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**IMPACT OF TRADITIONAL VALUES ON THE EQUALITY  
OF FEMALES LIVING IN BALOCHISTAN (PAKISTAN)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Societies follow a traditional value. Traditions evolve and are adapted according to the wish of majority of the people. Cultures mostly are under the disposition of the patriarchal system, a system dominated by men, where women are discriminated and subjugated because they hold a vulnerable position in the society. The present study focuses on equality of women present in Quetta Balochistan, effected by the cultural values present. Data was selected from seven Government Girls degree Colleges of Quetta based on random sampling method. The researcher used SSPS tool to evaluate the data. Results highlighted that cultural values are affecting the females here in Quetta and they are not treated as equals to their male counterparts.*

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**Key Words:** Traditional Values, Gender Discrimination, Male Dominancy

**INTRODUCTION**

Pakistan is multicultural nation where the traditional values have strong hold in society. The different traditional values effect the life of human being in all aspects of life. The expectations of society compelled everyone to perform their roles according to developed rules of community. The term gender defines the roles of man and woman. Having patriarchal system, the role of Pakistani woman is to stay at home and gives her services in completion of domestic chores (Rashid, *et.al.*, 2015). Patriarchy is an ideology, where men lead the societies. They dominate the other vulnerable people of society, such as women in this case. Women, in patriarchal societies are under subjugation of men; their decisions are bound to be under the influence of males. They are empowered by men in every aspect of their life. It has been observed that this domination by males is present in every field of their life. They face difficulty in their work places, at their homes, in their education, health facilities, in fact in everything, they face discrimination and biasedness. At some place, they have no power in

selecting a life partner for themselves and there are instances where they even face life threats. Males have empowerment to do everything in their life; they take decisions based on their own will (Santow, 1995). The process of socialization in one of the optimal ways through which people understands their responsibilities. They learn their ways of living, but it has been observed that in our societies the parents make the female children think that their male siblings are better than them, they are the ones who earn for the family and fulfil the basic needs of the family. They are also considered greater for being the producers of coming generation (Kishore, 1993). Culture plays a prominent role in East Asia & South Asia, the norms, ways of living are decided by the dominant culture, and the ones belonging to the same culture makes sure to abide by its values. Culture is an environment or surrounding made by men because human beings need to socialize with each other and they cannot live alone. A new born baby grows into a man shaped by its society and culture. Women, as being part of these cultures are not given their due place and this concept of thinking women as second class part of any culture is transferred into many generations (Pal, 1999).

#### **JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

Females are subjugated and discriminated in societies governed by men, they are not allowed to take any decision of their life, in fact the men, be their father, brother, husband or son, they take all the important decisions for the females of their family. Prejudice against women is noticed in all the male dominant societies, unjust treatment of women is experienced right from her birth. Women are made to believe that they are far inferior to their male counterparts. They are not even allowed to talk about their education, marriage, economic independence or even having children. Women's status is to an alarming lowest status, socially, politically and culturally. Hence, this study is focused to examine the reasons for this prejudice against women. It is investigated in the study to understand the social status of females and find out the problems faced by this gender. The study further explores about the behavior of different families and communities towards their females. The researcher has attempted to highlight the reasons of discrimination present in the society. The study will be helpful for the women of different societies to raise knowledge about their social status. Moreover, this study will also aide the social workers, NGO's, policy makers, counseling committees, and all the political sectors.

#### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

- The objective of this study is to analyze the effects of traditional values on the equality of females living in Quetta (Balochistan), due to the preference of son.

**HYPOTHESIS**

- Traditional values are affecting the equality of females due to son preference living in Quetta (Balochistan).

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

A brief review of Literature related to a particular topic provides organized material and an outlook to observe the gaps, despite of different works being done on the related topic. It paves way for establishing new information about the related topic.

Pakistan is one of many other countries where females face bigotry and intolerance by their male counterparts. The traditional and cultural norms are so created that they put the women to an inferior position. This is happening from the very basic level in a Pakistani society. Females are not provided with better prospects in Pakistani society and they face quite a lot of discrimination by the men of their society. It has been observed that for females, there are many obstacles, if she wants to achieve anything and life for her is not easy if she wants to pursue a career or have education (Shah, *et.al.*, 2013). In patriarchal societies males hold economic sources they are primary bread winner of family that is the main key to give preference to males over females. People of Pakistan do not have basic needs of life. The 60% population of Pakistan live under the poverty line, the income of an individual is very low as compare to the other under develop countries. Family size is increasing quickly due to have male's child because males will improve the economic condition of family by earning (Hussain, *et.al.*, 2000). Females in Pakistan do not have a very strong hold in its economy despite of taking part in the economic endeavors of the country because women are being treated biasedly in the economic circles of the country and are not given decision power in its circle (Bushra, *et.al.*, 2015). Bigotry behavior due to the gender of an individual is common in different societies and cultures. These norms become part and parcel of families and they are transferred from one generation to other. It is still not too late for women to know about their rights and bring change in their position on the basis of socialization. They should raise their voices against any sort of intolerance towards them, it is also the duty of governments and the policymakers to make sure that women get their due right (Barcellos, *et.al.*, 2012). Women in Pakistan suffer greatly, she does not have her own property and is not allowed to take part in the progress of the country. After getting married she gets more prone to subjugation by her husband and his family, who impose their decisions on her life all her life is spent under their will and desire. She cannot take any decision of her life through her life, a study based on a survey in Islamabad highlighted that females there are not permitted to take part in social activities due to the male dominance. A wide gap is observed in the

economic prospects of both the genders (Hassan, 1995). According to Arnold in a democratic state everyone enjoys certain basic rights and it is their right to cast votes. Democratic states are meant to serve their people, but it is unfortunate to observe that half of the population does not have voice in the political scenario of the country (Arnold, 1998). It is the fault of the society who breeds generation based on the notions of bigotry and intolerance. Men are since beginning made to believe that women are inferior to them in every aspect. They are made to think that women do not have any rights as equal as men. When such ideologies are constructed in the minds of people, it is not possible that things change and people start giving women their rights. Although, it is observed that women take care of their house, they manage the things in an organized manner without the help of men (Edlund, 1999). A study conducted on the empowerment of women, asserted that women should be allowed to work for the prosperity of themselves and their family. It was highlighted that mortality rate is higher in women who did not work, based on the notion that women who go out and work, they pay more attention to their child's nutrition and is aware of the children's health (Basu, 1989). Talking about the importance of economic prosperity in the wake of empowering women, it was noted in a study that females suffer due to being economically dependent, they suffer, if they do not take a good amount of dowry with them after marriage. They are brutally treated by their husband and his family who demand for money and things. Women in Pakistan are more actively participating in the labor force, yet they are paid less (28%) than men. These are very critical conditions for women in Pakistan (Alvi, *et.al.*, 2012).

All the human beings are created equally by God and there is no difference between them, however we discriminate based on their gender. Their rights are subjugated by not being let to cast vote, educate themselves and not even to choose a partner of their own choice (Ejaz, *et.al.*, 2011).

Pakistan's history as well as current situation is filled with such situations where women have been treated brutally by their own people. Forms of justice systems, such as Jirga, and Panchayat system are ones where some intense brutal decisions have been made against women, only due to the male dominance and power. Often, the decisions made by them do not fulfil the criteria set by law and enforcement system of the country and the world. Laws based on these systems are often the key sources to inculcate fear and insecurity amongst women (Ali, *et.al.*, 2011).

Women can be empowered and made strong through the process of equity, it is through equity that women can become liberated and can enjoy their position in society. They can flourish and their abilities can help them prosper as well as help in the betterment of their country. An independent woman can take decisions and be brave, she can help prosper her family and

people. An empowered woman can partake in the development of social and economic prosperity of her country and the world, when children are born in a family, the parents and the other family members pre-decide, what roles the children will take when they grow up. The notion that females are weaker physically and mentally is one which runs in almost all the families (Ali, *et.al.*, 2015). There are many cultural values in Pakistan which forbid the women to live their life according to their own will and become a stable part of the society. Although ideology of Pakistan is based on Islam but the women do not even have their religious rights and rights, they are entitled to have by the law of the country are also not given to them. It is because the norms of the society are based on their cultural values and not laws or religion (Akhter, *et.al.*, 2016). In a male dominated society, all the powers are enjoyed by the males of that society. In Pakistan, feudal system is one of the main elements making the men powerful. The customs and traditions constructed by these feudal based systems give less space to the females. They are almost always mistreated by the lords of the feudal system. Same customs are practiced and transferred to all the passing generations (Shaukat, *et.al.*, 2017).

When talking about mistreatment, violence, which means brutally treating someone physically as well as emotionally, is one the main ways of treating women in Pakistan. They face violent situations where they are either abused physically or emotionally. These situations are so common in the country that they are often not considered as violence. Social customs practiced by the people often do not let them think that whatever they are doing is hurting someone vulnerable. People often also follow these customs because they are afraid that they will not be allowed to become a part of their particular society if they do not act the same way. It is this insecurity and fear that lets women suffer and endure the mistreatment in the shape of violence and physical and emotional abuse. This also lets women lack educational and professional development which makes them socially inferior to men (Akhter, 2011).

Pakistan is one of the many third world countries where literacy rate of female is alarmingly low. Feudal system also does not let the education of females, that is why in the provinces of Balochistan and KPK the conditions are getting bad every day. The literacy rate there is between 3% and 8%. Many Non-government organizations (NGOs) attempted to bring some change in the educational conditions, but they failed due to the traditions and customs of the place (Alam, 2011).

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Pakistani society is a patriarchal society, where the males dominate because they are the ones who earn for their family, being in large numbers

make their family strong. However, the females are considered to be a burden for family for they have to provide for her dowry, which is why the families do not invest in any other way for their daughter. It is for this reason that the study focuses on knowing the traditional values due to which women of Quetta, Balochistan are not treated equally. The study has taken up the quantitative approach. The data is selected from Governments degree girls' colleges, where 200 respondents were selected through random sampling and after data collection data was analyzed by SPSS. Results highlight that due to strong traditional values females are not treated equal to their male counterparts.

### DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Traditional values are affecting the equality of females due to son preference living in Quetta (Balochistan)

#### Coefficients

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	R Square	Durbin-Watson
Tradition-al values	.176*	2.499	.013	.031	1.208

Due to strong cultural impositions, this biasedness increased in the families. 51.5% respondents agreed that they have strong traditional values and 51.0% respondents strongly agreed that they faced discrimination in their families, while 28.0% students agreed with this statement. 53.5% respondents strongly agreed that parents gave much attention to boys rather than daughters, 55.5% respondents said that they faced discrimination among gender from the birth of female child. 35.5% respondents said that daughters don't have same respect as boys have in family. Analysis of regression coefficient has significant association between traditional pattern and gender discrimination ( $B = .176$ ,  $t = 2.499$ ,  $P \text{ value} < 0.05$ )

50.5% respondents agreed that due to patriarchal society females faced discrimination because of male dominant society. Men of the society treated the women as some lower commodity of the society. 54.0% students said that females are not paid equally as compared to men. In patriarchal society where cultural values are very strong and men are the ones who earn for their family. 55.0% respondents strongly agreed that families prefer boys in order because when they earn money, their economic status also stabilizes. However, 41.7% respondents strongly disagreed with this. Analysis of regression coefficient has significantly association between traditional pattern and gender discrimination ( $B = .176$ ,  $t = 2.499$ ,  $P = .000$ ).

47.0% students agreed that girls are considered to be burdens because the parents have to take care of the dowry, which the girls has to take to another house. 40.5% respondents strongly disagreed that girls cannot look after their parents in old age. It is highlighted in the study that equality can evolve the social status and traditional values of a society. 67.0% strongly agreed that equality is the tool of social change. Analysis of regression coefficient has significant association between traditional pattern and gender discrimination. ( $B=.176$ ,  $t = 2.499$ ,  $P \text{ value} < 0.05$ )

## DISCUSSION

Women should be empowered to have the same favors of life as their male counterparts. They can have their capabilities and be brave when they are allowed to pursue their life. When females participate in the social and economic development of their country, they not only bring change in their own life, rather create a drastic change in the community and the world at large ((Basu, 1989). Respondents of the study agreed that females can take some very good and important decisions for their family, if they are given chance. 48% respondents strongly agreed, 34% agreed and 12% students did not decide and 2% disagreed. It was observed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the notion that females can become good decision makers, if they are let. Parents breed their children by making them think that they possess particular roles in the society. They make their children believe according to the values imposed by the society. Concepts, such as boys are better than the girls in many ways are propagated by the culture (Ali, *et.al.*, 2015). The cultural practices in Pakistan ban women from doing many things. They are not even considered as a part of the society in many areas. Although the country follows Islamic ideology but the females are neither given right as prescribed in religion nor as entitled in the law of the country. The laws enforced in the country are what are prescribed by cultural values (Akhter, *et.al.*, 2016). Thus, it is highlighted in the study that almost 51.5% respondents agreed that they have quite forceful cultural values, whereas 33.5% strongly agreed to this notion and just 5% of them strongly disagreed to this notion. So, majority of them agreed about having quite imposing cultural values.

When talking about other prospects of misbehavior, it was noted that females are also treated violently in Pakistan. They are abused physically as well as mentally in every stage of their life, starting from birth continuing to marriage, having family and lastly till their death. People often not think violating the rights as violation because they are blindly following the traditions and customs. Women become insecure and fearful due to the mental and physical abuse they experience in their life. Females experience sexual harassment. Moreover, lack of educational and professional prospects



makes them more inferior in front of men (Akhter, 2011). It is highlighted in the study that females feel disruptive and agitated due to this treatment by the society. 47% respondents agreed while answering this question, whereas 17% strongly agreed to it. On the other hand only 28% students were not sure what to answer, but it was observed that many did believe that they felt agitated and anxious as being treated like that. When answered about the labor force market that females do not have same wages men, 54% respondents strongly agreed that they get less wages in same category 31% students agreed with this question, whereas, on other hand just 3% students strongly disagreed. It was evident after the results, that females are not paid equal wages for their work as men. Pakistan and India are two such states where it is a common practice to give dowry to the daughters, dowry is collection of materialistic things presented to the daughter at the time of marriage and when women do not take enough possessions to their husband's home, she is being treated violently. There are cases of women being killed by the hands of her in laws and husband due to this (Alvi, *et.al.*, 2012). It is highlighted in the study that females are considered a heavy burden due to the same reason. 47% respondents agreed with this notion, 18.5% strongly agreed while 11.5% respondents strongly disagreed to it.

## CONCLUSION

Cultural values are undoubtedly very important for anyone, one cannot deny their importance and cannot take them away from their life at once. They are part of one's heritage, but the ones which subjugate a right of a human being and sabotage the needs of the ones who are vulnerable, those cultural values must be removed for the wellbeing of any society and culture. Almost half of Pakistan's population is based on females, hence they must be treated equally and they must be provided with opportunities where they can enhance their capabilities and prosper. Females are treated biasedly and this prejudice must be stopped because it is not letting women to come in front rows of political, social, and economic prosperity.

Allah created men and women equally and a woman who makes half of the Pakistan's population and is taking care of her family and managing everything is not treated fairly by her society. She is dependent on others, despite of having the skills, talent and capabilities. She has proved herself. Although as good administrator, legislator, speaker of assemblies, doctor, teacher, politicians etc., but still she lacks the quality in the societies based in Pakistan.

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