma of rape; he respected her choices in terms of coping, and assisted her in the ventures she undertook in order to address the issue. He felt the pressure of not dwelling upon the rape as he wanted to forget it, but his forward-looking attitude and belief in maintaining relationships gave him the strength to face these pressures.

Shakir established an engineering firm when he returned to Pakistan and has continued to focus on

institutionalising values including gender justice, honesty and transparency as part of the firm's operations. He felt that living abroad had significantly influenced his worldview. His daughter and son have studied in Pakistan, and were brought up with an awareness of Pakistani culture and its realities. They chose the arts and literature as their disciplines of interest and are continuing their higher education.

APPENDIX B-Study Information Brief

Ref. No.

April 2011

To

XYZ Organization,

Subject: Identification of MEN who took affirmative action against sexual violence against men, women or transgender individuals.

Greeting from Rozan!

Rozan is conducting a qualitative research study which aims to explore men's life experiences of taking affirmative action in cases of sexual violence against men, women and transgender individuals in the context of Pakistan. Rozan is an Islamabad based NGO working on issues related to emotional health, gender, and violence against women, children, and the reproductive health of adolescents. We would like your support in identifying men for this research.

The research aims at exploring life histories of men and boys who have taken visible affirmative action in terms of:

Taking Legal actions
Challenging Customary laws
Challenging a decision within family or outside family
Drafting or proposing policies

The criterion for the selection of participants is as follows:

Men/ Boys above the age of 18 years
Minimum one affirmative action

The following steps will be pursued in the selection criteria of potential participants

1. Identifying participants through direct (Rozan's programs handling such cases) or indirect (other NGOs and networks) methods.
2. Conducting a short preliminary interview with potential participants to assessing the nature of the affirmative action and other details.
3. Short listing to include suitable candidates according to pre-defined criteria.
4. Conducting detailed interviews using a life history approach, which may involve staying with the participants and conducting multiple interviews.
5. Letter of appreciation for participating in the study.

Please disseminate the attached information letter to groups/ individuals that may be relevant to this study. Your organization can also nominate men and boys directly by contacting us on the number or e-mail ID provided in the information letter. Please note that the deadline for receiving nominations is June 21st 2011, so we would appreciate that you disseminate this information as soon as possible.

Your participation and support will be highly appreciated.

Regards

Mafia Malik
Assistant Program Officer

Safiullah
Program Coordinator

APPENDIX C- Screening Interview Guidelines

Where are you calling from?

(For any call that comes, you must call back.)

Inform the caller about how long the call can approximately be. If they cannot give that much time, set up a more convenient time. I am speaking from Rozan. I would like to begin by thanking you for contacting us. Before continuing the conversation, I will tell you about myself. My name is _____ and I am associated with Rozan. Rozan is an Islamabad based NGO working on issues related to emotional and psychological health, gender, violence against women and children, and the psychological and reproductive health of adolescents and youth. One of Rozan's programmes works specifically with men. It is called Humqadam. This programme is conducting research where the primary objective is to understand experiences in men's lives, and to learn about those [men] who took affirmative actions for men, women and transgender individuals who have been targets of abuse (whether those actions were big or small). In this regard we also drafted an introductory letter which was sent out to people. May I ask how you came to know about this? Have you read this letter? You must have an idea then (if they have read the letter – if not, let them know) that we are conducting research with men who have taken affirmative action for women, transgender, or other men who have experienced sexual abuse. Instances of such affirmative actions and society's attitudes towards these people also need to be brought forward.

If you have any question in this regard . . .

Could you tell us a little about what kinds of actions you took?

For this study it is necessary for us to have a detailed conversation with you, and to spend some time with you. (Share time duration from June to July for info collection.) In your view, how can we arrange this, and would you be able to give that much of your time?

You must have read in the letter (if they have read the letter, otherwise respond in terms of how they responded earlier) that participation in this study is voluntary. That is, there can be no material/monetary compensation for the men who participate in the study.

I would like to clarify one more point: whatever conversation we have and whatever information you share with us during this study will only be used for this study. Your name or any sort of identifying markers will not be shared with anyone, and will be known only to the research team.

(At this point, get their permission for recording, and inform them about the selection process and additional processes.)

APPENDIX C-1-Case Summary Sheet

S. No.		Remarks
1.	Name	
2.	Age	
3.	Area	
4.	Education	
5.	Class, caste	
6.	Source of information	
7.	Accessibility	
8.	Action taken for (specify man/woman /transgender). Give some details about whom the action was taken.	
9.	Type of action	
10.	Brief description of the action	
11.	Information on the incident related details	
12.	Openness to sharing	
13.	Time availability	
14.	Clarity about research	
15.	Monetary interests	
16.	Analysis	

APPENDIX D- Consent Form

My name is and my companions are

We are associated with a non-governmental organisation, Rozan, which is situated in Islamabad. Rozan is working on issues of gender, such as violence against women and children, and the emotional and reproductive health of youth. Humqadam is one of Rozan's programmes. It works on the active involvement of boys and men for gender equality and towards the elimination of gender violence in society. To this end, Humqadam is conducting a research study. Its primary objective is to understand and learn from the lives of boys and men who have taken affirmative action against violence against men, women and transgender individuals (whether the actions were big or small, personal or social/professional). Supplemental objectives include highlighting the motivations for these actions, and society's attitude and behaviour towards these individuals.

Methodology:

The researcher will begin by providing some information about him/herself. You will then be informed about the study and its objectives. With your permission, you will then be asked questions about your life. The interview will include questions on the following:

- Childhood experiences
- Roles of parents, siblings and relatives in home life
- Incidences of and views on sexual violence
- Society's behaviour regarding incidences of violence
- Impact on social and economic life
- Actions taken by participants against sexual violence against men, women, and transgendered persons
- Societal expectations and pressures on these men

Risks:

There are minimal risks associated with your participation in this study. You may exchange your personal information with us through this questionnaire. It is possible that you could feel some hesitation or anxiety when responding to some of the questions. For any such question you may choose not to respond.

Benefits:

There are no direct and immediate benefits to your participation in this study. After successful completion of this research study, when [other] men take action towards the elimination of gender violence in the future, you and those you know will receive indirect benefits of that.

Your responses will not be shown to any of your friends or relatives. The information you provide will only

be seen by the members of the research team and will be kept under their supervision. Your name will not appear in the interview record. Information that you provide will not be shared in ways that can identify you.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate. If you agree to participate, you have the right to refuse to answer any question at any time, as stated previously.

This study involves collection of information that will take 2 to 3 hours of your time. If, during the study, you require any information, you may contact us at the following number:
..... •

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

I have read and understood the letter of consent.
I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature:..... **Date:**.....

Interviewer's Signature:..... **Date:**.....

If the participant is illiterate or unable to read or write:
Was oral consent received: Yes No.....
Interviewer's statement: has explained the purpose of the research and the possible risks and benefits to the participant in intelligible language. The participant has agreed to participate in the study.

Interviewer's Signature:..... **Date:**.....

APPENDIX E-In-Depth Conversational Interview Guide

1. As we spoke about previously, could you tell us about the incident that you mentioned?
2. How did you help?
 - Physically
 - Legally
 - Any other way (please state)
3. What sorts of difficulties, problems and obstacles did you have to face?
 - Personal obstacles (pressure, discomfort, alienation from home)
 - Obstacles at the level of the community
 - Obstacles at the level of society
4. What methods have you used/did you use to deal with these problems effectively?
5. What was the reaction of people around you, including family and community members?
6. Did you ever face any extreme reaction or action from them?
7. How did you resolve your personal grief or concerns?
8. When assisting the victim of violence, have you experienced/did you experience any internal pressure?
9. Generally, what sort of things do/did you get troubled by?
10. When assisting in any situation, case, or any individual who has experience violence, what are/were your thoughts and feelings? Could you share a little about that?
11. What motivations guide you or serve as drivers when you assist a person?
12. How is your life now? (Could you share a little about your past?)
13. Could you share something about your childhood? Where did you live? (Is there any significant event that you still remember?)
14. What was your household's system? (*Was it a nuclear or joint family system?) (Advantages or disadvantages?)
 - Did men, women, boys and girls have equal rights, opportunities and access to education, mobility, decision-making and resources?
15. Who had decision-making power in the home/who used to make decisions in the home?
16. Could you share something about household responsibilities? (What were your responsibilities?) (What responsibilities did your siblings have?)
17. Could you tell us about your parents? (Parents' attitude, their treatment, in terms of decisions in the home.)
18. Did you receive education? (How much, during that time was there any such incident that you still remember, any experience or conversation.)
19. Was the education system coeducational or segregated?
20. How were you with reference to friends?
21. Any memorable incident with reference to friends (good or bad)?
 - Was there ever an experience with friends that you were not pleased about? (Any conflict or argument.)
 - Have you or your friends ever used physical force against each other?

22. Have you ever witnessed violence?
 - If yes, then what sort of violence was it? What type?
 - Who was using it against whom?
 - What was your immediate response?
23. While growing up did you ever witness violence within your home? (What sort was it, and on whom was it perpetrated?)
24. Have you ever used violence, against your sisters, brothers, family members, friends or other members of your community?
25. Could you share a little about your work? (Job or something else.)
 - What was the attitude with co-workers?
 - Were there women among your co-workers?
 - In your opinion, should women go out of the house to work?
26. Is there any such incident that you still remember? Have you ever faced any problems while working?

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