# Weaponry Pattern of Homicidal Deaths in Faisalabad During 2014-2015

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Despite multiple laws implemented in various parts of the world to combat crime, homicide is on the increase day by day. Many factors predispose to the act of murder, the main being lack of self-control resulting in aggressive behavior. **Objective:** This study is aimed at finding out the types of weapons used for homicide in Faisalabad and comparing the statistic with other cities. **Study design:** Retrospective study. **Settings:** The mortuary of Punjab Medical College, Faisalabad. **Period:** Two years from 1st January 2014 to 31st December 2015. **Sample size:** 331 homicidal cases. **Data collection:** Cases labelled as homicidal based on Police papers and autopsy reports were analyzed after obtaining permission from the concerned authorities. The information obtained was recorded in predesigned performas and analyzed using SPSS version 12.0. **Results:** Majority of the homicidal cases were of the age group 20-29 years, males being the major victims. Firearm remained the main weapon of offence followed by sharp weapons. May was the month in which most homicidal cases were reported. Police station Sadar was the area from which majority of the cases were received. **Conclusion:** Over the ages, the young (20-29 years) are the most aggressive and mostly the victims of homicide. **Keywords:** Homicide, weapons, Faisalabad, Qatl, Homicidal rate, Firearms

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## INTRODUCTION

Homicide, one of the most extreme forms of human behavior, is derived from Latin, where "homo" means "man" and "cidium" refers to the "act of killing", hence "homicide" means "killing of one person by another". In the west, homicide is generally classified into murder, manslaughter and justifiable homicide. Murder is further broken down into first and second-degree murder based on the level of actus reas and mens rea. On the other hand, man-slaughter is reserved for instances where the accused did not plan the crime, nor did he intend for the victim to die because of his actions, usually arising out of accidental circumstances.

In Pakistan, homicide falls under Qatl according to the Qisas and Diyat act 1990, further being classified into Qatl-i-amd, Qatl-i-shibh-i-amd, Qatl-i-khata and Qatl- bi-sabab.

According to the global study on homicide 2013 done by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, almost half a million people across the world lost their lives in 2012 as a result of intentional homicide.[1] According to the study, the homicide rate in Africa and America was more than double the global average (6.9 per 100,000), whereas in Asia, Europe and Oceania it was roughly half.[1]

The homicidal rate in Pakistan in 2008 was 6.81[2] which increased to 7.7 per 100,000 people in 2012, being the highest in the South Asian region, followed by Afghanistan at 6.5 with India having a rate of 3.5 per 100,000 population due to its large population.[1] Faisalabad, being the 3rd most populated city of Pakistan had a homicidal rate of 10.9 per 100,000 individuals in 2014.

The vast number of the murder victims in various parts of the world fall under the 20-29year age group[7-9,12,13] with a gender predominance of males.[3,4,6,8,9]

Globally speaking, the main weapon of offence was firearms[3-5,9,12], followed by sharp edged weapons. Asphyxiation and blunt weapons had variable results.

Summers was the time when most cases of homicide occurred universally.

**Objective:** To determine the types of weapons used for murder in Faisalabad in 2014-2015 and compare the weaponry pattern with those in other parts of Pakistan and world-wide.

## METHODOLOGY
**Study design:** Retrospective study

**Settings:** Study material was collected from the mortuary of Punjab Medical college, Faisalabad which included Inquest reports, Injury statements, postmortem reports, hospital records/treatment notes of the victims labelled as cases of homicide built on police inquest Report and autopsy findings.

**Period:** Two years from 1st January 2014 to 31st December 2015.

**Sample size:** The collected sample size was 331 homicidal cases out of a total of 629 autopsies conducted.

**Inclusion criteria:**

Homicidal cases of

- Both genders.
- All age groups.
- From the area of Police stations under the Department of Forensic Medicine, Punjab Medical college, Faisalabad.

**Exclusion criteria:**

- Individuals killed in Police encounters.
- Homicide from areas not falling under the Department of Forensic Medicine, PMC.

**Data collection procedure:**

Three hundred and thirty-one cases labelled as homicidal based on Police papers and autopsy reports were analyzed after obtaining permission from the concerned authorities.

The modalities studied were the age of the victims, gender, type of weapon used, Police station /area of occurrence and month/season in which the homicide occurred. The information obtained was recorded in predesigned performas.

**Data analysis:** SPSS version 12.0 was used to analyze the collected data.

## RESULTS

During the 2year period of study, out of a total of 629 autopsies conducted, 331 were labeled as homicidal, hence being 52.62% of all deaths.

Majority of the victims were between 20-29 years of age, followed by the 30- 39year age group.

### Table 1: Distribution of victims based on age-sex

| Age group | Males | Females | Total | % |
|-----------|-------|---------|-------|------|
| 0-9 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 3.62 |
| 10-19 | 23 | 12 | 35 | 10.57 |
| 20-29 | 69 | 43 | 112 | 33.83 |
| 30-39 | 57 | 19 | 76 | 22.96 |
| 40-49 | 42 | 10 | 52 | 15.70 |
| 50-59 | 25 | 3 | 28 | 8.46 |
| 60-69 | 11 | 1 | 12 | 3.62 |
| 70-79 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0.90 |
| 80-Above | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.30 |
| Total | 236 | 95 | 331 | -- |

The Male population 71.30% clearly outnumbered the females 28.70% by a ratio of 2.5:1.

Among the 331 homicidal deaths, firearm was the most predominantly used weapon in 69.78% of the victims, followed by sharp weapons at 11.18% and asphyxiation 9.67% falling behind these two.

### Table 2: Weaponry pattern different age groups

| Age group | Fire Arm | Sharp | Blunt | Asphyxia | Poison | Flame |
|-----------|----------|-------|-------|----------|--------|-------|
| 0–9 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| 10-19 | 22 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 20-29 | 78 | 14 | 7 | 10 | 0 | 3 |
| 30-39 | 52 | 11 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| 0-49 | 42 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 50-59 | 22 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 60-69 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 70-79 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 80-above | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 231 | 37 | 24 | 32 | 2 | 5 |

The month in which most homicides were reported was May, followed by August.

### Table 3: Month-wise distribution of homicidal cases

| Month | 2014 | 2015 | TOTAL | % |
|-------|------|------|-------|------|
| January | 16 | 14 | 30 | 9.06 |
| February | 17 | 13 | 30 | 9.06 |
| March | 13 | 16 | 29 | 8.76 |
| April | 08 | 14 | 22 | 6.65 |
| May | 20 | 15 | 35 | 10.57 |
| June | 19 | 08 | 27 | 8.16 |
| July | 15 | 09 | 24 | 7.25 |
| August | 19 | 13 | 32 | 9.67 |
| September | 15 | 09 | 24 | 7.25 |
| October | 15 | 10 | 25 | 7.55 |
| November | 10 | 14 | 24 | 7.25 |
| December | 15 | 14 | 29 | 8.76 |
| Total | 182 | 149 | 331 | -- |

Majority of the cases were from the area under Police Station Sadar (17%) followed by Police Station Millat town (13.9%) and then Police Station Nishatabad (7.6%)

## Table 4: Geographical distribution of H.V

| Police station | Number of Homicides | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Batala colony | 15 | 4.53 |
| Civil lines | 10 | 3.02 |
| D-Type | 18 | 5.43 |
| Factory area | 19 | 5.74 |
| Ghulam Muhammadabad | 21 | 6.34 |
| Gulberg | 5 | 1.51 |
| Jhang bazar | 18 | 5.43 |
| Madina town | 18 | 5.43 |
| Mansoorabad | 16 | 4.83 |
| Millat town | 46 | 13.89 |
| Nishatabad | 25 | 7.55 |
| People's colony | 13 | 3.92 |
| Rail bazar | 03 | 0.91 |
| Raza abad | 06 | 1.81 |
| Sadar | 57 | 17.22 |
| Samnabad | 11 | 3.32 |
| Sargodha road | 13 | 3.92 |
| Theekrewala | 09 | 2.71 |
| Others | 08 | 2.41 |

## DISCUSSION

Faisalabad is the third most populated city in Pakistan. A demographic profile shows that the total population of Faisalabad was 3.038 million in 2014[2]. This makes a homicidal rate of 10.9 per 100,000 individuals which is an increase of 2.6 deaths per 100,000 individuals from the 2002 mean death rate for homicide of 8.3 per 100,000 persons[3].

The mortuary of Punjab Medical College, Faisalabad, deals with postmortems from jurisdictions of 19 police stations. During the 2year study period, 331 homicidal deaths were reported out of a total of 629 autopsies conducted in the department accounting for 52.62% of all the postmortems conducted. Individuals in the age group 20-29 years were the major victims (33.83%) of homicide followed by the 30-39 age group (22.96%). Similar findings were observed in previous studies conducted previously in Faisalabad[12-15], Lahore[17], Peshawar[19,23], Karachi[20]. This contrasted with the observations by Martin et al in France where the mean age of victims was 42 years[3], according to Khalil et al, the average victim age in North Tunisia was 37.7 years[24] and the study by Asad Ullah et al, where the 31-40 age group took the lead over the 21-30 age group[21].

In our study, males (71.30%) clearly outnumbered the females (28.70%) by a 2.5:1 ratio. These findings were similar to many studies conducted in different cities of Pakistan.[12-14,16,17,19-24] Globally speaking, the situation of gender distribution of victims is quite similar with males outweighing the females, usually in more than a 2:1 ratio.[3,4,6,8,9] The reason behind this may be that females generally stay indoors as compared to men and they are more likely to be killed by their spouse/intimate partner or family member while men are more likely to be killed by strangers.[24,25]

Inspite of multiple laws against firearm possession in various parts of the world, firearms remain the leading weapon for murder[3-5,9,12-23] hence showing that strict implementation and heavy fines against offenders should be put in place. The buying and selling of firearms should also be strictly and closely monitored. On the other hand, Hugar et al[7] and Khalil BM et al[24] believe that sharp weapons, not firearms, are the major weapons for homicide followed by blunt weapons.

There is a variation in the season and its relation to the number of homicides. While many studies show that the largest number of murders were reported in the peak summer months of June – September[8,12,13,16] still others state November[19], March.[20] In this study, the maximum number of homicides were reported in May (10.57%) followed by August (9.67%) hence no strong connection has linked the hot season to being a predisposing stimulus for murder as yet.

Of the 19 Police Stations that fell under the umbrella of the Forensic Department, Punjab Medical College, Faisalabad, the maximum number of cases were brought from the area of Police Station Sadar followed by Police Station Millat town and then Police Station Nishatabad, reason being that Police Station Sadar covers a wider jurisdiction and majority of the population are illetrate and belong to the rural areas.
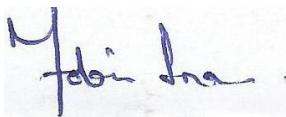
## CONCLUSION

From this study, it is concluded that over the ages, the young (20-29 years) are the most aggressive and mostly the victims of homicide. Males were mostly killed with firearms being the main weapon of offence. This requires strict laws and regulations of sale, purchase and possession of firearms with heavy fine and imprisonment in case of violation.

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