

**The effects of gender diversity on work group performance
in Pakistani universities**

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The Effects of Gender Diversity on Work Group Performance in Pakistani Universities

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the effects of gender diversity on workgroup performance in Pakistani universities. The study explores the cultural context of KP in Pakistan and theorises how social constructs regulate gendering in human relationships. Qualitative methods are employed to identify, explore and explain how the concept of gender covertly contributes to shaping the professional roles of men and women within extreme patriarchal cultures. The perspectives of both men and women academics, acquired through semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations of academic meetings, are analysed in this study. The findings support Goffman's (1954) work on performance and an argument is developed that social and cultural dynamics disempower women by affecting the way they control others' impression of them (women). The study posits a theory that segregation of men and women in Pakistani society, the attitudes and behaviours of individuals as well as social structure, all work to the advantage of men. This is based on cultural values influenced by traditional practices and different interpretations of religious beliefs. The study concludes that religious thought embedded in deep rooted historical religious traditions can be a more powerful reproducer of patriarchy than capitalist relations of production in South Asian cultures. Unlike western cultures where the influence of religious thought has been challenged and diminished over three centuries, there is no equivalent enlightenment in Pakistan that challenges the hegemony of religious thought. This being the case, the popular (activist) base from which to challenge the dominance of religiously informed patriarchy is not yet sufficiently well developed to support enforcement of legislation.

Introduction

The paper reports the findings of a study into the effects of gender diversity on the performance of academics in the Khyber PukhtunKhwa (KPK) province of Pakistan. This study took place in the specific social cultural context of KPK in Pakistan. It highlights how social constructs regulate gendering by familiarizing the reader with dynamics in men's and women's groups that are products of perceived gender differences. The reader will gain an understanding of what men and women seek from group membership.

The concept of gender influences social and interpersonal behaviours, and gender identity influences social and personal decisions (Roy, 2001). The study employed qualitative methods to identify, explore and explain how gendering covertly shapes the professional roles of men and women working in universities within a culture of extreme patriarchy. The perspectives of both male and female academics are reported alongside the researcher's interpretations of non-participant observation activity. By coding and developing a thematic analysis, insights into how gendered outcomes arise and are reproduced in Pakistani universities have been developed. The study contributes to knowledge by exploring gender role assumptions and identity in Pakistani culture to offer both an empirical and theoretical account of gender identity formation in extreme patriarchal cultures. By contributing to the wider understanding of gender related dynamics, this study promotes gender equality and encourages the use of gender studies to improve the human condition.

The paper is divided into five parts. In the first section, we explore the empirical context of the study by examining indicators of gender discrimination in Pakistan. In the second section, we set out our theoretical context. We outline different perspectives on the process of gendering with specific attention to Goffman's (1954) work on 'impression management' and Butler's (2004) insights into the 'livability' of different identities in the context of socially

constituted gender identities. In the third section, we outline the methodology and methods of the field work and analysis phase of the study. Section four reports our main findings and in the final section we draw out our contribution to knowledge. We conclude that pre-Islamic religious practices can be a more powerful reproducer of patriarchy than capitalist relations of production in North West Pakistan.

1.2 Background of the Study

Gender plays a significant role as an organising principle in society, as evidenced by the division of labour according to sex. Schalkwyk (1998) suggests that in most societies there are clear patterns of women's work and men's work, both in the household and in the wider community that are accompanied by cultural explanations. In Pakistan, socially constructed gender norms lead to a 'separate lives' philosophy for women and men, affecting women's position in society, and influencing outcomes for women in all aspects of life (Mumtaz, 2010).

The Pakistan Review (2011) finds that in a population of 78.7 million women, only 7% are economically active, placing Pakistan in the bottom quartile for gender empowerment (107th out of 140 nations). The Country Watch (2010) report suggests that women in Pakistan face a life of constant discrimination and harassment, in both their domestic and employment settings. In many parts of the country, there is a strong social pressure on women to stay at home which limits their mobility and capacity to contribute to wider society.

The Federal Bureau of Statistics (2010) indicates that literacy amongst men is almost twice as high as women (66.25% for men and 34.75% for women), and that employment is nearly four times higher for men (79% for men, and 21% for women). This gap is far wider than the neighbouring country of India (created after Pakistan) where 62% of men and 47% of women

work. The Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum, 2010) indicates that the overall ranking of Pakistan in the gender gap index is 132, below neighbouring countries like India (at 112) and Bangladesh (at 82), and far below any OECD country.

The outcomes for women in North West Pakistan are amongst the worst in Pakistan. Sultana (2009) argued that Khyber PukhtunKhwa (KPK) is one among the five provinces in Pakistan that struggle to combat extremism. The social structure there prevents realization of the full potential of women and they cannot participate as equals at work (Mumtaz, 2010). In a literacy survey of Pakistan in 2007-08, the province of KPK reported the literacy rate as 69% for men and 25% for women. The literacy rate for women in KPK lagged behind the Punjab province (51%) and Sindh (43%). The gap in the labour force participation rate (LFPR) was also reported as very wide: the LFPR gap in the KPK province was 79.3% points (98% men v 18.7% for women). While this is similar to Sindh (where it was reported as 79.1%), it is far wider than the Punjab (reported as 63.35%). Only the province of Baluchistan has a wider LFPR gap than the KPK province.

Alam (2009, page or URL?) commented on this issue on 'International Women's Day'. He noted that "the percentage of women's participation in the workforce in KPK is encouraging only in the Education and Health sector, the situation in other sectors if compared is quite alarming". This is supported by the gender gap index 2010 which shows that the gap is wide in manufacturing (76% men v 24% women) and Agriculture (73% men v 27% women), but smaller in Health (59% men v 41% women) and Education (56% men v 44% women). Education is one of only two professions where women enjoy almost the same freedom to work as men. Reassuringly, the Directorate of Literacy and Higher Education in February 2009 suggested that this balance is largely maintain in tertiary education: in KPK Universities just over 60% of academic were male and nearly 40% were female.

In identifying reasons for these conditions, Hanna (1971, p521) comments:

"The culture of social distance and maintenance of moral standards specified by the society in KPK sharply segregates men and women and limits their interaction. Separate compartments in trains and buses, screened pathways, curtained cars, separate sections for male and female at schools and colleges and separate offices and staff rooms for men and women at organizations are consequences of the culture of sex segregation".

In such a context, there are many challenges to collaboration between men and women in universities (for example on Boards of Studies, Academic Councils, Syndicates and other committees). Such extreme gender segregation impacts on an academic's performance in workgroups and studying gender interactions in these environments is fruitful to further advance gender research.

Performance of Gender and Pukhtun Culture of KPK

A substantial body of work concludes that the concept of gender is rooted in theories of sexual difference, gender socialization and social compliance (Buss 1995, Lorber 1994, Bandura 1999, Singh 2004, Aronson 2007). Sexual difference and the structural arrangements for work and family regulates differences in the lives of men and women and constructs the concept of gender norms in society (Barclay 2008). These structural arrangements vary in different cultures to create different norms regarding the roles of men and women. The extent to which there are expectations of compliance with social norms presents another site for the reproduction of differences between men and women, and strengthening social structures that operate to the advantage of men (Walby, 1990; Valian, 1992; Barclay, 2008; Critelli, 2010).

Butler (2004), following her dialogue with Braidotti, suggests that frameworks for sexual difference reveal the persistent cultural and political reality of patriarchal domination. Butler (2004, p. 314) takes the view that “whatever permutations of gender takes place, they do not fully challenge the framework within which they take place, for that framework persists at a symbolic level”. Sexual difference forms a continuing power difference between men and women in language and society and functions at a deep level to establish a symbolic and social order in society.

Within this set of assumptions is the idea that normative conceptions of gender construct a social system which is consistently more restrictive for women than for men. Butler unravels the subtle pressures placed on men and women in the realm of ‘desire’. While there is no assumption that a person with a given gender identity will desire in a specific way, stereotypes develop of the kinds of desires that a person of a given gender identity will pursue. In this way, the concept of desire, and the package of desires attribute to people with a specified gender identity, penetrate the consciousness of men and women and create tensions in their psyche.

Butler draws on the Hegelian traditions to unravel how the complexity of inner and external desires affects the production of consciousness. Desire is intricately connected to a person’s need for social recognition. Where inner desires and externally imposed expectations of desire are not in alignment, it affects a person’s capacity to fulfil their desires. As Butler (2004, p. 19) goes on to claim, it is “only through the experience of recognition that any of us becomes constituted as socially viable beings”.

The terms of recognition are socially articulated. Because of this, desires that are contrary to recognised norms make survival more difficult for those individuals. The options for

individual survival may become loathsome if personal desires deviate significantly from recognised sets of social norms (e.g. an individual adopting a queer / homosexual life style in a society does not recognise this lifestyle as legitimate or legal). So, the terms of recognition – and the power to participate in defining the terms - are sites of power. They affect an individual's capacity to define their personhood.

This means that an individual's self-determination is dependent upon norms that are laid out in advance prior to one's choice. As Butler (*ibid.*, p. 142) expresses:

One only determines "one's own" sense of gender to the extent that social norms exist that support and enable that act of claiming gender for one self. One is dependent on this "outside" to lay claim to what is one's own.

Butler's view of liveability, according to Bochner (2000), is minimization of the precariousness of life and reducing the vulnerability of individuals who may become targets of political action against them (particularly where this action is the product of a repressive normative framework). As Bochner (*ibid.*, p. 16) states:

“For Butler, the liveability of life is not a biological issue, but a social and political one, and that means that life needs to be protected against ever looming precariousness. Butler seeks a normative commitment to equality and positive obligations to provide those basic supports that seek to minimize precariousness in egalitarian ways: food, shelter, work, medical care, education, rights of mobility and expression, protection against injury and oppression.”

However, a number of authors (Nussbaum 1999, Young 2000, Bochner 2000) criticise Butler for framing gender as a fluid conception rooted in individuality rather than something derived from group identity. Butler's belief is criticised when she views women not as a unified

homogeneous group but as unique individuals woven from the intricacies of class, race and ethnic experience. They challenge the idea that the categorisation of women into a unified group has been detrimental to feminists call for equality. Nevertheless, they remain aligned with Butler that femininities are subservient to masculinities.

Our view, however, is that Butler's argument becomes more relevant as the 'terms' of recognition become more restrictive. In the context of Pukhtun culture, Afridi (2009) suggests that most Mullahs' interpretations of Islam severely restrict women's autonomy and are contrary to the spirit of Islamic code of conduct given in the Holy Quran. Jehan (2006) illustrates this issue by suggesting that the code of Pardah (veil) and employment for women in Islam can be subject to a more liberal interpretation than the one offered by Mullahs'.

However, Fukuyama (2001) argues that norms within social networks are created primarily by those with the greatest capacity to affect the social capital of others: this exerts a pressure for conformity and restricts their individual freedom. Afrid (2010) suggests that people in Pukhtun culture identify themselves with Hujras and Mosques, the social organizations in which Mullahs are most influential. Their capacity to frame restrictive informal norms for women constitutes the culture of Pukhtunwali and set the standards of social behaviour which men and women must follow to be accepted by their community.

Faqir (2001) outlines how Pukhtun culture defines a way of living, ranging from permitted interactions between male and female members of the society to the social and economic responsibilities expected of both sexes. The concept of 'namus' and 'izzat' (women as repository of family honour) places particularly tight restrictions on young and unmarried women in terms of the social and economic roles they can pursue (see also Mumtaz, 1987; Moghadam, 1992, Critelli, 2010). The idea that (young) women are the controllers of family honour leads to tight restrictions on their interactions with men. The social constitution of

gender identity by Mullahs potentially provides insight into why gender gaps in social and economic outcomes in the PKP region of Pakistan are so wide.

We can relate these social practices to Lukes (1974) concept of hegemony and theory of power. Social power over organisation agendas and educational curricula can be used to establish compliance to social norms. This is highly evident in Pukhtun culture where restrictive normative conceptions of gendered and sexual life act as a hegemonic influence. It permeates the conscious and unconscious desires of men and women and affects the livability of their lives (Butler, 2004). Social norms derived from Mullas interpretation of religion create cultural constraints to the disadvantage of women by setting unequal 'terms' for recognition and acceptance in the community, and socially constituting the desires of men and women differently.

However, Butler's argument that gender identity is fluid and individual may not be helpful in the context of Pukhtun culture (Critteli, 2010). At its current stage of development, it seems a distant goal to look at subtle differences between individuals and to see gender as a diffuse concept. Mullahs have the power to establish social norms on the basis of gender identity and have the social capital needed to punish those who deviate from social norms. This has profound implications for the 'liveability' of a gender identity (if affects rights to work, receive education, associate and speak freely).

Goffman (1954) regards performance as activities undertaken by individuals to manage others' impressions when in their presence continuously. Goffman suggests that an individual can obtain desirable responses from observers only when they offer behaviours seen as acceptable by the group (and which, in turn, fit with wider social norms). In this respect, Goffman was working on social process of constituting gendered norms well before Butler engaged it 50 years later (Butler, 2004). However, one difference between Butler's and

Goffman's work is Goffman's gender neutral approach to the issue (that people of different gender identities are each constrained by the other in different ways). Butler writes primarily about social norms that place restrictions on the performance of feminine identities. Nevertheless, both authors capture the dislocation that individuals can feel when there is a discrepancy between the way they are required to appear and the 'reality' they feel inside themselves. By fostering impressions that are not 'real', individuals encounter difficulty maintaining a 'real' life, shaking their confidence and affecting their social performance.

If we apply Goffman's theory to the cultural context of Pukhtun society, the more restrictive the normative conception for a particular gender identity, the more it disadvantages people to whom that gender identity is ascribed. As social norms in Pukhtun culture are largely derived from Mullas' interpretation of religion (and they place far more restrictions on women's autonomy than on men's), women's dislocation from their 'real' selves is likely to be more pervasive (Afridi, 2009; Jehan, 2010). However, it is not entirely clear how religious codes affect women's capacity for self-expression in mixed workgroups, so it is this aspect of gendering that this study seeks to address.

[Author 1] has been an academic for the last ten years in one of the universities in KPK, and his experiences provided the motivation to undertake this research project. In doing so, he engages the argument that women are best placed to undertake feminist studies. In the writers' view, this requires an empirical response from men (see Hammersley, 1992). Investigation of women's emancipation by men in an extreme culture of patriarchy will support the contention that men sincerely want to be partners with women in the search for emancipation from gendering processes. Moreover, by exploring where collaborative work by men and women in universities is possible, role models can be presented to young people that break with tradition and shape new notions of social justice (Rawls, 1999, [1971]).

The study contributes to knowledge by seeking a response to the following research question.

RQ: What are the effects of gendering on the capacity of academics in the Khyber PukhtunKhwa (KPK) region of Pakistan to foster positive impressions of their capabilities amongst work colleagues?

The research will raise critical awareness of the policy environment, socio-cultural context, customary practices, changing norms, traditions and human behaviours which impact on female and male academics' performance in the KPK region of Pakistan. By studying factors that influence group dynamics, new policies on gender interactions can be devised to bring about changes in a university setting.

Methodology

The research deployed qualitative methods consistent with a social constructionist perspective on the 'reality' of gendering processes that shape thinking and behaviour. In-depth interviews and non-participant observation was used to study individual academics (men and women) and the dynamics that occur in gender diverse groups within universities. Exploratory semi-structured interviews were conducted with an equal number of men and women. The interviews included questions on group dynamics, the influences on gendered on thinking and behaviour, and on the performance of male and female academics. During the interview, the paradox of living in a culture with equality laws nominally based on western norms while living under the constant threat of violent extremism became a focus of conversation¹.

The other principal method used was non-participant observation. By observing meetings at each department of the university after the interviews, [Author 1] was able to compare interview responses with meeting observations and undertake triangulation. This helped to

¹ A vivid example of this occurred during fieldwork when bombs were detonated to destroy schools only 20 miles from the location of field work because they were educating young women (REF?)

assess [Author 1's] influence on participants during interviews, and to gauge how group composition affected the performance of individual academics.

The interviews and meetings took place in three universities in major cities of the KPK region. Academics from the disciplines of education, management science and medical science were approached in their respective faculties. In these disciplines, the gender balance between male and female faculty is much more equal. Thirty-six interviews took place: eighteen with men, and eighteen with women, selected from the same cadre (e.g. Assistant Professors). The eligibility criteria set by HEC for assistant professors limited the sample to academics with five to ten years' experience (HEC, 2011) because this cadre are more frequently engaged in departmental group activities.

Two formal groups (Board of Studies and Academic Council/ Departmental meetings) had representation from all levels of academia (from Professor to Lecturer) and were good choices for non-participant observation. Nine meetings were selected for non-participant observation. In each of the three cities, two meetings were observed within the university setting, and one meeting observed at the medical college. Using a constant comparison method of analysis, three phases of coding identified the most relevant themes within the study. Boeije (2002) suggests that constant comparison involves an interplay between researcher and data which enables them to probe ever more deeply into the data with each successive phase. In this study, using the constant comparison technique at each phase provided guidance for the next phase. At each stage of the data collection process, at each department within the same university, analysis of the data enabled the researcher to develop a better rapport with participants at subsequent departments. Initiating discussion became easier, and the researcher was able to add further pertinent questions during subsequent interviews.

The coding process selected for this study was divided into the three phases identified by Strauss (1987), and Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998), namely open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The researcher selected this method as three phases of coding identified by these authors have become widely phases in qualitative research, even where the full process of Grounded Theory is not followed (Larossa, 2005).

By continually comparing interview findings and observation, similarities between events, interactions and experiences shared by participants were observed as patterns around which thematic categories were formed and developed. The next section presents an interpretation of findings from the analysis.

Main Findings

The main findings of the study are derived from data through three phases coding process identified by Strauss (1987), and Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998), namely open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The researcher selected this method as the phases identified by those authors have become the most widely accepted phases in qualitative research (Larossa, 2005). Strauss (1987) also suggests that the three phases of coding are most productive in the grounded theory method. The phases are further discussed below.

The first part of interpretation analysis started with a careful reading of the transcripts. The purpose of the reading was to thoroughly examine the data and identify segments in texts that are comprehensible by its self and contain one idea or pieces of information different from one another. This exercise was repeated twice, and resulted in a large number of notes being made in the margins of the transcripts themselves. The marginal notes were then given appropriate initial codes. Glaser (1978, p 56) named the initial codes as open codes and characterised open coding as "running the data open". Words, phrases and the meaning of the statements became the basis upon which the narratives within open codes were grouped.

The interview transcripts comprised of over twenty seven questions covering almost all the relevant aspects of the study. Since the format of the interview was semi-structured, some of the issues were scattered throughout the transcript of each interview, with certain questions being posed at different times in different interviews. The resulting transcripts were carefully read in order to identify and collate narratives and responses on similar issues. During this thorough examination of the interview transcripts, the researcher came across narratives such as:

“I meet with my female colleagues in the formal setting only, I mean faculty meetings or in some other committees. See if I will meet them in informal setting, I mean in coffee shop or in the gallery, I am sure it is going to harm their reputation.” (Interview, H.AMC.MH, 04-08-2010)

And:

“Two of my cousins are in this university, one of them is even my colleague but I still can’t openly meet him as you know I don’t want to become gossip for people” (Interview, H.MS.MNK 01-07-2010).

These two statements both indicate towards the participant’s perception of safeguarding their reputation by interacting less with men. As such, these statements were highlighted and labelled with the code name ‘honour and reputation’. The concept of ‘honour and reputation’ was further defined considering the contextual meaning in which the narrative was provided by the participants and was then also defined as ‘character image of academics’. Throughout the interview transcripts, all the statements which were identified as being relevant to this definition were thus labelled with the open code of ‘honour and reputation’.

A similar technique was employed when the researcher came across statements like this (emphasis added by the researcher):

“I was very good in the subject of Mathematics; I wanted to become an Engineer but my father said that this field is saturated with men so it is not for you”. (P.MS.SG, 12-06-2010)

And:

“My father was the first one in the village who sent my sisters to higher secondary school which was having coeducation as there were very few non coeducation schools in those days. All my uncles and other relatives resisted and were against my father for this”. (Interview, P.MS.QB. 04-08-2010)

And:

“I talk to my male colleagues only when it is very important, I don’t want my husband to hear stories and ask me to leave the job”. (Interview, D.ED.SH, 18-05-2010)

In reviewing the transcripts, the researcher noticed these statements indicated towards the concepts of ‘family influence’ and ‘control by men’. The researcher identified that the latter concept was much more relevant than the former, as the references made to fathers and husband carrying a significant decision making status in the lives of these participants was felt to relate more closely to male control than family influence in general. Such comments highlighted the dominant role of men in the academics' lives. As the Social Science Dictionary (2011) describes patriarchy as ‘conditions of men’s superiority over women’, so these statements were highlighted and coded with the label of ‘Patriarchy’ and were defined as ‘authority of men over women’. The responses in all interview transcripts which identified any level of relevance to this definition were thus labelled with the same open code of

'patriarchy'. The concept of 'family influence' also became one of the codes employed by the researcher, but was only used for those statements where both male and female members of the family were indicated by the participant to have exerted an influence over the academic's professional life.

This code was used for statements such as:

“My mother thought that if I am not married in next two years then I will find no one to get married, she insisted that I should not leave for MPhil before marriage”. (Interview, D.ED.SB, 23-05-2010)

And:

“My father in law and mother in law are old, I have to stay back and ask for leave when they are not feeling well”. (Interview, P.KMC, ST, 05-08-2010).

The formation of broader categories at later stages further resulted in the integration of similar concepts like 'patriarchy' and 'family influence'. This is further explained later in this section.

The academics' participation roles were also identified from transcripts of the observation sessions taken from the researcher's recording device, and from field notes which were taken by the researcher during the observation sessions. The field notes included observations made by the researcher in relation to the seating arrangement, the outlooks of the academics and their eye contact with each other. Along with the use of the simple reading and highlighting technique as described above, the narrative of the transcripts and the field notes were also interpreted in terms of the participation role of the academics during the meetings.

For this technique, the idea proposed by Clinton (2001) about participation roles in groups (Table in Annex) was utilised. Belbin (2004) also suggests nine team roles which also accords with Clinton's proposals. For instance, Clinton identifies the member who proposes new ideas as the initiator, whereas Belbin identifies the same individual as the planter. The member who concludes the group work is the completer or finisher according to Belbin, and for Clinton, the summarizer. The only discernible practical difference for researcher between Clinton and Belbin's suggestions is that Belbin focuses on defining the role of teams engaged in activities rather than in group discussion, whereas the roles defined by Clinton are more oriented towards and relevant to formal group discussions. Therefore, the researcher felt that Clinton's proposals better suited the phenomenon investigated in this particular study. The participation roles were identified from the interview transcripts, non-participant meeting observation transcripts and field notes, and then related to the open codes on the basis of contextual meaning.

For instance, within the meeting transcripts, the researcher came across statements from male participants responding to suggestions made by female participants such as:

“Why should we not learn from the last year's experience, why invent the wheel again?”
(Meeting.H.MS.BS, 06-08-2010).

And:

“I think we have sufficiently discussed about this, let's move on to the next point”
(Meeting. P.ED.MK. 07-06-2010)

In the light of Clinton's description of the different participation roles assumed in groups, these statements were regarded by the researcher as representing 'blockers', which Clinton defined as 'disagreeing or resisting beyond reasonable objection'. Both of these statements

were made by male participants in response to suggestions made by female members of the group. In both cases, the researcher identified a resistance beyond reasonable objection. All of these points demonstrate the statements' relevance to the concept of 'patriarchy'. Therefore, these statements were highlighted and grouped beneath the open code of 'patriarchy'. It is important to mention here that these statements were identified in the transcripts of observation and field notes and they were therefore also placed under the open code of 'acceptance in meetings' which was later integrated into the selective code of 'interactional issue'. This pattern of identification, comparison and resemblance was followed in developing and integrating codes from the transcripts of meeting observations and field notes.

The data collected through semi-structured interviews and observations covered many other issues relevant to the aims and objectives of the study which resulted in the formation of forty nine open codes initially. This later increased to fifty and then, after reading and rereading the transcripts, the researcher ultimately determined fifty three open codes in total. These fifty three codes were then used to form summaries of all the interview transcripts. Each code was made into a heading and all the relevant narratives were placed under each heading in a summarized form. The aim of the summaries was to identify and select descriptions of the relevant and pertinent narratives only from the lengthy interview transcripts. The summaries assisted the researcher in commencing another phase of coding, axial coding.

The second step of analysis for this study involved the researcher reading and rereading the summaries of interviews with an emphasis on comparing the meaning of open codes with each other. Corbin and Strauss (1998) suggest that 'the aim of the axial coding process is discovering how categories relate to subcategories in terms of their properties, dimensions and incidents'. So, at this stage of interpretation, the initial plan of the researcher was to

compare and identify open codes with similar meanings, and to gather them together and label them with a code that captures the substance of the topic and identifies the cluster of open codes.

This process can be better demonstrated using the example given above in relation to open coding, i.e. 'honour and reputation' and 'patriarchy'. The code of 'honour and reputation' was defined as 'character image of academics'. The participants used words relating to 'honour and respect' in terms of the theme of safeguarding women's honour and respect, which participants suggested might be harmed with frequent interaction with men. The context in which these statements were made suggested that women are considered as repositories for the honour of those people related to them and working/living around them (see context chapter), as a result of which frequent interaction with men is avoided and limited to only formal settings.

On the other hand, the open code of 'patriarchy' is attached to several narratives and is defined as 'authority of men over women'. The context suggests that, in most cases, men are seen to influence women's decisions in their personal and professional lives (see chapter on Literature Review).

If both these open codes i.e. 'honour and reputation' and 'patriarchy' are regarded holistically, keeping the context into consideration, it can be said that females are considered to be the repository of honour and reputation and, in almost all cases, women are accountable to men for losing their honour and negatively affect their reputation by interacting with men (other than family). Therefore, it can be seen that there exists a sort of control system whereby men prevail over women in the name of honour and respect. If, as per Strauss, 'special attention to context is given', then it can be identified that, in most cases, men influence women's decisions in terms of limiting their mobility for the sake of honour and reputation. Thus, it

was recognized that patriarchy is principally exercised for the sake of honour and reputation of men associated with women. Consequently, the open code of 'honour and reputation' was integrated into 'patriarchy', which was subsequently listed as an axial code. The purpose was to shorten the list of codes without overlooking any relevant concepts.

The aim of the researcher at the final stage of the data analysis was to come up with a main story that would be understandable, lucid and reasonably accurate. Strauss and Corbin (1998, p 148) defined selective coding as explication of "the story line". Larossa (2005) also cited Strauss and Corbin, suggesting that selective code has analytic power because of its ability to pull together the other categories to form an explanatory whole. In this way, the axial codes were further compared and integrated on the basis of contextual similarities and differences. The idea was to develop a story line around which everything in the study could be draped.

Picking up on the same set of codes which the author used above to explain the identification of open and axial codes, the process of final integration can be better understood. For example, the axial codes of 'patriarchy' and 'family influence' were not integrated during the second stage of coding. The reason for this was that the code of 'patriarchy' was used to represent all those narratives from the transcripts which showed 'men's authority over women' or 'male domination or influence', whereas 'family influence' was used to represent all those narratives in which family was identified as influential for both men and women in their professional lives. Although the context and the transcripts revealed that on most occasions the family influence came from men,, it was not always directed towards female academics only, as such influence was also identified to have an effects on male academics. 'Patriarchy', on the other hand, was found to be directed towards women only. Due to this difference, these two codes were not integrated by the researcher at the second stage of coding. However, these two codes (along with several others) were subsequently integrated

to form a selective code of 'cultural issues'. Culture can be described as inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge shared by a group of people with common traditions, which are transmitted and reinforced by members of that group. The researcher identified that 'patriarchy' and family influence' can both be said to be attributes of culture and, therefore, these codes (along with other axial codes) were integrated to form the selective/core code of 'cultural issues'. The contextual definition of all the open and axial codes (see table in Appendix) which were ultimately integrated into the core code of 'cultural issues' also reveal that these codes are directly or indirectly associated with the cultural aspects of the studied universities. Therefore, these identified codes can be regarded as issues pertaining to culture.

Initially the author formulated six selective codes. However, after repeated comparison and integration following a similar process, the researcher ultimately rested on three selective codes i.e. of 'interactional issues' and 'interventions', around which the story line of interpretation was built.

The interview responses and findings from non participant observation suggest that socio-cultural dynamics, notably gender stereotypes, the traditional culture of Pukhtunwali (Pukhtun Culture) and the joint family system and religious interpretations produce a radical form of female oppression and forms the social system of patriarchy. This system endorses gender segregation, and serves to influence and intensify the perceptions and behaviours of academics in KPK. Such perceptions and behaviour adversely affect gender relations in universities and the performance of women academics in academic workgroups, as socially constructed gender norms affect an individual's ability to participate in mixed group meetings.

The study finds that the core components of the Pukhtun culture are its basic assumptions or beliefs that take the form of values which become the norms of Pukhtun society. In KPK,

these basic assumptions are affected by the power of Mullahs over traditions and religious interpretations which shape such values, norms and behaviours. These in turn covertly or overtly affect the status of women in Pukhtun society. The power of religious interpretation which identifies women as representatives of family honour restricts their social interactions both before and after marriage. The social stereotypes which emerge from such religious interpretation encourage the admiration of women who are reserved, less interactive with men, and who observe Pardah (veil) as defined by Pukhtunwali (i.e. the wearing of the Burqah, a veil covering all the body).

The study uncovers that stereotypes are so strongly embedded in the culture that most women consider even the basic right of accessing an education and going out in public to work (under certain conditions allowed by the religion), as being privileges. This naturally affects women's participation in socialization and their performance in an employment context, as the empowerment of women in both the private and public spheres is adversely affected by these stereotypes. Although some privileged women do profess to have knowledge of their rights, they still nevertheless feel helpless and unable to take any action or to speak out for fear of the potential social censure to which this might lead.

The joint family system derived from Pukhtunwali also rests on the idea of patriarchy and this system consequently serves as a key factor affecting female oppression. The study explains why domestic life and the home are considered natural and essential domains for women. However, it does not follow that women are empowered in the home, as family decisions are nonetheless taken by men in Pukhtun culture. A woman's movement is restricted as a consequence of the boundaries laid down by fathers and brothers before marriage, and by husbands after marriage. This means women have very little access to the education and socialization required to develop their performance in organisations and institutions.

Pukhtunwali norms in society are so highly valued that they supersede the law, and lead to the development of a patriarchal society. Consequently, women's empowerment is inhibited in both private and public domains.

This reflects that the culture of social distance and sharp segregation shapes the thinking (perceptions) and behaviours and creates the culture of extreme patriarchy. The extreme patriarchal culture adversely affects the performance of female academics in work groups. The interpretations suggest that the effects of gender stereotypes, Pukhtunwali (Pukhtun culture), its power over religious interpretation, and on the joint family system, constitute hegemonic power over women that contributes to the culture of patriarchy by inhibiting the changes required by national law and UN conventions. The findings suggest that there is no equivalent effort made in the implementation of national legislation and international commitments to challenge these cultural issues. The influence of culture is much more pervasive than the researcher previously thought and, conversely, the influence of legislation is much weaker than anticipated.

Theoretical Contribution

The study takes up the position that people living in the most extreme cultures value traditional norms and religious thoughts more than economic interests. In such cultures, the interpretation of religion as a strong social control mechanism restricts women's freedom more so than for men, as even the traditional norms are influenced by religious thoughts. Such tight social control is exerted to bind individuals who share the same religion and inherit the same traditional norms in order to establish social capital for the purpose of identity and dominance. The endeavour of building social control permits maintenance of cultural patterns in society which are transferred from one generation to another.

Put more clearly, the study contributes the argument that segregation of men and women in Pukhtun society, the attitudes and behaviours of individuals, and the social structure which is to the advantage of men, are based on cultural values influenced by traditional practices and power over religious interpretations. The perception of the status of women is based more on customs and less on religious interpretations that argue for equal power amongst men and women. This means that unequal gender relations and women's oppression stem from the patriarchal culture brought about by traditional norms and restrictive religious interpretations for women in Pukhtun culture, rather than the pursuit of capitalist accumulation.

Among the theorists who worked in the cultural context of Pakistan, Syed and Ali (2006) appreciate the extent to which religion, economy and tradition are intertwined and permeate into the society. Mumtaz and Shaheed (1987) also suggest that the broad range of restrictions imposed on women through tribal customs, economic positions and the power of religious interpretation are key reasons for the oppression of women. Moghadam's (1992) elaboration on Islamization programs for political gains in Pakistan does also indicate that religious thought can be a base mode of patriarchy, but the focus of these authors remains on the selective use of religious interpretations for women's oppression. These authors (Moghadam 1992, Mumtaz and Shaheed 1987, Jawad and Ali 2006) remain unconcerned about the pervasive power of religious interpretation in the Pukhtun culture as a key and distinctive factor in the oppression of women.

Weiss (1989) and Cretelli (2010) consider traditional practices as being primary reasons for women's oppression in the context of the Pakistani culture, but are silent about religious thought as a basis for women's oppression. Moreover, those authors focus on the inscription of religion in the legal framework of Pakistan and regard the interplay of religion, politics, economic factors and gender as a reason for gender inequality.

The debate instigated by these researchers has successfully highlighted the social barriers for women's entry into the workplace in the relatively liberal social sites of Pakistan i.e. the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, which are comparatively more industrialised and economically competitive provinces. This reflects that the focus of researchers has traditionally been shifted away from the more conservative Pukhtun culture of Pakistan. This can be argued to be the reason for those theorists identifying economic factors with tradition and religious thought as the reason for women's oppression and for their view of economic independence as being an important factor in defeating traditional and religious interpretation.

The authors working on gender equality in the workplace in Pakistani culture (Mumtaz and Shaheed, 1987; Moghadam, 1992; Jawad, 2006; Ali, 2006; , Crettelli, 2010) have not to date focused on the workplace contexts in which comparatively better gender representation exists (i.e. universities and higher education institutes). More specifically, the context of immediate gender interaction (gender diverse work groups) has not been examined to any extent by researchers conducting studies in the workplace context of Pakistan. Most of the studies in existence have focused on workplaces where women are in the minority (such as in the context of the spheres of manufacturing, agriculture and banking).

Although the researchers have talked about the power of religious thought, patriarchy and traditional norms (Mumtaz and Shaheed, 1989; Weiss, 1989; Moghadam, 1992,) with regard to gender issues, they have not clearly contributed to demonstrating the strength of such power. In contrast, this study focuses on the most extreme patriarchal Pukhtun culture of Pakistan and examines the gender issue in the context of a balanced representation of both genders. This clearly advances the theory that the power of cultural and religious thought is a much greater and stronger reproducer of patriarchy.

In these ways, the study argues that a challenge to the basic assumptions, values, norms and behaviours derived from culture is critical to produce female emancipation and gender equality. The study suggests that the implementation of gender legislation is only possible if the process also includes debates which focus on those cultural norms which conflict with women's independence. If it does, attitudes towards women's rights, which are ostensibly permitted by religion but are in fact prohibited by the Pukhtun culture, can be changed by engaging in public discourse.

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