

Religious and Sociocultural Factors affect Women's Education

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Abstract

This paper deals with religious and sociocultural factors that affect women's education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The sample chosen for this study is 100 students of different departments of Hazara University in Mansehra. Using Likert scale, the questionnaire has been framed. This study is mainly quantitative research. The findings show positive result except table 20. It is noticed that women's education is closely linked with religious values, especially religious seminaries. Unlike past researches, the findings related to sociocultural factors which also include parental attitudes show positive development in the society.

Keywords: religion, women, education, traditional, culture, parental attitudes

Note:

Sabina Shah conducted PhD research in the field of English at Freie University Berlin, Germany. This is the minor part taken from her thesis. However, the data chosen for this paper is not taken from her PhD thesis. Only section 1 and 2 have been taken. The questionnaire has been changed according to the needs of this paper.

Gerhard Leitner supervised this research from 2011-2015 at Freie University Berlin, Germany.

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1. Introduction

According to World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) (1990), third world countries are trying hard to attain the aim of providing basic primary education for everyone in the country as well as to lessen down the illiteracy rate in a country. However, this target could not be achieved successfully which was pinpointed by World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. The strategy presented in the aforementioned forum stressed girls' education in order to achieve EFA objectives. The strategy also aimed at achieving gender parity especially in primary and secondary education by 2005 and at all levels in education by 2015.

UNICEF did not portray an optimistic scenario of South Asia and mentioned that the South Asian countries cannot meet the target of achieving gender equality in education in 2005, and it seems difficult for them to achieve the objective of Universal Primary Education by the end of 2015. UNICEF reported that gender inequalities are decreasing in primary education in few South Asian countries. Unfortunately, Pakistan is not included in those countries. The Pakistan Integrated Household Survey (2001-2002) states that Pakistan has been shown in an index where gender disparities are raising, especially in remote areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (as cited in Arai & Tabata, 2006, p. 2).

In order to rectify the aforementioned situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the provincial government formulated an action plan, Education Sector Reforms: Action Plan 2001-2002 – 2005-2006, which was aimed at providing academic materials, textbooks and tuition fee, to the students. However, gender disparity could not be reduced in these areas at primary, secondary and higher levels. Recent studies (Shah, 2015) identified this issue and paid special attention to learning English in the remote area, Mansehra, in North West part of the country. To address this issue, following objectives have been devised.

1.1 Objectives

- a) To identify religious factors which contribute to gender disparity in education.
- b) To investigate sociocultural issues which affect women literacy.

2. Review of Previous Studies

2.1 Religious Factors

2.1.1 Misconstructions of Religion

The Pakhtun society does not promote women participation in public sphere. The traditional and rigid group of people misconstrues religion, which is in line with Pakhtun system of leading life (Orakzai, 2011). The conservative misconstructions of religion have damaged women's education in the area, and such regions are under major influences of inept local clerics. The present scenario of misinterpreted Islamic beliefs is difficult to settle with female education in Pakistan. This is quite evident from the fact of attacks on female educational institutes in North West part of Pakistan.

Bradley and Saigol (2012) contend that there are two schools of thought in Pakistan since the day of independence. One favours modern education for girls and the second favours religious education in order to influence them in all walks of life. However, religious scholars consider women an important agency that transfers religious teachings from one generation to the next. The religious scholars do not seem to

favour modern education for women for the reason that this type of education infiltrates girls’ minds and attract them towards modern life style. Considering this observation, they started building as well as increasing the number of madrasas which are also called religious seminaries which aimed to provide normal education along with Islamic teachings.

The report, based on statistical evidence which was recorded in 2007, indicates that 1.4 million students are studying in religious seminaries which are registered in government registers (Bano, 2007). Surprisingly, less than a fifth are females. Bradley and Saigol (2012) note that in 2008-2009 people are more attracted towards the education provided by religious seminaries due to inexpensive fees, uniform, textbooks and accessories. Contrary to this, UNESCO reports that high number (95%) of students is registered in government run free schools. Therefore the percentage of students registered in religious seminaries does not represent majority in the field of education.

According to Bano (2012), female religious seminaries started establishing in Pakistan in 1970s when General Zia ul Haq (1977-1988) was the President of the country. The number (236,000) of girls enrolled in religious seminaries increased day by day which indicates the fact that the establishment of religious seminaries will increase as time passes. Their misinterpreted teachings affect people’s attitudes towards female education (Bradley & Saigol, 2012). These effects can be seen in the curriculum taught at women’s seminaries.

2.1.2 The Curriculum in Female Religious Seminaries

The role of religious seminaries has become heightened since the day of establishment (Daily Times, 16 May 2009). The religious seminaries came in limelight during the reign of President Pervez Musharraf (1999-2008). Considering widening effects of religious seminaries, President Pervez Musharraf imposed restrictions on one of the prominent institutions, Jamia Hafsa, which was located in the capital, Islamabad (Bradley & Saigol, 2012). Jamia Hafsa was one of the leading higher institutes for women, which was banned due to its anti-government views. Following sectarianism, religious seminaries are divided into different wafaqs or boards, as given below

Table 1: The Religious Seminaries’ Wafaqs in Pakistan

Sect	Sub-sect (<i>maslaq</i>)	Madrasas Board (<i>wafaq</i>)	Board established	Wafaq HQ
Sunni	Ahle e Sunnat (Barelvi)	Tanzeem-ul-Madaris Ahl-e Sunnat-wal-Jamaat	1959	Karachi
Sunni	Deobandi	Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia	1959	Multan
Sunni	Ahl e Hadith	Wafaq-ul-Madaris	1955	Faizalabad
Islamist	Jamat e Islami	Rabta-ul-Madaris Al Islamia	1983	Mansoor, Lahore
Shia	Jaffari Twelwer Shia	Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Shia	1960	Lahore

Adopted from Borchgrevink (2011, p. 2)

The highest numbers of religious seminaries in the country are owned by the Deobandi (65%) and Bareilvi (30%) sects (see Table 1). The biggest religious seminary Wafaq-ul-Madaris (Deobandi) pinpoints that the large number of religious seminaries are run by male religious elite who also design syllabi for female seminaries in a way that it meets their standards and requirements (Bradley & Saigol, 2012). Such standards lay emphasis on forming “passive, obedient and house-trained women” (Shah, 2015, p. 98). Metcalf (1982) finds that other wafaqs also follow Dars-e-Nizami (curriculum title) which preaches injustice with regard to equal opportunities of education for girls and boys. Dars-e-Nizami spreads boring domestic roles for girls that can only help them to facilitate their families, especially male members. Teaching manners is the basic standard of female seminaries in Pakistan. Learning good manners are considered as the first step towards becoming practising Muslim women.

On the other hand, the state run schools do not follow this type of curriculum, they teach universal curriculum and devise futuristic plans in order to bring improvement in their education standards. However, Saigol (1995, 2003) pinpoints that the country, Pakistan, has been founded on the basis of religion, so it is difficult to dissociate religion from the curriculum.

2.1.3 Revolt against Female Literacy

The destruction of schools and killings affected women's education to a greater extent in Pakistan. It is reported that the terrorists had smashed 758 schools in North West part of the country (The Express Tribune, June 2012). Wieseltier (2012) contends that the militants spread their fight against women's education and enlightenment. Destroying girls' schools is the core principle of their agenda which results in the low levels of women's education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Yusuf, 2012). The government of Pakistan with the help of Army and NGOs renovated the devastated institutes and hope to bring education all over the place (The Express Tribune, June 2012).

2.2. Sociocultural Factors

2.2.1 Parental Attitude

There are different sociocultural factors which prevent women's education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Teachers in the schools pinpoint that the girls have not been given permission by the parents to join schools as compared to boys in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as in Baluchistan (Qureshi, 2003). Different ethnic communities live in these two provinces. The local customs are not the same in these provinces; however they have a common tradition of confining women to the boundaries. This idea of confinement has been further strengthened by the presence of male chauvinistic society. Haque (2010) found the same situations of patriarchal values in daily life.

The research conducted in the area of Dera Ghazi Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa shows that all parents are not inclined towards keeping their daughters uneducated and ignorant of advanced studies (Buzdar & Ali, 2011). There are some parents who want to go out of the rural areas to educate their daughters; however poverty does not allow them to go to urban areas and afford education expenditure. Contrary to this, Purewal and Hashmi (2014) find more (52%) people supporting boys' education and less (1.7%) advocating girls' education. Another group of parents only favour madrassa (religious seminary) education for females. Khan, Azhar and Shah (2011)

maintain that there are no facilities provided even for madrassa education, so most parents rely on home based recitation of the Holy Quran, especially in tribal areas, and consider this their final destiny. Parents are not alone in deciding girl's fate, their relatives, especially grandparents' influence decisions taken. Similar findings have been concluded in the area of North West part of Pakistan by Arai and Tabata (2006).

2.2.2 Parental Illiteracy

Some studies focus on parental illiteracy and consider it cause to prevent women's education (e.g. Ahmad & Neman, 2013). Parental illiteracy leads low economic condition which ultimately leads to poverty. Due to lack of resources, girls stay at home and do household chores rather than getting involved in other professional or skilled occupations. The Annual Status of Education Report (2013) shows that mothers in Pakistan are less educated as compared to fathers. The percentage of literate mothers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is 22% while the percentage of literate fathers is 54% (cited in Bilal, 2013). Thus this percentage does not seem to be sufficient for increasing women literacy. Another disadvantage of mothers' illiteracy in the rural areas is they do not want others to see their daughters while going across the road or walking in the street, hence they favour only religious education or madrassa education for them.

2.2.3 Early Marriages

An important cultural factor, early marriages, is tightly linked with the education of girls. Kids Rights Report (2013, p. 14) shows the results of United Nations Population Fund [on] Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage (UNFPA) (2012) that the girls who are getting married at young age is escalating day by day, and this situation will lead to 15.1 million girls, whose age range is less than 18, will be tying the knot every year. Similar results have been found in the Swat region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where early marriages are the main cause of slowing down the process of spreading education for girls (Arai & Tabata, 2006). The report published by UNWomen (2013) mentions that discontinuing education at the primary level isolate girls from schools, colleges and universities.

We also see some opposing views as indicated by Ahmad and Neman (2013). Mothers favour as well as resist the idea of education for girls. Those who favour, they believe that education helps to enlighten one's mind and enable girls to learn good manners and ethics which will help them to counter future issues. On the other hand, another group of mothers want to get their daughters married as early as possible. For this, Sindh province is known to have "the highest rate of child marriage of any province in Pakistan" (The Guardian, 2 June 2014). The newspaper further reports the provincial assembly has passed the law that stops under 18 marriages, be they male or female. However, people are not familiar with this act in rural areas. Not only this, they also don't know how to get their children's name and date of birth registered in government records which escalates child marriages, since they do not have the record of their ages at the time of tying the knot.

Following research questions have been formulated to investigate the current issue of gender disparity in education.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Research Questions

a) What is the association or relationship between religious principles and gender inequity in education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

b) How do sociocultural issues create obstacles in women education?

3.2 Delimitation

This study is narrowed down to analysing the responses of people of Mansehra regarding religious factors and sociocultural problems that prevent gender equality in the field of education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The focus is on misinterpretations of religion (i.e. Islam), curriculum in religious seminaries, parental attitudes and early marriages.

3.3 Instrument

The closed ended questionnaire has been formulated on Likert scale. It is administered in order to collect data. This study uses the quantitative research method.

3.4 Pilot Study

After explaining purpose of the study, students were given general instructions regarding filling in the questionnaire, and the researcher asked them to tell her if they have any confusion in filling the questionnaire. For instance, they could ask if they didn’t know the meaning of a particular word or don’t comprehend the meaning of a statement within the questionnaire. While filling in the questionnaire, three of the participants, two female and one male, asked for the meaning of the word “intimidated” which was explained by me. The word was changed into “alarmed” for the original data collection that the participants may not get confused while filling in the questionnaire.

The researcher entered the data into SPSS 22 (2013) software in order to find out Cronbach alpha of the questionnaire. Cronbach alpha, .715, was calculated for 20 items, so the items are reliable and consistent.

3.5 Sample

S.No	Department	Female	Male	Total
1	Education	15	15	30
2	Chemistry	10	10	20
3	Physics	15	15	30
4	Bioinformatics	10	10	20

4. Analysis

5.

Following tables have been formulated in order to tabulate values gender wise. Table 1 reveals that the highest value (33%) shows 28% female disagree with the statement, “women only need to get religious education”, whereas 5% male disagree. 31% shows 16% male strongly disagree and 15% female strongly disagree. We also notice that 18% sample strongly agree with the idea. If we look at gender distribution, then, male segment (12%) is more inclined towards conservative values than female (3%).

Table 1
Women only need to get religious education. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women only need to get religious education.	Strongly disagree	Count	16	15	31
		% of Total	16.0%	15.0%	31.0 %
	Disagree	Count	5	28	33
		% of Total	5.0%	28.0%	33.0 %
	Uncertain	Count	3	0	3
	% of Total	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%	
	Agree	Count	12	3	15
		% of Total	12.0%	3.0%	15.0 %
	Strongly agree	Count	14	4	18
		% of Total	14.0%	4.0%	18.0 %
Total		Count	50	50	100
		% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0 %

Table 2 shows that 40.4% participants disagree with the idea that the women’s education should be restricted to religious seminaries. As compared to male (13.1%), female shows higher value (27.3%). We also see strong resistance to the idea among male (11.1%) than female (8.1%). Uncertainty (15.2%) also prevails among masses, more among female (10.1%) than male (5.1%).

Table 2
Women should only get education in religious seminaries. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women should only get education in religious seminaries.	Strongly disagree	Count % of Total	11 11.1%	8 8.1%	19 19.2%
	Disagree	Count % of Total	13 13.1%	27 27.3%	40 40.4%
	Uncertain	Count % of Total	5 5.1%	10 10.1%	15 15.2%
	Agree	Count % of Total	13 13.1%	2 2.0%	15 15.2%
	Strongly agree	Count % of Total	8 8.1%	2 2.0%	10 10.1%
Total		Count % of Total	50 50.5%	49 49.5%	99 100.0%

Table 3 shows the highest value (39.8%) agree with the statement, women’s education is affected by traditional family values, 24.5% male agree and 15.3% female agree. 20.4% participants strongly agree, and we see this attitude more among female (14.3%) and less among male (6.1%).

Table 3

Women's education is affected by traditional family values. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women's education is affected by traditional family values.	Strongly disagree	Count	4	9	13
		% of Total	4.1%	9.2%	13.3%
	Disagree	Count	8	9	17
		% of Total	8.2%	9.2%	17.3%
	Uncertain	Count	7	2	9
	% of Total	7.1%	2.0%	9.2%	
	Agree	Count	24	15	39
		% of Total	24.5%	15.3%	39.8%
	Strongly agree	Count	6	14	20
		% of Total	6.1%	14.3%	20.4%
Total		Count	49	49	98
		% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%

Table 4 shows 38.4% participants strongly disagree with the idea that educated women cannot prove to be obedient wives and devoted mothers. More females (24.2%) than males (14.1%) strongly disagree. 27.3% participants disagree. There is no significant difference between the percentage of male (13.1%) and female (14.1%) who disagree. Among those (14.1%) who are uncertain show 8.1% male and 6.1% female.

Table 4

**Educated women cannot prove to be obedient wives and devoted mothers. *
Gender Cross tabulation**

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Educated women cannot prove to be obedient wives and devoted mothers.	Strongly disagree	Count % of Total	14 14.1%	24 24.2%	38 38.4%
	Disagree	Count % of Total	13 13.1%	14 14.1%	27 27.3%
	Uncertain	Count % of Total	8 8.1%	6 6.1%	14 14.1%
	Agree	Count % of Total	8 8.1%	5 5.1%	13 13.1%
	Strongly agree	Count % of Total	6 6.1%	1 1.0%	7 7.1%
Total	Count % of Total	49 49.5%	50 50.5%	99 100.0%	

Table 5 shows 53.0% participants agree that there is a need to revise the curriculum of female religious seminaries. More female (29.0%) than male (24.0%) agree. The second highest number (16.0%) is uncertain whether to revise the curriculum of female religious seminaries or not. Uncertainty is seen more among females (11.0%) than males (5.0%).

Table 5

**There is a need to revise the curriculum of female religious seminaries. *
Gender Cross tabulation**

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
There is a need to revise the curriculum of female religious seminaries.	Strongly disagree	Count % of Total	4 4.0%	2 2.0%	6 6.0%
	Disagree	Count % of Total	7 7.0%	6 6.0%	13 13.0%
	Uncertain	Count % of Total	5 5.0%	11 11.0%	16 16.0%
	Agree	Count % of Total	24 24.0%	29 29.0%	53 53.0%
	Strongly agree	Count % of Total	10 10.0%	2 2.0%	12 12.0%
Total	Count % of Total	50 50.0%	50 50.0%	100 100.0%	

Table 6 shows 45.4% stresses the idea, women must attend school; more females (23.7%) than males (21.6%) strongly agree. 37.1% participants agree with the aforementioned statement. Equal number of males (18.6%) and females (18.6%) agree.

Table 6

Women must attend school. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women must attend school.	Strongly disagree	Count	7	3	10
		% of Total	7.2%	3.1%	10.3%
	Disagree	Count	2	4	6
		% of Total	2.1%	4.1%	6.2%
	Uncertain	Count	0	1	1
		% of Total	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%
	Agree	Count	18	18	36
		% of Total	18.6%	18.6%	37.1%
	Strongly agree	Count	21	23	44
		% of Total	21.6%	23.7%	45.4%
Total	Count	48	49	97	
	% of Total	49.5%	50.5%	100.0%	

Table 7 shows 49.5% disagree with the statement, women only need to get basic education in Urdu; less than 5% difference is seen between male (22.7%) and female (26.8%). 19.6% participants strongly disagree with the statement. There is no significant difference between the percentages of male (10.3%) and female (9.3%).

Table 7

Women only need to get basic education in Urdu. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women only need to get basic education in Urdu.	Strongly disagree	Count	10	9	19
		% of Total	10.3%	9.3%	19.6%
	Disagree	Count	22	26	48
		% of Total	22.7%	26.8%	49.5%
	Uncertain	Count	4	7	11
% of Total		4.1%	7.2%	11.3%	
Agree	Count	9	2	11	
	% of Total	9.3%	2.1%	11.3%	
Strongly agree	Count	4	4	8	
	% of Total	4.1%	4.1%	8.2%	
Total	Count	49	48	97	
	% of Total	50.5%	49.5%	100.0%	

Table 8 shows 44.0% participants agree with the statement, it is important for women to get education in colleges and universities. 25.0% female agree while 19.0% male agree. This shows female segment is more inclined towards modern education than male segment. 29.0% participants stress the idea of women going to colleges and universities.

Table 8

It is important for women to get education in colleges and universities. *
Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
It is important for women to get education in colleges and universities.	Strongly disagree	Count	13	1	14
		% of Total	13.0%	1.0%	14.0%
	Disagree	Count	4	2	6
		% of Total	4.0%	2.0%	6.0%
	Uncertain	Count	2	5	7
		% of Total	2.0%	5.0%	7.0%
	Agree	Count	19	25	44
		% of Total	19.0%	25.0%	44.0%
	Strongly agree	Count	12	17	29
		% of Total	12.0%	17.0%	29.0%
Total	Count	50	50	100	
	% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	

Table 9 shows 44.3% participants strongly disagree with the idea, women should not be allowed to step out of the four walls. More females (27.8%) than males (16.5%) strongly disagree. 27.8% participants disagree with the statement.

Table 9

Women should not be allowed to step out of the four walls. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women should not be allowed to step out of the four walls.	Strongly disagree	Count	16	27	43
		% of Total	16.5%	27.8%	44.3%
	Disagree	Count	15	12	27
		% of Total	15.5%	12.4%	27.8%
	Uncertain	Count	6	0	6
% of Total		6.2%	0.0%	6.2%	
Agree	Count	4	8	12	
	% of Total	4.1%	8.2%	12.4%	
Strongly agree	Count	8	1	9	
	% of Total	8.2%	1.0%	9.3%	
Total	Count	49	48	97	
	% of Total	50.5%	49.5%	100.0%	

Table 10 shows 41% participants stress the idea of women getting education in the Mansehra region, 27.0% female strongly agree and 14.0% male strongly agree. 37.0% participants agree with the statement.

Table 10

For the progress of the Mansehra region, it is important for women to get education. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
For the progress of the Mansehra region, it is important for women to get education.	Strongly disagree	Count % of Total	7 7.0%	3 3.0%	10 10.0%
	Disagree	Count % of Total	6 6.0%	2 2.0%	8 8.0%
	Uncertain	Count % of Total	3 3.0%	1 1.0%	4 4.0%
	Agree	Count % of Total	20 20.0%	17 17.0%	37 37.0%
	Strongly agree	Count % of Total	14 14.0%	27 27.0%	41 41.0%
Total	Count % of Total	50 50.0%	50 50.0%	100 100.0%	

Table 11 shows 36.0% disagree with the statement, women only need to be trained in household chores. 20.0% female disagree as well as 16.0% male disagree. 31.0% participants strongly disagree with the statement. 21.0% female and 10.0% male strongly disagree which shows 50% difference between them.

Table 11

Women only need to be trained in household chores. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women only need to be trained in household chores.	Strongly disagree	Count	10	21	31
		% of Total	10.0 %	21.0%	31.0%
	Disagree	Count	16	20	36
		% of Total	16.0 %	20.0%	36.0%
	Uncertain	Count	4	7	11
		% of Total	4.0%	7.0%	11.0%
	Agree	Count	11	2	13
		% of Total	11.0 %	2.0%	13.0%
	Strongly agree	Count	9	0	9
		% of Total	9.0%	0.0%	9.0%
Total	Count	50	50	100	
	% of Total	50.0 %	50.0%	100.0 %	

Table 12 shows 33.7% participants strongly disagree with the idea, women should not study in co-education, 22.4% female participants strongly disagree and 11.2% male participants strongly disagree, 50% difference is noticed. 32.7% participants disagree, 20.4% female participants disagree and 12.2% male participants disagree. This shows more female than male participants favour co-education.

Table 12

Women should not study in co-education. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women should not study in co-education.	Strongly disagree	Count	11	22	33
		% of Total	11.2%	22.4%	33.7%
	Disagree	Count	12	20	32
		% of Total	12.2%	20.4%	32.7%
	Uncertain	Count	5	6	11
		% of Total	5.1%	6.1%	11.2%
	Agree	Count	7	1	8
		% of Total	7.1%	1.0%	8.2%
	Strongly agree	Count	14	0	14
		% of Total	14.3%	0.0%	14.3%
Total		Count	49	49	98
		% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%

Table 13 shows 43% total participants strongly disagree with the statement, a woman should not get education after getting married, 29% female participants strongly disagree whereas 14% male participants strongly disagree. 32% participants disagree with the statement, female participants (18%) show more resistance than male participants (14%).

Table 13

A woman should not get education after getting married. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
A woman should not get education after getting married.	Strongly disagree	Count	14	29	43
		% of Total	14.0%	29.0%	43.0%
	Disagree	Count	14	18	32
		% of Total	14.0%	18.0%	32.0%
	Uncertain	Count	3	2	5
	% of Total	3.0%	2.0%	5.0%	
	Agree	Count	13	0	13
		% of Total	13.0%	0.0%	13.0%
	Strongly agree	Count	6	1	7
		% of Total	6.0%	1.0%	7.0%
Total		Count	50	50	100
		% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%

Table 14 shows 48% participants agree that women’s education is essential to modernize outdated traditional ideas in the Mansehra region, 25% female participants agree and 23% male participants agree. We do not see notable difference here. 17% respondents strongly agree with the idea. Here more male participants (9%) strongly agree than female participants (8%).

Table 14

Women's education is essential to modernize outdated traditional ideas in the Mansehra region. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Women's education is essential to modernize outdated traditional ideas in the Mansehra region.	Strongly disagree	Count	6	4	10
		% of Total	6.0%	4.0%	10.0%
	Disagree	Count	4	8	12
		% of Total	4.0%	8.0%	12.0%
	Uncertain	Count	8	5	13
% of Total		8.0%	5.0%	13.0%	
Agree	Count	23	25	48	
	% of Total	23.0%	25.0%	48.0%	
Strongly agree	Count	9	8	17	
	% of Total	9.0%	8.0%	17.0%	
Total	Count	50	50	100	
	% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	

Table 15 shows 45% participants agree with the notion, traditional ideas related to women’s education should be reviewed and changed according to the needs of the time, the percentages show that female respondents (23%) are more interested in the process of change and modernization as compared to male respondents (22%). 26% participants strongly agree, 15% female and 11% male respondents strongly agree with the idea of change.

Table 15

Traditional ideas related to women's education should be reviewed and changed according to the needs of the time * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Traditional ideas related to women's education should be reviewed and changed according to the needs of the time	Strongly disagree	Count % of Total	6 6.0%	2 2.0%	8 8.0%
	Disagree	Count % of Total	6 6.0%	4 4.0%	10 10.0%
	Uncertain	Count % of Total	5 5.0%	6 6.0%	11 11.0%
	Agree	Count % of Total	22 22.0%	23 23.0%	45 45.0%
	Strongly agree	Count % of Total	11 11.0%	15 15.0%	26 26.0%
Total	Count % of Total	50 50.0%	50 50.0%	100 100.0%	

Table 16 shows 40% respondents strongly disagree with the idea that parents do not permit girls to join schools, 26% female respondents and 14% male respondents strongly disagree. 30% respondents disagree with the notion. Here male respondents (20%) do not seem to agree as compared to female respondents (10%).

Table 16

Parents do not permit girls to join schools. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Parents do not permit girls to join schools.	Strongly disagree	Count	14	26	40
		% of Total	14.0%	26.0%	40.0%
	Disagree	Count	20	10	30
		% of Total	20.0%	10.0%	30.0%
	Uncertain	Count	5	5	10
		% of Total	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%
	Agree	Count	8	7	15
		% of Total	8.0%	7.0%	15.0%
	Strongly agree	Count	3	2	5
		% of Total	3.0%	2.0%	5.0%
Total	Count	50	50	100	
	% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	

Table 17 shows 38% participants strongly agree with the statement, mothers need to be educated in the Mansehra region, 22% female participants strongly agree as compared to 16% male participants. 38% participants agree, male and female participants show equal results (19:19).

Table 17

Mothers need to be educated in the Mansehra region. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Mothers need to be educated in the Mansehra region.	Strongly disagree	Count	7	4	11
		% of Total	7.0%	4.0%	11.0%
	Disagree	Count	4	3	7
		% of Total	4.0%	3.0%	7.0%
	Uncertain	Count	4	2	6
	% of Total	4.0%	2.0%	6.0%	
	Agree	Count	19	19	38
		% of Total	19.0%	19.0%	38.0%
	Strongly agree	Count	16	22	38
		% of Total	16.0%	22.0%	38.0%
Total		Count	50	50	100
		% of Total	50.0%	50.0%	100.0 %

Table 18 shows 31.3% participants agree to the idea, parents should not get their daughters married at early age; more female participants (20.2%) seem to agree with the idea than male participants (11.1%). 29.3% participants strongly agree, more female participants (16.2%) seem to agree than male participants (13.1%).

Table 18

Parents should not get their daughters married at early age. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Parents should not get their daughters married at early age.	Strongly disagree	Count	12	4	16
		% of Total	12.1%	4.0%	16.2%
	Disagree	Count	6	3	9
		% of Total	6.1%	3.0%	9.1%
	Uncertain	Count	7	7	14
		% of Total	7.1%	7.1%	14.1%
	Agree	Count	11	20	31
		% of Total	11.1%	20.2%	31.3%
	Strongly agree	Count	13	16	29
		% of Total	13.1%	16.2%	29.3%
Total		Count	49	50	99
		% of Total	49.5%	50.5%	100.0 %

Table 19 shows 48.5% participants agree regarding proper arrangement of conveying information about birth registration in government records in order to control early marriages. More female participants (26.3%) seem to agree with the idea than the male participants (22.2%). 33.3% participants strongly agree with the idea, more male participants (19.2%) strongly agree whereas 14.1% female participants strongly agree.

Table 19

Regarding birth registration, government should arrange free informal education for illiterate parents. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Regarding birth registration, government should arrange free informal education for illiterate parents.	Strongly disagree	Count % of Total	5 5.1%	3 3.0%	8 8.1%
	Disagree	Count % of Total	0 0.0%	4 4.0%	4 4.0%
	Uncertain	Count % of Total	3 3.0%	3 3.0%	6 6.1%
	Agree	Count % of Total	22 22.2%	26 26.3%	48 48.5%
	Strongly agree	Count % of Total	19 19.2%	14 14.1%	33 33.3%
Total	Count % of Total	49 49.5%	50 50.5%	99 100.0%	

Table 20 shows highest value, 34% participants agree that parents are alarmed by modernizing attitudes of their daughters. The percentages show that female participants (18%) are more worried about modernizing attitudes of their daughters than male participants (16%). 26% participants are uncertain about the situation. The results show high level of uncertainty among female participants (18%) than male participants (8%).

Table 20

Parents are alarmed by modernizing attitudes of their daughters. * Gender Cross tabulation

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Parents are alarmed by modernizing attitudes of their daughters.	Strongly disagree	Count % of Total	8 8.0%	2 2.0%	10 10.0%
	Disagree	Count % of Total	3 3.0%	3 3.0%	6 6.0%
	Uncertain	Count % of Total	8 8.0%	18 18.0%	26 26.0%
	Agree	Count % of Total	16 16.0%	18 18.0%	34 34.0%
	Strongly agree	Count % of Total	15 15.0%	9 9.0%	24 24.0%
Total	Count % of Total	50 50.0%	50 50.0%	100 100.0%	

6. Conclusion

Based on above analysis, this study attempts to create a link between religious principles and gender inequity in education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Since religious seminaries only teach submissive roles of women in their syllabi, it is important to revisit and re-evaluate the existing syllabi in the religious seminaries in order to bring change regarding women’s education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The results presented in table (1-5) reveal optimistic situation among participants in the Mansehra region regarding their views about religion and women’s education.

Some sociocultural issues hinder the way to women’s education. Unlike previous studies (see Section 2) the results presented in table (6-10) show positive responses about women’s college and university education, and education other than Urdu. Few cultural factors have also been considered in table (11-15). The results show optimistic scenario of participants regarding questions about household chores, co-education, woman education after getting married, and modernization of the

Mansehra region. They agree to change traditional ideas, and out-dated ideas be replaced with emerging trends. Several factors contributing to parental attitudes to women's education have also been discussed in table (16-20). The results reveal positive response of participants in table 16-19, whereas table 20 shows parents' anxiety regarding modernizing attitude of their daughters which is the result of modern education. This shows parents are aware of the importance of education, however they are forced to remind themselves of the culture they were born in and raised by their parents long ago. The research conducted in the Mansehra region helps us to generalize its findings on other regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa because the religious and sociocultural conditions are same in other parts of the province.

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