

## Gender Differences In Modernization Of Leisure: Changing Trends In Sports And Recreation In Rural Punjab

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### Abstract

The main objective of present study is to measure changes in leisure activities of a rural community in the Punjab, Pakistan. Gender differences and changes in participation of sports are also assessed over a period of fifty years. The changes have been identified from 1960s through 2008 retrospectively. Data are taken from a larger sample survey covering various social institutions in the village. An interview schedule permitting multiple responses was developed to interview persons, age 55 + years. Out of 223 eligible persons, 109 respondents (54 males and 55 females) were systematically selected. Our findings are based on descriptive and trend analyses. It is found that watching television is a popular leisure activity in the village. Leisure activities such as folklores, visiting neighbors and smoking *huqa* disappeared during the last two decades. Traditional sports are almost replaced by modern ones such as cricket, football and badminton from 1990s and onwards. Girls have also started participating in outdoor games which used to be exclusively meant for boys.

**Keywords:** Gender Differences, Leisure Activities, Television, Sports, Rural Community.

### تلخیص

زیر نظر مطالعہ کا بنیادی مقصد پاکستان کے صوبہ پنجاب کے دیہاتی علاقوں میں تفریحی سرگرمیوں میں تبدیلی کا جائزہ لینا ہے۔ گزشتہ ۵۰ سالوں میں صنفی بنیادوں پر فرق اور کھیلوں میں شرکت میں تبدیلیوں کا اندازہ لگایا گیا ہے۔ یہ تبدیلیاں ماضی میں ۱۹۶۰ء سے لے کر ۲۰۰۸ء تک ایک تسلسل کے ساتھ وقوع پذیر ہوئیں ہیں۔ یہ اعداد و شمار دیہات میں موجود مختلف سماجی اداروں کا احاطہ کرنے والے ایک بڑے سروے سے حاصل کئے گئے۔ مختلف آراء کے حصول کے لئے ایک انٹرویو شیڈول کیا گیا جس میں ۵۵ سال سے زائد عمر کے افراد کو شامل کیا گیا۔ ۲۲۳ اہل افراد میں سے ۱۱۰۹ افراد (۵۴ مرد اور ۵۵ خواتین) کو ایک منظم طریقے سے منتخب کیا گیا۔ ہمارے نتائج وضاحتی اور رجحانوں کے تجزیاتی بیانات پر مبنی ہیں۔ یہ سامنے آیا ہے کہ ٹی وی دیکھنا گاؤں میں ایک مقبول تفریحی سرگرمی ہے، تفریحی سرگرمیاں جیسا کہ لوک قصے کہانیاں، ہمسائیوں کی طرف آنا جانا اور حقہ پینا گزشتہ دو دہائیوں کے دوران معدوم ہو گئی ہیں۔ ۱۹۹۰ء اور اس کے بعد سے جدید کھیلوں جیسا کہ کرکٹ اور بیڈمنٹن نے روایتی

کھیلوں کی جگہ لے لی ہے۔ لڑکیوں نے بھی آؤٹ ڈور گیمز میں شمولیت اختیار کرنا شروع کر دی ہے جو کہ کبھی فقط لڑکوں کے لئے ہی مخصوص سمجھے جاتے تھے۔

کلیدی الفاظ: صنفی تفریق، تفریحی سرگرمیاں، ٹیلی ویژن، کھیل، دیہی آبادی

## Introduction

This paper intends to observe various leisure activities that used to prevail in a village of the Punjab (Pakistan) named Mohla. Participation of young girls and boys in various sports over the period of five decades is also covered. Leisure is an institution that has its own social dimensions. Gender, age, education, economic condition and availability of technological items make the difference in the utility of free time. Leisure activities provide us pleasure, enjoyment and mental relaxation generally during free time. Social aspects such as age and ethnicity determine the recreational activities (Katz-Gerro & Shavit, 1998). Leisure activities may also vary with gender, education, caste, occupational status and socio-cultural environment. Those who find less opportunity to socialize at work preferably spend their leisure time with friends and family (Wilson, 1980). According to his analysis, early family experiences also influence the recreational activities of adult members. Watching television, craft making, participation in social, political and community activities are examples of various types of leisure (Peterson, 1981).

Like all other limited resources, free time is also unequally distributed among the people of a society (Wilson, 1980). He finds that poor seems to have more free time than rich people. However, he mentions that free time increases with level of education because educated people know how to manage their time efficiently. Katz-Gerro (1999) has also found in his study that social aspects like education, gender, race, and class determine the types of leisure activities. For instance, a research suggests that single adults adopt leisure activities more for personal satisfaction (Kelly, 1975). Generally, interests of people vary greatly with age so are their involvement in various recreational activities. Age and gender are often observed significantly associated with physically active recreational activities (Laakso et al., 2008). It states that more young than old people and males than females participate in physically active leisure activities.

## Review of Literature

Leisure is a relative concept that may vary in its subjective meanings. For instance, watching television and listening to music are leisure activities for some individuals. Others may enjoy playing different games, spending time with friends, travelling and doing meditation. Individual interpretation of leisure may vary on the basis of occupational and gender differences. For instance, gardening, playing sports, household

maintenance and reading might be leisure activities for some and work for others (Clark, Harvey & Shaw, 1990).

Messener & Blau (1987) have mentioned three macro perspectives that link leisure activities with social organization. First, such activities are expression of social integration. Second, leisure is an outlet of social discontent. Third, leisure promotes disorganization and at times aggression too. Deducing from these perspectives, leisure in a way, becomes an important aspect of social structure. Social context of leisure may provide varied definitions for different strata such as age group, gender and social class.

There are also variations in the leisure activities of urban and rural settings. Generally, there are more internationally recognized leisure activities in urban as compared to rural areas. Most of the rural communities lack entertainment facilities such as cinemas, public parks, society clubs etc. that are found in the cities. However, Kelly (1978) is of the view that leisure is more than sports, community programmes and use of special facilities for the purpose.

The growing influence of foreign media in Pakistan also has its advantages and disadvantages. Cable television and internet are accessible almost equally and easily to almost all segments of society whether rural or urban. Media, particularly cable network exposes us to various other cultures. Apparently, influence of Western and Indian culture is among the most prominent in Pakistan. Cultural impact not only includes the material aspects but also carries social influence. It can be observed in social norms, values, traditions and other non-material aspects of a society. For instance, media images of gender roles may have the ability to influence social attitudes towards cultural stereotypes of males and females. Media portrayal of social roles needs to be factual to some extent, so that people may relate to these gender images (Murphy, 1998).

Listening to radio, a common source for entertainment Skuse (2005), is getting replaced by television due to technological shift occurred over time. Television viewership is the highest among the non-working females, elderly person, children and poor people (Peterson, 1981). Watching television has increased over recent years though it has negative impact on social relationships and traditional values by encouraging individualism (Melvin, 1974). A study of the USA suggests that older people watch more television than younger ones due to isolation (Chayko, 1993). Computers also have influenced many aspects of human life including work, economy, information management and even leisure activities. Utility of technological item may vary in rural and urban settings. For instance, use of computers would be considerably high in cities whereas listening to radio or television viewership could be popular leisure activity in villages. Some studies have also focused on the transition of free time activities. Fischer (1994) has indicated three main types; firstly, organized pastime replacing spontaneous

activities. Secondly, commercial entertainment and sports substituting informal and active leisure. Third transition highlighted by Fischer is individual indulgences which are replacing collective recreation.

Social and cultural patterns are also reflected in the types of sports that are generally popular in a region. Besides leisure, sports is an important social institution through which culturally constructed gender roles are reinforced (Wesely & Gaarder, 2004). According to functional perspective, sports socialize young people by transferring them social values and norms (Hanson & Kraus, 1998). They state that participation in sports provides identification and also have group integration function. Conversely, they add that conflict perspective views sports as mechanism of reproducing gender differentiation by providing men more access to sports than women.

Men are generally involved in more aggressive and violent sports than women (Washington & Karen, 2001). Moreover, differences are also expected to be found in cultural specific gender perceptions for indoor and outdoor sports. In conservative societies women are mostly discouraged to participate in outdoor games (Wesely & Gaarder, 2004). Therefore, sports reflect many social patterns other than just a leisure activity (Leisberson, 1997). People of the Punjab are fond of many local traditional games including wrestling, horse riding, bull fighting, *kabbadi*, cock fights etc. (Quddus, 1989). Over the period of time, some of the traditional games might have lost popularity while some of these games are modified into modern form.

## **Methodology**

The data of present study is derived from a larger probability sample survey which included various social structural aspects of the village. The extended survey covered various social institutions and changes there in over the period of fifty years. This paper assess patterns of leisure activities prevailing and changing over the decades also relevant reasons in a retrospective way. Perceptions of the villagers are observed to assess the general social trends in the given time periods.

## **Sampling**

The village comprised of 350 households that was taken as sampling frame. The population included 2374 individuals. Since our focus was on changes that have occurred over the period of fifty years, the selected age of the respondents was 55+ years. This age group in particular was assumed to have observed changes over the period of time. Out of total village population, there were 223 eligible persons. Systematic sampling technique was used for the selection of the respondents. Every second household with respondent in eligible age group was selected which resulted in 109 successful interviews.

## Data Collection

An interview schedule permitting multiple responses was constructed comprising of both open and closed ended questions to interview the respondents. Interview schedule was developed instead of questionnaires as majority was illiterate. The instrument was developed in English then translated in native language for interviewing the respondents. Since the responses are based on recollection of memories, we specified ten years as point in time for obtaining required information. It was expected to reduce the influence of any memory lapse. Moreover, questions were asked about general social patterns prevalent in various decades instead of specific events. This was assumed to have further enhanced the validity of the responses.

## Changes in Leisure Activities

A general question is asked about leisure activities of the villagers over the decades. Proportions of the respondents stating various leisure activities of the villagers by time periods are shown in Table 1. It shows that about three-fourth of the people used to visit neighbors for chatting and sharing activities in their free time during the first two decades (1960s and 1970s). It declined significantly in 1990s and 2000 onwards (from about 28.0%).

Over two-third of them were also involved in various types of sports as part of their leisure activity in 1960s. Participation in sports substantially declined in 1970s. It started to rise gradually as a leisure activity afterwards. Perhaps, traditional rural sports declined drastically which are being replaced by modern sports such as cricket. Plausible reasons may include awareness of various sports such as cricket or football by watching television. In 2000 onwards, about one-fourth of the respondents state sports among the leisure activities of the villagers.

In 1960s, a significant proportion (about 60.0%) of persons used to listen to folklores for entertainment. Folklores are stories based on cultural myths, traditions and popular beliefs. In the villages, generally males get together for listening or watching (performed by artists of mobile theatres) these folktales. *Sussī Panu*, *Heer Ranjha* and *Saiful Maluk* are among the popular folklores of the region. Eglar (1960) studied some cultural aspects of the same village about five decades ago. She has also mentioned these folklores except *Sussī Panu* that particularly, belong to the region (Gujrat) under study. Occasionally, folklores are lyrical recited by an individual in a poetic way. Villagers gather around the person and enjoy listening to it. Some of these folklores are also symbolic expressions showing the connection between man and God. Popularity of folklores appeared to decline in 1970s and 1980s. It almost vanished during the last two decades, probably due to availability of other sources of entertainment such as television, radio and computers.

**Table: 1**  
**Percentages of the respondents stating leisure activities in the village by time periods, mohla 2008**

<b>Leisure Activities</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000+</b>
Visiting relatives/ neighbors	72.5	71.6	67.9	31.2	27.5
Playing sports	69.7	14.7	16.5	21.1	22.9
Folklores	59.7	44.0	34.9	1.8	0.9
Computer	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.9	25.7
Watching T.V	0.0	5.5	13.8	80.7	94.5
Watching Movies	0.9	1.8	3.7	4.6	17.4
Listening Radio	12.8	26.6	25.7	17.4	9.2
Others(Smoking <i>Huqa</i> , Rest, Household work)	59.6	59.6	60.6	16.5	7.3
N	109	109	109	109	109
<b>Average No. of Responses</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.1</b>

\* Multiple responses were permissible. Sum total of percentages may exceed 100.0

Our results show that doing household work and smoking *huqa* (traditional device for smoking) as a leisure activity declined during the recent past. These activities were stated by a substantial proportion (about 60.0%) during the first three decades. Generally, men used to sit together and chat over *huqa* in the evening at a central place in the village. On the other hand, women used to stitch clothes, make handicrafts and other household items in their free time. It declined drastically in 1990s and reduced to about seven percent in 2000 onwards. Technology provides us with more leisure time as most of the chores of earlier time periods are not replaced by modern and readymade items (Carlson et al., 1999). It may have resulted in due to decrease in informal social interaction among community members who used to get together regularly to share interesting activities.

Some of the villagers used to listen to radio as a leisure activity in 1960s. Listening to radio increased to about one-fourth in 1970s and 1980s. It then declined in 1990s and reduced to about nine percent in 2000 onwards. This trend indicates the effects of availability of television in the village. Watching television as a leisure activity emerged in 1970s. Plausible reason for this may be that there were no television sets in the village before 1970s. Increasing trend is observed in watching television for entertainment. Substantial increase is observed in watching television in 1990s. There were few televisions in 1990s (about 13.0%, Data not shown) and probably majority of the people get together to watch it (about 81.0%) due to homogeneity and close interpersonal relations. A study conducted in Pakistan also revealed that a reasonable proportion of people watch television but do not own (Miller, Kayani & Javed 1998). In 2000 onwards, overwhelming majority of the people prefer to watch television programmes during their free time (about 95.0%). It may

be due to the fact that significant increase in the possession of television in 2000 onwards (about 68.0% of the households, Data not shown).

Some people have radio but they prefer to watch television s over listening radio. There were rare cases of watching movies from 1960s through 1990s. It increased to about 17.0% in 2000 onwards. Use of computers started during 1990s in the village. About one-fourth of the respondents state that mostly young people use computers for watching movies, listening to music and chatting etc.

On the average, about three responses are given in 1960s that are reduced to about two responses in 1990s and onwards. Decreasing average number of responses shows that villagers have fewer leisure activities in the recent than the earlier decades. It can be inferred that in earlier decades people had strong social ties. Women and men used to get together in their respective groups in the afternoon or evening. It worked as a mechanism of problem sharing and discussing matters. It has significantly declined during the last two decades. It is replaced by watching television within the households during the latter decade. Interpersonal interaction at community level has declined significantly over the period of time. McBride (1998) also holds similar viewpoint that television is destroying social fabric and social capital by causing individualism. Social ethics are changing due to rapid change in technological items (Melvin, 1974).

Respondents are also asked about their own leisure activities at the time of survey in 2008. The proportions of respondents stating their leisure activities are shown in Table 2. A study conducted in Israel found that age and ethnicity affects lifestyle of the people including their recreational activities (Katz-Gerro & Shavit, 1998). As respondents for the present study belong to relatively older age group, differences are expectedly found in their leisure activities and those of the villagers (of all ages) in 2000 onwards. Majority of the village population belong to young age groups and for them, there are limited sources of entertainment in the village. Therefore, probably they watch more television as compared to older group.

Table 2 shows that about one-fourth of the respondents visit neighbors and relatives for chatting. Similarly, some of the respondents prefer to take rest in their free time. Old age of the respondents might be one of the major reasons. Surprisingly, a new response category emerged when asked from the respondents about their leisure activities, that is, worship. A sizable proportion of the respondents state that they draw pleasure from praying and meditation. It may be due to the fact that respondents belong to old age group.

**Table: 2**  
**Percentages of the respondents stating leisure activities by gender, mohla 2008**

Leisure Activities	Respondents' Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Watching TV* (n)	76.7 (43)	52.1 (48)	63.7 (91)
Listening Radio* (n)	66.7 (21)	52.2 (23)	59.1 (44)
Visiting Neighbors/friends	24.1	29.1	26.6
Folklores	7.4	7.3	7.3
Worship/Praying	14.8	34.6	24.8
Resting	27.8	23.6	25.7
Smoking Huqa	9.3	1.8	5.5
Others(Playing with grandchildren, looking after animals, Reading)	16.7	12.7	14.7
N	54	55	109
<b>Average No. of Responses</b>	2.4	2.1	2.3

\* Percentages are out of cases who own television and radio

\*\* Multiple responses were permissible. Sum total of percentages may exceed 100.0

More females than males offer prayers, meditate and recite Quran (holy book of Muslims) whenever they get time from other responsibilities. Generally, females are relatively more religious than males perhaps due to their restricted mobility. About one-fourth of the respondents also listen to radio during free time. Of those who have television, about two-third of the respondents watch it. Probably, elderly people are involved in limited activities and feel socially isolated at times. As a result, most likely they spend their free time by watching television in households. Findings of a study conducted in the USA also suggest that elderly people watch more television than young or middle aged group due to social isolation (Chayko, 1993). The present study supports these findings as our respondents belong to old age group and they generally have limited social activities.

More males than females watch television for entertainment. One of the reasons may be that generally televisions are placed in the guest room that is, particularly meant for men in the village. More males than females also smoke *huqa* as a leisure activity. Probably, women are generally discouraged to smoke in Pakistani culture. Participation in family activities and resting are among the leisure needs that separates work and leisure (Kabanoff, 1982). In the present study, a small proportion of the respondents (about 15.0%) also like to spend time with their grandchildren, look after their animals and do reading during their free time.

### **Types of Radio and Television Programmes**

Respondents are asked about types of radio programmes they like to listen. Total number of the respondents is relatively small (26). However, Table 3 shows that of those who listen to radio, more males (over 90.0 %) than females (about 58.0%) listen to news. Plausible reason may be the interest of men in political matters and current affairs.



**Table: 3**  
**Percentages of the respondents stating various types of radio programmes by gender, mohla 2008**

Types Of Radio Programs**	Respondents' Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Informative/Religious	57.1	50.0	46.2
News	92.9	58.3	76.9
Entertainment/Songs	50.0	33.3	42.3
Average No. of Responses	2.0	1.4	1.7
<b>N</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>26</b>

\* Multiple responses were permissible. Sum total of responses may exceeds 100.0

\*\* Only those respondents were asked about types of programs who stated that they listen to radio

About one- half of males and females also listen to religious and informative programmes on radio. Half of the male respondents also prefer entertainment based programmes such as songs etc. Over one-third of the females also listen to songs and music. On the average, 2.0 and 1.4 responses are given by male and female respondents respectively.

A question is also asked on types of television programmes that the respondents prefer to watch for entertainment. Total number of the respondents stating watching television is 58 (33 males and 25 females). Percentages of the respondents stating various types of television programmes by gender are shown in Table 4. Of males who watch television, majority watch news bulletins. However, a study conducted in Israel suggests that generally males are more inclined towards religious information (Katz-Gerro & Shavit, 1998). On the contrary, our results show that males are more interested in political and informative programmes than religious ones.

**Table: 4**  
**Percentages of the respondents stating various types of television programmes by gender, mohla 2008**

Types Of Tv Programs**	Respondents' Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Religious	60.6	88.0	72.4
News	81.8	64.0	74.1
Political Discussion	39.4	20.0	31.0
Comedy	30.3	20.0	25.9
Dramas	36.4	60.0	46.6
Movies/Songs	66.7	52.0	60.3
Sports	42.4	24.0	34.5
Fashion Shows	18.2	12.0	15.5
<b>N</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Average No. of Responses</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.6</b>

\* Multiple responses were permissible. Sum total of responses may exceeds 100.0

\*\* Only those respondents were asked about types of programmes who stated that they watch TV

In the present study, over three-fourth of the females are found to watch religious programmes. Probably, females are more interested in religious. Abelman (1987) also finds that strong religious belief is associated with viewing of religious programmes. Miller and Stark (2002) have mentioned three theoretical explanations for gender differences and religious levels. These explanations given by them include: the way females are socialized make them more passive, traditional role of women as mother and family caretaker, and lack of social and economic power of women in most societies. These three factors are assumed to encourage high religiosity among females.

In a conservative village community such as ours, females are generally confined to their houses and have limited exposure. This may contribute to their stronger religious beliefs. Perhaps, it is one of the reasons for greater interest of females than males in watching religious programmes. Various programmes on television are stated to have different impact on people. These impacts vary with gender, age groups or social class. For example, dramas presenting crime and violence may have strong negative effect on males whereas news are more fear producing for females (Eschholz, Chiricos & Gertz, 2003). Our results show that political discussions and news are watched more by males than females. It may also reflect greater interest and involvement in political activities of men than women.

On the contrary, dramas are watched more by females than males (60.0 % and 36.4% respectively). Plausible reason may be that mostly dramas are based on domestic issues that may interest women more than men. It is found that more males than females are interested in watching sports programmes like cricket match etc.. Men generally participate more in outdoor activities like sports than women. This may explain the gender difference. Comedy programmes are almost equally watched by both the male and female respondents. Some males and females also watch fashion shows as part of their leisure activity.

### **Impact of Television**

Information technology is generally believed to influence various aspects of social life. Technological innovations that affect social structure of a community are television, computers, mobile phone etc.. These may bring about changes in lifestyles, family relationships, gender roles and social values of the people.

The social impact is a relative term which is subjective in nature. It can be both positive and negative. Findings of our study show that television has become part of many households. To see the impact of watching television and its various programmes, a question is asked about its impact on various aspects of social life. Table 5 shows that a very high proportion (about 94.0%) state that television is changing the lifestyles of the people. Lifestyle may include learning new things (cooking, décor etc.), dressing, utility of items etc. People adopt many things as they are exposed to information through this medium.

**Table: 5**  
**Percentages of the respondents stating impact of television programmes on various social aspects, by gender, mohla 2008**

Social Aspects	Respondents' Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Lifestyle	90.7	96.4	93.6
Family Relationships	64.8	61.8	63.3
Gender Roles	53.7	61.8	57.8
Social Values	77.8	80.0	78.9
N	54	55	109
<b>Average No. of Responses</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.9</b>

\* Multiple responses were permissible. Sum total of percentages may exceed 100.0

About three-fourth of the respondents state that family relationships are changing due to television. In their view, interaction within the family members has declined which has negative influence on family relations. Over 50.0% also perceive that change is occurring in gender roles as young people are exposed to various programmes. Generally, dramas and movies show different dimensions of stereotypical gender images. This is probably influencing the traditional attitudes towards gender roles, particularly of females. Mostly young females wish to do various jobs such as teaching etc. Moreover, awareness of rights may also make young boys and girls question the traditional attitudes and existing value system.

The factors discussed so far may also contribute to the change in overall social values of the people in the village (about 79.0%). Respondents state that young boys and girls prefer to spend their free time in watching television rather than helping or sharing work with elders. As a result, mostly elders of the household may feel somewhat isolated and ignored. Therefore, television is considered to have more negative than positive influence on the lives of people.

Percentages of the respondents stating programmes perceived inappropriate and its reasons are shown in Table 6. These programmes include movies, dramas, advertisements, sports and fashion shows. Overwhelming majority (about 93.0%) disapprove movies perhaps due to vulgarity and indecent dressing. Higher proportion of males than females consider dramas and fashion shows inappropriate for watching with family members. Probably, such programmes interest females more than their male counterparts. Over 40.0% of both the genders state that advertisements are also not worth watching with family members. These may include advertisement on family planning, AIDS etc.. Over one-fourth of them also perceive some sports as inappropriate. These may refer to dresses in females sports such as swimming and tennis etc. of those who watch television, about three-fourth consider various programmes not worth watching with family members.

**Table: 6**  
**Percentages of the respondents stating programmes considered inappropriate and its reasons, by gender, mohla 2008**

Inappropriate Programmes	Respondents' Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Drama	62.5	47.1	56.1
Movies	95.8	88.2	92.7
Advertisement	41.7	47.1	43.9
Sports	29.2	23.5	26.8
Fashion Shows	83.3	52.9	70.7
<b>Average No. of Responses</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Reasons For Considering Tv Programmes Inappropriate</b>			
Vulgarity	75.0	88.2	80.5
Romantic Dialogue	33.3	11.8	24.4
Indecent Dressing	33.3	35.3	34.1
Average No. of Responses	1.4	1.4	1.4
<b>N</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>41</b>

\* Multiple responses were permissible. Sum total of percentages may exceed 100.0

A vast majority (about 81.0%) mentions vulgarity among the reasons for perceiving various programmes inappropriate. Indecent dressing is another reason for not watching some programmes with family as stated by about one-third of the respondents. It may be due to religious (Islamic) and relatively conservative values of the community members. Particularly, females dressed up in Western or exposing dresses is generally discouraged by the cultural standards. Nearly one-fourth of them are also of the view that romantic dialogues in dramas or movies make them feel embarrassed if watching with family. Plausibly, it is due to the traditional value structure of the village.

### **Sports and Gender**

Sports are not just considered leisure activities but also depict many of the social processes (Leiserson 1997). This institution also represents the cultural heritage and other social aspects of a region. Messener, Duncan & Jensen (1993) observe that not just the type of sport but its language also reflects social meanings, biases, stereotypes and inequities within a society. Sport is an important social institution through which social construction of masculinity and femininity is learned (Wesely & Gaarder 2004). On the individual level, participation in sports is found positively related with self esteem (Tracy & Erkut 2002).

Percentages of the respondents stating sports of boys by the time periods are shown in Table 7. Sports of boys include *kabbadi*, *gulli danda*, cricket, football etc.. Most of these sports are outdoor in nature. The table shows *kabbadi* (a game played in the sub-continent) was the most popular sport of the boys (about 98.0%) in 1960s. A substantial proportion of boys used to play *kabaddi* till 1980s. Drastic decline in the game is observed in 1990s that reduced to about six percent in 2000 onwards. *Gulli danda* was another game played by majority of young boys in the village during the earlier decades. Over 80.0% of the respondents mention *gulli danda* during the first two decades. Proportion for *gulli danda* declined significantly in 1990s and further reduced to about 14.0% in 2000 onwards.

Over three-fourth of the boys used to play marbles during the first two decades. It declined to about two-third in 1980s. Playing marbles almost vanished during the last two decades. Cockfight and dogfight were among the sports stated by about one-third of the respondents from 1960s through 1980s. It reduced to about 20.0% in 2000 onwards. Cards and *ludoo* are indoor games that used to be played by some of the village boys.

**Table: 7**  
**Percentages of the respondents stating sports of boys by time periods, mohla 2008**

<b>Sports of Boys</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000+</b>
<i>Kabbadi</i> *	98.2	94.5	80.7	11.9	6.4
<i>Gulli danda</i> *	87.2	88.1	78.9	19.3	13.8
Cards	25.7	22.9	27.5	31.2	29.4
Cricket	5.5	7.3	18.3	91.7	94.5
Football	5.5	5.5	19.3	48.6	49.5
<i>Ludoo</i> *	18.4	19.3	17.4	14.7	14.7
Playing marbles*	78.0	77.1	65.1	5.5	0.9
Cock fight/ Dog fight	31.2	33.0	34.9	22.0	20.2
N	109	109	109	109	109
<b>Average No. of Responses</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.3</b>

\* Traditional games of the rural Punjab

\*\* Multiple responses were permissible. Sum total of percentages may exceed 100.0

Overall, consistency is observed in playing cards among boys. Over one-fourth of the respondents stated playing cards during all the decades. *Ludoo* is also played by some boys in the village throughout the decades. Although it declined slightly in 1990s and afterwards but no significant change is observed in the trend. Due to lack of television, cricket was little known in the villages. As the use of television increased, it appears to have gained popularity. This might be a reason for a very small proportion of boys playing cricket during the first two decades. Substantial increase (about 92.0%) in playing cricket is observed in 1990s resulting in as the most favorite sports of young boys

in 2000 onwards. There were negligible cases of football among the games during the first two decades. It started to increase afterwards. About one-half of the respondents state football in 2000 onwards. It is observed that there were few popular traditional games for boys such as *kabbadi*, *gulli danda*, playing marbles etc. during the first three decades. These sports appeared to be replaced by modern ones like cricket and football, mostly due to television.

On the average, about four responses are given in 1960s as compared to about two responses in 2000 onwards. Decreasing average number of responses is an indication that boys used to play more games previously than the latter period. Overall, the trends show that some traditional games of boys have almost vanished over the period of time. Cricket and football are among the popular games of boys during the latter decades in the village.

Washington & Karen (2001) state that men are generally involved in fast paced and violent sports whereas women are more into slow paced and less violent sports. Social and cultural stereotypes of gender also influence the participation in sports by males and females. Wesely & Gaarder (2004) find that females are traditionally discouraged to participate in sports and other outdoor activities.

In our study, respondents are asked about the sports of girls in the village by time periods. Table 8 shows that over one-half of the respondents state that girls do not play any game. Of those who acknowledge participation of girls in sports, about three-fourth of them mention *stappoo*, playing marbles and hide and seek from 1960s through 1980s. Most of these games played by girls are indoor in nature. Proportions for these games declined moderately in 1990s onwards and remain at the level of over 50.0% in 2000 onwards. Skipping is also among the games played by over one-third during the first three decades. It reduced to about 17.0% in 2000 onwards.

**Table: 8**  
**Percentages of the respondents stating sports of girls by time periods, mohla 2008**

<b>Sports of Girls</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000+</b>
<i>Ludoo</i> *	9.6	9.6	15.4	36.5	48.1
Skipping	34.6	34.6	34.6	25.0	17.3
<i>Stappoo</i> *	76.9	76.9	75.0	59.6	53.9
Hide & Seek/ Playing Marbles	75.0	75.0	73.1	57.7	55.7
Badminton	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.8	25.0
N	52	52	52	52	52
<b>Average No. of Responses</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.0</b>

\* Traditional games of the rural Punjab

\*\* Multiple responses were permissible. Sum total of percentages may exceed 100.0

\*\*\*Only those respondents were asked about types of sports who stated that young girls play games in the village

There was a very small proportion of the respondents stating playing *ludoo* by girls during the first two decades. It appears to increase steadily during the following decades. Slightly less than half of the girls play *ludoo* in 2000 onwards. A very small proportion of girls started playing badminton in 1990s. It increased to about one-fourth in 2000 onwards. It may be due to separate school for girls in the village that provides facilities for modern sports.

Messener, Duncan, & Jensen (1993) state that increased number of females participation in various sports is associated with the change in the attitudes. In the present study, we also find that girls started participating in outdoor games that used to be considered a taboo previously. It is observed that games such as *stappoo* and playing marbles are declining whereas playing *ludoo* and badminton are increasing. Expectedly, boys participate in more outdoor games whereas girls have fewer options and that are mostly indoor in nature.

## Discussion

Our study shows that visiting neighbors or other community members was the most favorite free time activity in 1960s. Participation in sports, listening to folklore, smoking *huqa* and household work were also popular leisure activities during this period. These activities significantly got reduced in 1990s and onwards. Simultaneously, watching television increased substantially during the last two decades. Peterson (1981) also observes in a study of the USA that television is a prime source of news and information. Media industry and information technology got expanded during the political regime of President Musharraf (2000 onwards). Use of computers also appears to have emerged as a leisure activity during this period. There are certain other activities through which respondents draw pleasure including worship, resting and playing with grandchildren. An Australian research conducted by Kabanoff (1982) also suggests that family related work and taking rest are among the leisure activities. Global influences through media can be observed from communities in different parts of the world inclusive of the one under study.

People are observed to have a wider range of leisure activities as compared to the earlier time periods. The trend shows, technology, particularly television have significant impact on the change. Informal social activities such as visiting neighbors and getting together for smoking *huqa* have faded away over the period of time. In the recent past, watching television has become the most popular means of entertainment. It partially becomes a disintegrative factor for the family members as perceived by the villagers. Economic factors are also responsible for bringing about the change in leisure activities due to affordability of such technological items. A study conducted by Farooq & Kayani (2012) suggests changes in economic structure of the village. Perhaps, better financial conditions

and availability of technological items influenced this change. Global influence, particularly through media and migration is influencing the group ties and unity. Leisure activities of the people have also changed from more collectivist (socializing, chatting over smoking *huqa* in a group, visiting neighbors) to individualized (watching television) ones. Similarly, modern sports are replacing their traditional forms. For example, cricket has taken the place of *gulli danda*. Participation of girls in sports appears to be a new phenomenon in the village. It can be well associated with influence of media and their enrollment in formal educational institutions (games in schools etc).

Trend analyses of sports of boys and girls show that gender differences prevail in the village. A study conducted in Pennsylvania by Kreager (2007) reveals that gender inequalities are reinforced in displays of aggression, independence and competition by men participating in various sports. We also found that traditional sports such as *kabbadi*, *gulli danda* and playing marbles were among the popular games of boys during the first three decades (from 1960s through 1980s). These games declined substantially during the latter period. It can be derived from the comparative analysis from the East and the West that certain aspects of traditional and modern societies are similar to each other. Modern sports such as cricket and football increased significantly in 1990s and onwards. Perhaps media, particularly television, played role in the promotion of these sports among boys during the last decade. Buysee and Embser-Herbert (2004) also conclude that media preserves male domination through presenting superiority of men in certain sports. Probably, it is one of the reasons that male participation in physically active outdoor sports is much more than that of females in the village.

A study of the USA by Wesely and Gaarder (2004) show that females are generally not encouraged to participate in outdoor games in conservative societies. Our results confirm their findings that young boys participate more in outdoor sports whereas females participate more in indoor ones. Girls used to play indoor games including marbles, *stappoo*, skipping, hide and seek during the first three decades. Significant decline is observed in these games in 1990s and onwards. On the other hand, *ludoo* and badminton increased during this period.

Modernization has its influence on various social aspects such as education, family and technology, it also becomes a source of strain in traditional structures (Divale and Seda 2001). The gap might produce disturbance in the system which used to be functional in the distant past. Analysis of Pakistani society by Qadeer (2006) suggests the imbalance in the system due to gap between material and non-material culture, particularly, when the former is developing at the expense of the latter one. Melvin (1974) states one such example of television as having negative impact on family relations and traditional values. It is confirmed by our findings of changes in family system and leisure activities.



It is a general observation that television has reduced social interaction and integration which is considered negative, particularly by the elderly members of the village.

## Conclusions

Trends show that leisure activities of the villagers have changed over the period of time. It shows that visiting community members, playing sports, smoking *huqa* and doing household work were popular leisure activities during the earlier decades. These activities are replaced by watching television during the last two decades. News and religious programmes are favorites for those who listen to radio or watch television. Popular games of boys were *kabbadi*, *gulli danda* and playing marbles during the first three decades. These games are replaced by cricket and football during the last two decades. Girls used to play marbles, *stappoo*, skipping, hide and seek during the earlier decades. Decline in these games with simultaneous increase in *ludoo* and badminton is observed over the period of time.

Keeping in view the above trend, it is expected that in future, popular leisure activities will include watching television, using computers etc. Impersonal means of communication and entertainment will likely replace the social interaction among the villagers. People will rely more on technology such as computers and mobile phones than family or community members for social networking. Less social interaction and interdependence among the family and community members may become the norm. Trend analysis of participation in sports of boys suggests that traditional sports such as *kabbadi* and *gulli danda* will be likely replaced with the modern ones such as cricket and football in near future. Girls will participate more in outdoor sports than indoor in following years.

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