FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

BY LOVE SERVE ONE ANOTHER

Estd. 1864

Exploring Reasons and Risks of Body Modifications in university Students

Name: Tahreem Sajjad

Roll Number: 231451452

SOCL 499: Final Year Independent Research Project

2022

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree

Department of Sociology

Forman Christian College (A Chartered University)

Contents

Abstract

The trend of body modification has increased in Pakistan, specifically body piercing and permanent tattoos. However, there is very little academic scholarship in this area. The aim of this research was to try and understand: (i) the reasons for engaging in body piercing and permanent tattoos, and (ii) any perceived risks or difficulties experienced by people who have had body piercing and permanent tattoos. The research design is qualitative in nature, using a semi-structured questionnaire to conduct in-depth interviews. The selection criterion was FCCU university students who have engaged in body piercing and permanent tattoos using snowball sampling. Ten themes were found through thematic analysis under the two study areas. 1. Reason for body modifications: (i) Depression, anxiety and stress – tattoos as a coping strategy or way to take control of body; (ii) Using tattoos as a form of rebellion against society; (iii) Influence of Western rock music; (iv) Impulsive Decision; (v) Fascination from young age due to social media; and (vi) Peer pressure. 2. Perceived risks or difficulties after body modifications: (i) Hiding tattoos from family – shame and passing; (ii) Society's stance that it is not allowed in Islam; (iii) Regret for permanent tattoos; and (iv) Engagement in other risky behaviour. Based on the study findings salient recommendations to support university students are discussed, including family sessions for counselling and social support can be provided, and education about risks of body modification.

Introduction

Making a decision to have something permanently done to your body, like tattoos and piercings, is interesting from a sociological point of view. This is because we get to learn and understand the reasons behind the decisions and the importance behind changing the body permanently in individuals. Body modifications have been known to be practiced more than 10,000 years ago. Body Modification is any method of permanently adorning the body, including tattooing and piercing. Bodily modifications suggest the practice of intentionally changing physical appearance. The term body modification is not only about getting tattoos, piercing, getting branded or scarification, but is also about understanding what the current trends and expectations in society are, and how people adapt and modify their bodies to meet social expectations. People who modify their bodies have different reasons behind their choices, even if they are living in the same society, culture or environments. Understanding and exploring the underlying reasons or motivations behind body modifications is necessary to understand the youth of today and also the factors behind desire to permanent alter the body.

Some of the literature suggests that body modification is associated with peer support and encouragement. Whereas other literature highlights that it is associated with family rejection and community shaming. In addition, scholarship reports that there is an association between body modification and engagement in deviant activities such as use of intoxicants, and engagement in risky behaviour in youth. Research in body modification can also highlight needs of youth related to following cultural practices versus going against the norms in order to gain attention and become rebellious. In this way, research in body modification can alert practitioners to the possibility of other risk-taking behaviours in adolescents, leading to preventive measures, including counselling. There is great need to understand the underlying

reasons and experiences of youth of Pakistan who engage in body modification in order to identify if areas of support are needed.

Significance of study

This study can help in understanding the reasons that motivate FCCU university students, to engage in body modification, specifically permanent tattoos and piercing. Understanding and exploring the underlying reasons or motivations behind body modifications is necessary to understand the youth of today and also the factors behind the desire to permanently alter the body. The prevalence of permanent tattoos and body piercings is associated with low social support, community shaming, engagement in deviant activities such as use of intoxicants, and engagement in risky behaviour. Thus, this study's findings may also help to highlight the need for family, and social support for youth, and also practitioner attention to prevent deviant behaviour in youth.

Literature Review

In a quantitative study it was seen that young people who had piercings and permanent tattoos were significantly more likely ($p<0.05$) to exhibit certain types of risk behaviour (Balci, Sari, & Mutlu, 2017). This included consumption of intoxicants such as smoking, alcohol, and substance abuse; and also, engagement in potentially dangerous and risky activities such as extreme sports, carrying switchblades/knives, and engaging in unprotected sexuality and having multiple sex partners. Another study assessed permanent tattoos and body piercings as markers of risk-taking behaviors in adolescents (Carroll et al., 2002). Permanent tattoos and/or body piercings can alert practitioners to the possibility of other risk-taking behavior in adolescents, leading to preventive measures, including counseling. Furthermore, tattoos and body piercing are an important part of a health maintenance and preventing healthcare for the youth.

In another study, the youth of Nigeria have been investigated using both quantitative and qualitative data (Ezeibekwe et al., 2016). Findings revealed that whereas there is a growing convergence in the disposition of both male (67.0%) and female (33.0%) students towards tattooing, there is a sharp difference exists in their disposition towards body piercing. The study shows that in contemporary times permanent tattoos are preferred over piercing. The study also showed that 41% of the respondents perceived their colleagues who engaged in tattooing and/or body piercing as irresponsible.

A qualitative study from Pakistan reveals that tattooing is more common among males (74.03%) than females (25.96%) (Gul et al., 2022). Some of the common reasons for getting permanent tattoos were found to include: (i) for the sake of fashion (31.57%) and (ii) because it was considered to enhance beauty of the body (36.31%). The majority of the participants considered tattooing harmless (66%); whereas few considered it to be harmful (28%), with few

(N=6%) have mixed opinions. In another study, the impact of tattooing in Pakistani society was discussed (Sheikh, 2020). The roots of the tattooing tradition were described as having a meaningful background, emphasized by the fact that that tradition has been around for almost 5,000 years. Historical records suggest that in Ancient Egypt, a sect used to make permanent tattoos on their skin for religious significance or for cultural manifestations.

In a quantitative study, it was found that young adults believe that body piercing is highly acceptable among the general public (Schorzman & Gold, 2007). However, it was also found that they believe such body art is acceptable in others, they feel it is less acceptable on themselves. Study participants displayed a high level of awareness regarding the potential health risks of body art, and, in fact, overestimated those risks. The complexity of tattooing is that though the health risks are recognized, and for some tattooing considered as taboo, it is still slowly permeating our society and being accepting as the new normal. There are many top-notch celebrities we follow worldwide who flaunt their tattoos, influencing fashion choices and invariably inspiring, rightly or wrongly, many youngsters to attain the same look eventually.

Study aims

The aim of this study is to learn about the reasons behind getting body modifications in FCCU university students, specifically body piercing and permanent tattoos. In addition, the study has attempted to explore the barriers and facilitators participants have faced after getting body piercing and permanent tattoos from family, friends and society. The aim was also to understand the underlying meanings behind body modifications and if participants are aware of risks and take precautions accordingly. Finally, there was an attempt to explore if participants who engage in body piercing also partake in risky behavior.

Research Questions

In light of the literature review, this study attempted to answer the following research questions:

(i) the reasons for engaging in body piercing and permanent tattoos

(ii) any perceived risks or difficulties experienced by people who have had body piercing and permanent tattoos.

Theoretical Framework

Evolutionary theory suggests that change is a reality of human society and culture and habits do not remain the same (Emlen, 1995). The assumption is that change is inevitable, and 'natural'. This theory aided to build the foundation of this study in terms of highlighting that even if Pakistani society did not traditionally accept body modification, with globalization and time there is a change and youth is partaking in body modification. Social norms theory describes situations in which individuals incorrectly perceive the attitudes and/or behaviors of peers and other community members to be different from their own (Berkowitz, 2005). This theory helps in developing the argument that people who engage in body piercing, depending on the norms and culture of their society, may face acceptance or rejection when they engage in body piercing.

Symbolic interactionism relates to body modification in a very important way. The meaning of this theory is that individuals develop meaning and establish views about the world, for example a name of a loved one tattoo can be really special for someone. Cooley's looking glass self-part of the symbolic interactionism theory relation to body modification, even though people get their bodies modified for different reasons or for themselves but they still look up to other people for their view (Shaffer, 2005). Goffman's dramaturgical theory relates to body modification and raises the question- how do people who engage in body modification fit into society, with the theory suggesting that 'fitting in' largely depends on the time, culture, setting, and society (Robert, 2016). As researchers explore the cultural location of the participants, there is better understanding of social interaction and experiences that occur after body piercing. There may be many facets of social interaction before and after body modification that can be revealed related to social support and also individual choices.

Methodology

Research design

This study is a qualitative research design using snowball sampling. Qualitative research involves different type of data collection and is inductive in nature (Bryman, 2006). In-depth interviews have been conducted with the support of semi-structured questionnaire, developed through literature review.

Sampling design

The selection criterion is FCCU university students who were approached based on prior contact and those who have engaged in body piercing and permanent tattoos. The researcher knew two FCCU university students who have permanent tattoos and body piercing, and they were asked to share contacts of others at the university through a snowball sampling approach.

Ethics

This study received ethics clearance from FCCU IRB **(Appendix C)**. The interview participants were told in the cover letter that their participation in this study is completely voluntary, and they can choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time they wish. The participants were given a choice to select time and place for interview on the campus. They were also told that the option of online interviewing is available and that the interviews can be conducted through Skype or WhatsApp. They were asked for consent for recording the interview, to help the researcher recall data for analysis, and that the audio recordings are stored safely with researcher and not shared with anyone except the supervisor for data analysis purposes only. The participants were further ensured that their emails, phone numbers, and address are not shared with anyone. The participants were further informed that the data collected from them and later presented as findings will be anonymous and their names will not be mentioned anywhere.

Interview Guide

A semi-structured questionnaire was developed with the help of the supervisor, which is attached in **Appendix B** and informed consent form is attached in **Appendix A.**

Data Collection

A total of 6 participants were part of this study, and each were interviewed once or twice for 45-60 minutes. Two interviews were conducted online and four were in-person. The data was collected between July and August 2022.

Data Analysis

The data analysis is done using thematic analysis. The interviews were transcribed into Microsoft Word. Manual coding was done with the guidance of the supervisor. My supervisor and I independently generated themes and then discussed to corroborate findings. After manual coding was done ten themes were generated.

Results

Ten themes were found through thematic analysis under the two study areas.

1. *Reason for body modifications:*

(i) Depression, anxiety, and stress – tattoos as a coping strategy or way to take control of body;

(ii) Using tattoos as a form of rebellion against society.

(iii) Influence of Western rock music.

(iv) Impulsive Decision.

(v) Fascination from young age due to social media; and

(vi) Peer pressure.

2. *Perceived risks or difficulties after body modifications:*

(i) Hiding tattoos from family – shame and passing.

(ii) Society's stance that it is not allowed in Islam.

(iii) Regret for permanent tattoos; and

(iv) Engagement in other risky behavior.

Reason for body modifications

Depression, Anxiety and Stress – Tattoos as a Coping Strategy or Way to Take Control of Body

Most of the participants held the view that body modification is the coping mechanism to combat negative emotions such as depression, anxiety, and stress. They believed that getting tattoos or piercings is a way to be in charge of their body, gain confidence, connect with themselves, and communicate with the world. Participant (21-year-old-female) claimed:

> "So, basically, I was going through very tough times 2 years ago. I was having family
>
> issues and I was dealing with anxiety and depression. So I thought dyeing my hair and

getting piercing would help distract me and make me feel better. I wanted a change in my life and I wanted control over what I would change. After the dying and piercing, I felt better, so the next year I also got tattoos."

Using tattoos as a form of rebellion against society

Several participants had a common narrative on not becoming what society wants them to be. They didn't want to be defined by the general rules assigned by the society they lived in. In order to be different or to have their own identification they opted for body modifications. One participant (24-year-old-Male) shared:

> "A permanent tattoo fit into my nature. I am known to be a rebel in my family and amongst friends. My tattoos help me to find a rhythm to life and to find comfort. I am able to make my own rules and dance my own rhythms. The tattoo further confirms to everyone who meets me for the first time, that I am a social rebel. I will raise a voice against all social evils and social norms that harm people. What do you think is worst tattooing my body, or hitting someone because she is a woman. Our society needs to change its definitions for what is acceptable and what is not…this is what my tattoo represents."

Influence of Western Rock music

One interviewee stressed that he had been inspired by Western rock music and that rock musicians who inspired him had tattoos. He also explained that body modification and permanent tattoos are not condemned in Western culture and in fact are considered to raise the status. In order to live life like a rockstar he opted for tattoos. He (26-year- Male) old claimed:

> "The main reason and the motivation behind having these permanent tattoos was Western rock music culture. As you know that I play rock music from a long time, starting from my O level days. I was really fascinated by these

rockstars from the West and their lifestyles and I wanted to adopt their habits

myself, starting with getting these tattoos done."

Impulsive Decision

Most participants shared that getting their bodies tattooed or pierced was an impulsive decision. They didn't really think it through carefully and they made the decision without much reflection. Most of the participants didn't care about discussing the risks associated with tattoos and piercings and did not feel the need to get consent from their parents. One of the participants (22-year-old-Male) claimed that:

"It was much more of an impulsive thing for me to go and just get it

done. At this age, it is not like our parents will notice what is on our back

or legs, so we don't need their permission."

Fascination from young age due to social media

Few of the participants claimed that they had been fascinated by piercings and tattoos from a very young age They wanted to change their bodies and were always absorbed by ideas and pictures about what color they could get their hair dyed, where they could get the next piercing and what image to get tattooed. They could not remember a time when they had not been fascinated by body modifications. A participant (22-year-old-Female) shared:

"The reason that I opted to get tattoos and piercings is due to my own

personal interests obviously, I've always been into these things since I

was around 12 or 13 years old. My personality is reflected through this…

my tattoos and my piercings."

Peer pressure

The majority of participants shared that they had pressure or influence from their friends to have tattoos. One of the participants got a tattoo because his friends were also getting tattoos. He (24-year-old-Male) claimed:

> "Of course, it (the tattoo) does have meaning. A few years ago, a friend of mine died. So my other friends decided to get a tattoo of his name on their arm. I went with them and got the tattoo done too. I might get another one of my children, in the future."

Perceived risks or difficulties after body modifications

Hiding tattoos from family – shame and passing

Nearly all the participants explained that they never talked about their tattoos and piercings with their parents or anyone from their families. They never got permission from parents before getting their body modified. And most of the participants said that they never tried telling their parents even long after it was done. Even when their parents found out about it, they did not discuss it. The reason for not telling their parents was because they would be upset and angry. It was thus that participants found it convenient to hide their tattoos, so they are not criticized relentlessly by parents and family. One of the participants (21-year-old-Female) claimed:

> "I had to hide the tattoos from my parents but later on when they found out-after 6 to 7 months... they thought the tattoos are the temporary one's and they wanted me to get them removed. But when they found out that the tattoos are permanent, I had to deal with a lot of backlash. You know the character assassination girls have to deal with, for example people

say *achi larki nahi hai agr tattoos hai* (any girl who has tattoos is not a nice girl).

In our society if boy's have a tattoo, it is still acceptable. So, these are the things that I had to deal with. My parents are ashamed of me and scared that other relatives will find out about my tattoos."

Another participant (21-year-old-Female) shared:

"They (our parents) still don't know exactly who we are becoming and what we are dealing with in life. To cope with all the problems and stress we get piercings and tattoos... academics and sports are not enough you know to keep us going. But because they (our parents) don't understand our lives, we also don't share our activities with them."

Society's stance that it is not allowed in Islam

Majority participants shared that family and parents used religion to claim that tattoos are *haram* (illegal in Islam). Participants shared that family stigmatizes them for not being good Muslims because of their tattoos. One participant (24-year-old-Male) said:

"My family got to know after I got the tattoo, they asked different questions, they were like this is *haram* in religion since I belong to a Muslim family, it is not part of our culture. They have also told me not to tell anyone about it."

Another participant (24-year-old-Male) shared:

> "My friends usually shame me by saying that said that I can't do *wazoo*
>
> (ablution before prayer), and because my namaz (prayer) is not accepted
>
> I will go to hell."

Another participant (22-year-old-Female) said:

> "My family is not okay with it because they think it something
>
> antireligious."

Regret for permanent tattoos

Two of the participants wanted to change or modify their already existing tattoos. One participant (22-year-old-Female) claimed:

> "I didn't think about the consequences of this being permanent. I want
>
> to get my tattoo removed or then covered up with something better
>
> which holds some meaning."

Engagement in risky behavior

All participants shared that they did engage in some kind of risky behavior after getting piercings and tattoos. They explained that since their engagement in body modifications, it had sealed their identity and they were now easily able to indulge in intoxicants. All six participants claimed they consumed cigarettes and two shared that they consumed alcohol. One shared that they did other risky behavior but did not want to share what it was. One participant (24-year-old-Male) shared:

"After my tattoos, my friends and I became permanent cigarette smokers. Whereas before the tattoos we were occasional smokers. It goes well together, you know…smoking with the tattooed arms."

Discussion

The study findings suggest that reasons behind getting body modification i.e., tattoo or piercing is diverse, personal life narrative, fascination from social media, peer pressure, engagement in risky behavior, impulsive decisions. And difficulties faced as societies stance not allowed in religion or individuality. **(1) Reasons** why the participants opted for body modifications One of the participants was going through rough times in life and family which she considered as depression and anxiety. She wanted to opt for other kind of modifications too like dying hair. One of the other participants also claimed a similar interest of other body modifications. The participants said that they wanted to take charge of their life, want change in life and get some kind of confidence through it that could give them a boost or energy. There sometimes be a deeper motivation to get tattoos; individuals are looking for to maintain control of their body over their possessions, and body modification is a statement of someone's taking ownership of their body (Cano & Sams, 2010). Getting tattoos or piercings is a form of individualism. the impulsiveness all the participants talked about shows that they didn't really think it through, it's just like when the consumer likes the idea of having something he don't think in his excitement about the cost he will have to pay or the consequences he'll have to face after it (Cano & Sams, 2010).

Tattoos are so common these days in society that most of the individuals feel stress to get tattooed. One of the participants shared his fascination from western rock music culture. He got really captivated by these western rockstars, their lifestyle and of course, the tattooed bodies. Social norms theory describes situations in which individuals incorrectly perceive the attitudes and/or behaviors of peers and other community members to be different from their own (Berkowitz, 2005). These trends of body modification are not any longer constrained to the West culture.

Nowadays they have become more popularized, they are broadly available, and more popular in parts of the world where they weren't before. In current India, the terror and disgrace linked with tattoos disappeared, and that body artwork is no longer allied with scramblers and drug addicts. In a study it was stated that a tattoo workshop owner, in Delhi, speaks that mothers even get inked, and you "see people at discussions with tattoos." This behaviour was not always the case. One of the participants associated their tattoo with the star of taurus. There's always a meaning behind these modifications it can be special for them, every one of the participants tried to show their individuality or personality through these modifications i.e., if it is rebellious nature, deviancy, showing their personality in different ways then the rules defined by the society they live in.

Therefore, younger generation is inclined to body modification because of the childishness, inquisitiveness, thrill-seeking attitude and leaning toward peer pressure. Though tattoos have been more communal in the West; it's now also piercing in other portions of the world. According to a study Pakistan can extremely indoctrinate the tattooing as; 30% of the total population is among 15-29 years old is of people who are young and have extreme susceptibility to get predisposed to body modification. Secondly there's an inspiration of Western culture through social media. Henceforth, as predicted, the intensifying trend of tattoos is lately stated in Pakistan. Evolutionary theory aided to build the foundation of this study in terms of highlighting that even if Pakistani society did not traditionally accept body modification, with globalization and time there is a change and youth is partaking in body modification.

In medical facet; from Pakistan there's a case-controlled study described that tattooing rises the danger of Hepatitis C 27 times. Which according to the interviews not most of the participants knew in detail. Few of the participants were completely indifferent about the risk associated with body piercing and permanent tattoos, they just went for it without considering

any fatal effects to their health. As Goffman's dramaturgical theory relates to body modification and raises the question- how do people who engage in body modification fit into society, with the theory suggesting that 'fitting in' largely depends on the time, culture, setting, and society (Robert, 2016). **(2) Difficulties** participants faced apart from medical facts were also religious and social facets of body modifications. There were different kind of beliefs concerning tattoos or piercings in different cultures and religions. In Islamic culture getting body modifications is forbidden, getting something done on the body created by Almighty is highly intolerant according to the principles of the religion and society the participants live in. In some cultures, having a tattoo portrays illegal actions. In Japan, tattoos are strongly related with crime establishments identified as the Yakuza.

Lastly, Ministry of Health should take measures regarding the hygiene standards at tattooing parlours to lessen the risk of transmission of infectious diseases. Results advocate that individual with body modifications are more expected to involve in risky behaviours, which can cause health risks. The participants showed that one way or other they are involved in risky behaviours, it was part of their personality before getting their body tattooed and none of the participants believe that it has any association with their body modification. The participants were unconcerned by how they modified their body be piercing or be it the tattoos they had on their bodies. They had their reasons to justify their modifications. All of the participants were so captivated in their sentiments and the influences and individuality that none of them regret their modifications though one them wanted to coverup the last tattoo and get it done in a better and new way. Participants had to face inconveniences within the family and in the society because of the culture they live in and religious values. All the participants had to hide their modifications because of the fear of not being expected and the outburst of the family.

Limitations

This study is limited to FCCU University students and so the sample cannot be generalized to wider population who engage in body modification in Pakistan. We also were not be able to generalise the findings to other students in Lahore and students attending public universities.

Concluding Recommendations

From the results of this study, few recommendations were concluded through which people practicing body modification can be aided. Family sessions for counseling and social support can be provided for the betterment of the situation. Counseling sessions for peer pressure must be given to the students for a better understanding of doing the right thing. Counseling for risks of permanent tattoos and safe behavior must be necessary in universities. Education regarding body modification should be provided to the participants. Along with everything risky behavior counseling sessions should be obligatory. Counselling sessions should be planned by universities. Students should be provided with the awareness regarding the health risks by body modifications. Counselling should be obligatory deterring drug usage in the students of universities. Therapy should be suggested for mental health and adverse behaviour in the students with body modifications. Help should be provided to instil cultural values and tradition. There should be programs organized by media related to health. Lastly there should be strict measure by the government for the tattoo studios in order take safety measures to deter transmission of infections and health risks.

References

Balci, S., Sari, E., & Mutlu, B. (2015). Comparison of risk-taking behaviour and frequency of piercing and tattooing among university students. Allergy, 2, 5-6.

Berkowitz, A. D. (2005). An overview of the social norms approach. Changing the culture of college drinking: A socially situated health communication campaign, 1, 193-214.

Bryman, A. (2006). Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: how is it done?. Qualitative research, 6(1), 97-113.

Cano, C. R., & Sams, D. (2010). Body modifications and young adults: Predictors of intentions to engage in future body modification. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 17(1), 80-87.

Carroll, Sean & Riffenburgh, Robert & Roberts, Timothy & Myhre, Elizabeth. (2002). Tattoos and Body Piercings as Indicators of Adolescent Risk-Taking Behaviors. Pediatrics. 109. 1021-7. 10.1542/peds.109.6.1021.

Emlen, S. T. (1995). An evolutionary theory of the family. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 92(18), 8092-8099.

Ezeibekwe, U. P., & U. Ojedokun, A. A. (2016). Ezeibekwe, U.P., Ojedokun, U.A., & Aderinto, A.A. (2016). "Love for Artwork: Tattooing and Body Piercing among Undergraduate Students of university of Ibadan, Nigeria, African Journal for the Psychological Studies of Social Issues, 19(3), 87-95.

Gul, S., Safeer, A., & Obaid, A. (2022). Metaphors as Tattoos on human body: Passion or Pathosis? Bangladesh Journal of Medical Science, 21(3), 730-740.

Roberts, D. (2016). Using dramaturgy to better understand contemporary western tattoos. Sociology Compass, 10(9), 795-804.

Schorzman, C. M., Gold, M. A., Downs, J. S., & Murray, P. J. (2007). Body Art: Attitudes and Practices Regarding Body Piercing Among Urban Undergraduates. Journal of Osteopathic Medicine, 107(10), 432-438.

Shaffer, L. S. (2005). From mirror self-recognition to the looking-glass self: Exploring the Justification Hypothesis. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 61(1), 47-65.

Sheikh, H. (2020). Your Body Owns the Tattoo! . AELJ, 235.

Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

Dear Respondents,

You are invited to participate in a study which aims to explore the phenomena of body modifications, specifically permanent tattoos and piercing. Issues like reasons for body modification, social response, and your feelings and understandings related to the area will be discussed. The interviews will take approximately 40 minutes. There is no compensation, and your participation is voluntary. You are not compelled to complete the interview once it has started and have full right to withdraw at any point. There is no kind of known risk involved. The information provided will not be shared with a third party, and no names will be asked. Your anonymity and the confidentiality is guaranteed. By signing this form, you are agreeing to have read this cover letter and give your consent to take part in this research study.

FCCU Student Researcher,

Department of Sociology

Tahreem Sajjad (231451452@formanite.fccollege.edu.pk)

Informed Consent of Participant (*Signature*): _____

Appendix B: Open-ended Semi-Structured Questionnaire

1. What are the reasons that encouraged you to opt for body modifications, specifically body piercing and permanent tattoos?

2. What kind of barriers and facilitators did you faced after getting body piercing and tattoos (from family, friends and society)?

3. Are you aware about any possible risks associated with body piercing and permanent tattoos?

4. Did you ever research about the side effects of getting tattoos/piercing?

5. Can you describe if tattooing/ body piercing holds any significant meaning for you, (for example: your personal life, your feelings, etc)?

6. Does tattooing hold relevance for you and your position in society, and your status in family/ community/ university?

7. Do you engage in any (i) risky behaviour such as consumption of any type of intoxicants (e.g. smoking, drugs…) and (ii) potentially dangerous and risky activities (e.g. dangerous sports, speed driving…)?

8. Have you ever thought about removing your piercing or tattoos?

9. Do you regret getting piercing or tattoos?

10. Do you want/ plan to get more permanent tattoos/piercing, and / or encourage your friends /family?

Appendix C: IRB Approval Certificate:

FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

IRB Approval Certificate

IRB Ref: IRB-391/05-2022

Date: 18-05-2022

Project Title: Exploring the phenomena of body modifications, specifically permanent tattoos and piercings, in FCCU University students: Reasons, Responses and Risks.

Principal Investigator: Tahreem Sajjad.

Supervisor: Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree.

Institutional review board has examined your project in IRB meeting held on 18-05-2022 and has approved the proposed study. If during the conduct of your research any changes occur related to participant risk, study design, confidentiality or consent or any other change then IRB must be notified immediately.

Please be sure to include IRB reference number in all correspondence.

Dr. Kauser Abdulla Malik HI, SI, TI
Chairman, IRB
HEC Distinguished National Professor (Biotechnology)
Dean Postgraduate Studies
Director, Research, Innovation & Commercialization (ORIC)
Forman Christian College (A Chartered University)
Lahore

For Further Correspondence:
Ferozepur Road, Lahore-54600

3/10