


Gender Stereotyping in Family: An Institutionalized and Normative Mechanism in *Pakhtun* Society of Pakistan

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Abstract

Gender stereotyping and gender role development is one of the debatable concerns to sociologists especially those who are interested in sociology of gender. This study attempts to investigate the role of family inculcating gender stereotyping in *Pakhtun* culture and its impact on gender role development conducted in public-sector universities of Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. The data were collected through in-depth interview method using interview guide as a tool of data collection. A sample size of 24 respondents consisting male and female students and teachers (8 samples from each university through purposive sampling technique) was selected from three universities in the region, that is, University of Malakand, University of Swat, and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Sheringal (main campus). The collected information has been analyzed qualitatively where primary information has been linked with secondary data for further elaboration and attainment of grounded facts. The study reveals that gender stereotyping and gender role formation are sociocultural and relational constructs, which are developed and inculcated in the institutional network, social interaction, and social relationships especially in family. The study indicated that in family sphere, gender stereotyping and gender role formation are the outcome of gender socialization, differential familial environment, and parents' differential role with children. The study recommends that gender-balanced familial environment, adopting the strategy of gender mainstreaming and positive role of media, can overcome gender stereotyping and reduce its impacts on gender and social role formation.

Keywords

family, gender stereotyping, gender socialization, differential familial environment, gender role development, sociocultural and institutionalized mechanism

Introduction

Gender relates to a set of cultural expectations according to which men and women behave (Kruger, 1997). Each culture assigns certain roles and standardized patterns of behavior to its members that allow them to organize their lives in a consistent and predictable way. In normative order, cultures and societies prescribe normative role behavior and ease-down interaction of individuals (Lindsey, 2010). Normative role behavior is collectivistic that delimits individual freedom and tie them to predetermined rights and duties as well as expectations. The socially constructed and culturally defined realities are closely associated with the development of stereotypes that are predetermined notions or images, which define various spheres of activities including gender.

Stereotyping is the act of judging someone on the basis of one's perception of the group to which that person belongs. In other words, it is "the unconscious or conscious

application of (accurate or inaccurate) knowledge of a group in judging a member of the group" (Agars, 2004, p. 104). A stereotype is a view that is held by one or more individuals about a group to make overgeneralization of the characteristics of that group (Bell, 2007). Through stereotyping, people are categorized according to the characteristics they have in common, including gender, age, race, ethnicity, language, religion, and so on. In sociological discourse, stereotyping is closely associated with prejudicial judgment characterized by rigid and irrational generalization about an entire community of people. More specifically, gender stereotypes are deep-rooted perceptions of the

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characteristics of male and female, which support the continuity of specific gender roles (Suter, 2006).

Based on gendered division of labor and social roles, men and women are often represented stereotypically according to the traits they are assumed to possess by virtue of their biological makeup (Lindsey, 2010). Several studies point to stereotyping on the basis of their sex-related characteristics (Sanders & Peterson, 1999). It is viewed that gender stereotypes are formed during the process of learning and communication in which sociocultural and interactional factors play the role of key socializing agents (Leaper & Friedman, 2007). The factors and agents also include family as a basic and primary source of gender socialization (J. E. Jacobs, 1991) where social roles are assigned based on gender (Eccles, 1983; J. Jacobs, 2000). Family as a foremost socializing agency transmits simplistic labels and deep-rooted messages considered specific for a feminine woman and a masculine man. In family, different role models are assigned to women and men according to what is traditionally attributed to each sex. Similarly, on the basis of a set of physical qualities and psychological characteristics defined by family, society labels tasks which are known as gender stereotypes.

In many societies, masculinity is identified with competitiveness, aggressiveness, and independence, whereas feminine stereotypes revolve around a set of beliefs that define women as caring, altruistic, affective in interpersonal relationships, child friendly, emotionally expressive, sensitive and empathetic, and above all submissive and passive (Ridgeway & Balkwell, 1997). Based on the argument, this study then attempts to investigate the role of family institution in nurturing gender stereotypes among *Pakhtuns*. The study mainly focuses on the role of family in preserving, reinforcing, and thus perpetuating gender differentiation, gender socialization, gendered division of labor, and parents' differential treatment that inculcate gender stereotypes and resultantly affect gender role development.

Statement of the Problem

As a male-dominated patriarchal society, *Pakhtuns*¹ segregate gender roles according to the social order. Along with sex differences in perceived qualities, a socially shared and culturally defined set of expectations about gender behavior exists according to which individuals behave (Javaid, Omer, & Jabeen, 2012). Dichotomous stereotypical images regarding gender roles are common, and role development is less natural and more sociocultural based on predetermined notions. Masculine roles are instrumental that link family to the external world, whereas females manage domestic activities. The projection of sexism in the traditional and patriarchal familial environment of *Pakhtuns* plays a substantial role in providing a conducive environment to stereotypical dichotomy.

The development of gender stereotyping is not haphazard or automatic, rather facilitated by various sociocultural and

relational factors. The foremost among them is family, which plays a significant role in the development of gender stereotypes, and because of physical and social proximity, socialization, rearing, and caring, the role of women is often stereotyped (Lindsey, 2010). In *Pakhtun* society, family institution operates under the influence of patriarchy² along with customs and traditions manifested in awarding more space to men. For instance, the birth of male child is symbolic of increased family power and is thus celebrated, whereas female birth does not bring such celebrations (Naz & Rehman, 2012). Similarly, key decisions related to marriage, mate selection, and other familial issues are dominated by men. The normative social order restricts women and tends to favor men to become the guardians and the rulers. Patriarchy protects male ideology and nurtures negative gender values. This study then is an attempt to investigate familial factors that contribute to stereotyping and highlights institutional mechanism for reinforcing and preserving gender stereotypes among *Pakhtuns*. It also attempts to explore the impact of stereotyping on gender role development.

Method

This research study is qualitative in nature based on both secondary and primary information. For secondary information, a thorough review of literature has been carried out where gender stereotypes are highlighted in a thematic manner. The primary data are gathered from students and teachers of public-sector universities of Malakand Division.

To enrich the findings of the study, the primary data also include in-depth interviews through interview guide. A total of 24 interviews were conducted in the three universities, 8 from each including University of Malakand, University of Swat, and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Sheringal. Selected through purposive sampling, a gender-balanced representation from each university was ensured, that is, 2 male students, 2 male teachers, 2 female students, and 2 female teachers.³ Besides, the collected information related to the study has been analyzed qualitatively where primary information has been linked with secondary data for further elaboration and attainment of grounded facts.

Areas of Analysis Based on Primary and Secondary Data

Gender Socialization and Gender Stereotyping

Socialization is the process through which a child becomes an individual respecting his or her environment's laws, norms, and customs. Gender socialization is a more focused form of socialization; it is how children of different sexes are socialized into their respective gender roles (Giddens, 1993) and taught what it means to be male or female (Morris, 1988). Gender socialization begins at the moment of birth, and from the time when people ask one and the simple

question, is it a girl or a boy (Gleitman, Fridlund, & Reisberg, 2000, p. 499)? Similarly, gender and gender role formation are primarily learned through the dominant agencies of socialization, such as family, peer, school, and so on, which are considered “teachers” of the society.

Through socialization, one can learn what is appropriate and improper for both genders (Crespi, 2004). To sociologists, socialization is a process through which individuals learn the way of life that includes culture and other capabilities acquired by humans as members of the society (Booyesen & De Witt, 1995; Haralambos, 1985; Lindsey, 1997; Popenoe, Cunningham, & Boulton, 1998). Moreover, it is a lifelong process where individuals are believed to accumulate knowledge of the rules and regulations, norms and values, attitudes, customs, and other role requirements that are acceptable to their society and culture (Haralambos, 1985). In this connection, every society presents a prescription regarding the content that individual members have to conform to, to become active members of the society. Similarly, through socialization, individuals are inducted to social world to learn gender appropriate role.

In this regard, gender role is learned through the process of socialization where individuals learn behaviors and attitudes prescribed by the society. Through this process, a particular culture and society shapes and reshapes the type and kind of men and women they like them to be (Hensline, 1996). Similarly, each and every society of the world prescribes particular behaviors and attitudes for men and women appropriate in different situations, which constitute gender norms in the form of prescriptive guidelines and resultantly form gender roles (Doyle & Paludi, 1991). With regard to gender role development, social learning perspective links it with a lifelong learning process, which is carried by socialization through social institutions such as family, peers, media, and religion. Furthermore, it is carried out through observation, imitation, and reinforcement mechanism that provide a ground for character building and role formation (Lynn, 1996).

In familial environment, people learn specific sets of gender role requirements and responsibilities in accordance to their relevant social statuses. In addition, people also learn to recognize the pressure of external forces that compel them to conform to, even when they do not accept the role definitions others have for them. Children learn the traditional gender roles where such roles help to sustain gender stereotypes, for example, males are believed to be aggressive, independent, and task-oriented, whereas females are assumed as more sensitive, emotional, people-oriented, and dependent. In this regard, extracts have been taken from field information as evidence material to the secondary data mentioned. The field data reflect different views of the interviewees that come in support to the secondary data, while somehow it has con-founded the literature. The question regarding socialization was asked as follows: “When and how did you start knowing gender stereotyping?”

In response to the questions, different opinions and responses were recorded having unanimity and disagreement at some points. In this regard, majority of the respondents reflected that knowing the stereotyping usually starts at the early childhood. In such type of situations, children face a kind of taunt and social stigma while indulging in tasks of opposite gender, that is, playing *Gudyaani* (Dolls), *Chindro*, *Mirgaaty*,⁴ and so on, as such games are viewed as feminine. Among the respondents, extractions have been taken from the interview of Respondent 13 (male student) where he expresses,

... I used to play the traditional games at the early childhood without observing the masculine or feminine games. I had my female cousins who were my ultimate friends and we had to play games such as *Gudyaani* (Dolls), *Chindro*, *Mirgaaty*, etc. In most of the cases, my father observed me and daunted me severely for playing such type of womanly games. I was discouraged to mix-up with females as it was against the cultural patterns and traditions of the family as well as community.

This sort of compulsion over children creates a sense and identity of their gender where they are directed through stereotypic socialization that male children should not join the company and games related to females, and females should avoid masculine activities. Besides, in response to the next question that when and where do gender stereotypes form, the respondents reflected in majority that mostly gender segregation occurs at the early puberty or teenage. It was added by the respondents that the gender segregation occurs at the time when two opposite sexes, that is, boys and girls, come in contact or gather with one another, which is mostly forbidden by the family and community. In this connection, the communal perception is highly taken into consideration. Respondent 9 (male student) tells,

... Since the very early age, I used to visit the traditional Mela (mostly celebrated at Eids) in my village along with other members of the family especially the female relatives. In this way, I confronted a strong and strict communal rejection for doing so when few of community members complained my father after our visit. My father severely scolded me and even slapped me many times that it was a bad job I had involved in. At the same time (while meeting the consequences) I realized that male and female are the two different streams that are not allowed to be mixed up. Since that, I hear the resilience of those slaps and avoid the mixing up with opposite gender as it is a kind of sin.

Resultantly, the discussion so far in terms of literary and empirical information reflects that socialization is mostly cultural in nature, which is inculcated to the followers inside family and community. Cultural transmission and inculcation is an ancestral process that is reinforced through imitation and modeling of the socializing agencies, particularly parents inside the family. In the same manner, the new generation in the area

under study has been acknowledged with gender-specific roles since their birth that continues throughout their life span. In this regard, the concluding field information leads to a smaller theory that differential gender socialization and compulsive familial environment create gender differences that become gender stereotypic and finally develop gender role.

Differences Between Boys and Girls and Gender Stereotyping

Gender differences are developed through the process of socialization where such differences are strengthened during childhood as well as adolescence. For example, before the age of 3 years, there are fascinating differences between boys and girls that further create differences in their interaction. In this way, boys mostly attempt to dominate, control, and try to find out the answer of the question “Am I better than you?” and they try to present themselves as being strong and independent. Similarly, they also establish their dominant social status; even then, they try to continue and use the masculine autonomy to maintain their position in the long run.

Contrary to boys, girls try to establish and sustain their relationships where they often ask the question, “Do you like me?” because boys and girls want to adopt and do different things; they start to avoid each other at the age of 3 or 4 years. At the age of 6 years, girls mostly do not like the rough and tough male-type play and dislike boys’ dominance, and therefore, they choose the girls as playmates instead of boys. In childhood, boys mostly do not like girls’ games. Indeed, boys are not ready to adopt feminine characters and even feel shame to do so, whereas this is not the case with girls. In this way, boys always want to be active and competitive, and seem less interested to win friends and make relationships (Basow, 1992).

The facts in terms of gender differences have prevalence in the area under study as well, although this research has identified some other areas that are missing in the prevalent literature such as gender differences in games, domestic activities, peers’ participation, and so on. In this regard, the questions asked in terms of gender differences were as follows: What are gender differences, and are they different or stereotyped? And, how do biological characteristics determine and influence gender role?

To examine the difference in light of primary data, the respondents were interviewed where their response has been accounted and explained. The gender differences are emphasized by the respondents in a high number, that differences do found in the area among boys and girls. The differences are mostly cultural and psychological where the behavioral aspects also have a dominant role. The *Pakhtun* generation is inculcated with identification of such differences since birth though socialization.

In light of gender differences, males are labeled with to show *Ghairat* or bravery which inculcated by the elders through storytelling of the forefathers. They must act in a

traditional manner keeping the decorum of their culture in mind. On the contrary, females are taught with emotionality and delicacy through examples from the past. In addition, females mostly urge on this outlook including their physique in terms of delicacy while keeping the traditional norms. Although they are less likely involved in beautification of themselves, as it is against the customary law, yet traditional *Singhaar* (makeup) is observed. Males in this category are found to show aggression and bravery to reflect their dominance and supremacy. Through this way, they take the bridle of leadership and thus form a patriarchic structure. Females on the contrary are taught to be submissive and obedient.

To authenticate the statement, interview (with Respondent 7, female teacher) has interesting information regarding gender differences. As a female teacher, she expresses,

... of all the other obligations that a Pakhtun female has to obey and follow, I was less likely taught about the gender differences. As the environment of my home is educated and most of the members are cooperative and open minded. I have taken my education in coeducational institution and having an employed status. Instead of all these facilitations, I have been restricted and internalized with the gender differences. I have been inculcated with the femininity, obedience, submission and distance from the opposite gender. In most cases, I had to mix-up with my colleagues in some kind of parties and functions, where I was strictly discouraged to attend such gatherings where I had to submit my will and obeyed. In this way, I learned and realized the statement “Do as the Romans do,” if I was to be part of the culture, community, and family. Currently, I believe that both the males and females are two sides of a stream that go parallel to a long way, but can’t meet.

The field information shows that gender differences are not natural but rather the production of sociocultural packages where such packages are practiced in different institutions especially in family. In a family, through socialization, parents enact stereotypic images regarding male and female where children learn all such differences and internalize them. At early ages, individuals do not know about gender differences where they are on the disposal of their parents; children know about their gender as male or female, and adopt roles that their parents prescribe to them.

In addition, it has been cleared from the findings of research studies conducted so far along with current study that there are differences between males and females, where such differences are strengthened and internalized by both genders through the process of gender socialization. In familial environment, parents are the primary influence on gender role development in the early years of one’s life (Kaplan, 1991; Miller, 1987; Santrock, 1994). Family in fact, unlike other groups, is characterized by a specific way of living (Donati, 1997; Saraceno, 1988) and constructing gender differences through a process that is surely biological but also relational and social. Family is the social and symbolic place where difference in general and sexual difference in

particular are believed to be fundamental and at the same time constructed (Donati, 2006).

In concluding remarks, it has been observed from secondary and field information that gender socialization is a means to create gender differences whereby individuals learn about their gender and adopt roles, which are viewed as gender appropriate. In the course of socialization carried out in family at early age, parents take in consideration the stereotypic images of such differences while treating their children as boys and girls where individuals are socialized differently under the socially and culturally defined notions—stereotypes. In this way, the proposed research assumption that “differential family environment, parental socialization and gender socialization in family lead to the development of gender stereotyping which further puts stress on traditional masculine and feminine gender roles” is proved valid and authentic.

Parents' Role in Inculcation of Gender Stereotyping

Research studies show that parental behavior toward their children, either overt or covert, is the primary influence on gender role stereotyping development in early life (Crespi, 2004; Kaplan, 1991; Santrock, 1994). Parents play a key role in children's socialization and provide a suitable environment in family where they contact with their children in a face to face interaction. Parents teach stereotypes through different ways and behaviors in daily life, for example, the way they use to dress their children and decorate their children's rooms, the toys they give their children to play with, and their own attitudes and behavior toward them that increase the inculcation of gender stereotyping (Hetherington & Parke, 1999).

In family, parents take in consideration the emotionality of their children whenever they make conversations with them, and similarly, they discuss matters differently with sons and daughters (Dunn, Bretherton, & Munn, 1987). In this context, parents especially mothers talk more with their daughters and encourage them for more supportive and affiliative speech and remarks in relation to others as compared with sons (Leaper, Anderson, & Sanders, 1998; Leaper, Leve, Strasser, & Schwartz, 1995). Contrary to this, mothers encourage independence and autonomy in their sons (Pomerantz & Ruble, 1998), and they rarely discuss same matters with their daughters (Fivush, 1989). In regard of father and mother role in gender socialization and stereotyping, Leaper (2000) identified that mothers as compared with fathers used to encourage collaborative play with sons and daughters, but similarly, they favor affiliative play with daughters; they are encouraged for supportive and responsive interaction with others, whereas the reaction of fathers was negative especially with their sons for cross-gender behavior.

In addition, parents share their thoughts, experiences, and behaviors with children and provide resources in the community to assist them in developing healthy gender attitudes

(Sales, Spjeldnes, & Koeshe, 2010). Parents also socialize their children through storytelling, which is one of the dominant ways of socialization whereby children learn regarding their gender and gender role. Through storytelling, children are familiarized with the valued attributes and personal traits. In this regard, Fiese and Skillman (2000) have highlighted many patterns of storytelling for the development of gender-typed characteristics, values, and related traits among children. These studies also identified that parents especially fathers used to tell the stories of bravery, success, and achievement to their sons, whereas mothers especially told the stories of emotions, expression, relationship, and support to their daughters (Fiese & Skillman, 2000).

Furthermore, it has also been identified that the emotionality level of men and women is different where women are viewed as emotionally passive, whereas men having masculine attributes are aggressive. In this way, through the process of socialization, gender stereotypes are developed and inculcated inside family where parents treat their children with an internalized stereotypic manner to enact their sons with anger, strong, and agentic, whereas girls with passive, weak, and delicate. This stereotypic socialization defines and decides different and separated spheres both for male and female and resultantly provides a ground for gender role development. In the context of current research study, gender stereotyping is socially constructed reality as supported by the literature, which is deep-rooted in the sociocultural norms of *Pakhtun* society. Under this gender stereotypic mechanism, in *Pakhtun* traditional society, men are viewed as earners to support their families and are involved in buying and selling, agricultural activities and jobs, and so on, and therefore are appreciated and encouraged both by parents and community members (such notion is supported by majority of interviewees). Similarly, the parents (teachers) were asked how they treat their children where their replies show that being parents living in traditional areas, they consider and even teach their sons to be active, aggressive, brave, dominant, and independent, whereas daughters are prescribed with to-do household chores and are supposed to be submissive, weak, and dependent (viewpoint of teachers in majority). Such viewpoints and the obtained findings reflect the inculcation of gender stereotypes facilitated by parents' role and behavior, which they have with their children. Among the respondents, the ideas of Respondent No 13 (male student) have interesting elaborations, which reflect,

... I am a traditional and pure Pakhtun and love to follow Pakhtunwali as my code for which I feel honored. My father has been telling me the past and old stories of our grandparents, their lives, their culture, their activities and so on. I have been told with the old Hujra (guest house) system where decisions were used to be taken for conflicts by an elder who was my grandparent. Since my childhood, I have conceptualized the picture of those brilliant personalities in my mind and I try to act like them somehow at times. During my childhood and teenage I used to draw beard and moustaches on my face through a

marker and pencil, wore his Paghrhi (turban), handed his Kontai (stick) and sit in Hujra. Some of my village-mates were asked to be the servants and the remaining were the parties having conflict on land or other matters for which I made the decisions. Such acting has been so deeply internalized in my mind that those personalities have become my role models and I believe that all Pakhtun males should be like them. Pakhtun must be brave, aggressive, decision-maker, fighter, muscular and un-fearing of any threat or situation.

The findings observed so far from the extracts of interviews explicitly indicate that the stereotypic images— notions such as anger, bravery, boldness, cooperativeness, decision making, and so on—related to males and females are not inherent but rather developed among individuals through the process of socialization. The family or parents teach their children in a way to give them an impression to exhibit such type of masculine characteristics as members of society and culture.

Similarly, however, field information reflects that a *Pakhtun* female should be of contrary nature where she has to be passive, low tuned (while talking), caretaker of others, cooperative, shy, and so on (views of respondents in majority). In addition, similar views have been documented from the extracts (of interview) of Respondent 21 (female interviewee) as

... we have been taught under the rules of Pakhtunwali in family that women are born in the four walls; they have to live inside the four walls and after death to be again buried in the four walls of the grave. Such inculcation reflect the strict observance of Purdah (veil) on female folk as we (all females in the family) have to keep distance from male members whether relatives or outsiders. In addition, it has been emphasized on us to cool, calm and less talkative when males (particularly elders) are at home, while strictly directed to keep the tone of voice at lowest level when talking at home. Further, we have to submit our wills in decisions taken for family or individuals that also include our personal matters such education, mate selection, employment or property. In this connection, our familial and cultural norms have been settled and we are obeying them whole heartedly. (Similar remarks also noted from the extractions of interviews with Respondents 3, 10, 14, 17, and 22)

While analyzing the mentioned facts about both cases, it is clear that men (among *Pakhtun*) are lying at the dominant edge, whereas women at the low. Men are the decision makers for the whole community being elder of the village, whereas women are unable even to decide their own personal matters. Such are the stereotypical images that have been emerged from the prevalent normative structure in collaboration with customary law of the culture. Resultantly, these images are inculcated and internalized by the young generation of *Pakhtun* society where parents play a dominant role.

It is clear from the aforementioned discussion that parents play a key role in the development of gender and gender role in early years of life. Parents encourage their children for

gender appropriate activities, such as they emphasize on girls to play with dolls and boys with trucks as supported by research studies (Eccles, Jacobs, & Harold, 1990). In addition, parents send predetermined messages to children that they think will give signals to sexes for gender appropriate role (Arliss, 1991). Parents also adopt different ways to speak and play differently with boys and girls. They use reward if the children conform to and punishment if the children intent to break the normative order of gender roles, for example, when a boy plays with dolls, he is discouraged and similarly, a general statement is made that boys are emotionally strong and should not adopt feminine games and characters (Gleitman et al., 2000; Morris, 1988). Similarly, if the parents do not send any messages intentionally, it is enough for children to notice the differences between sexes by observing the adults in surrounding; thus, they observe and notice others and accordingly behave. In this connection, the prevalent stereotypic knowledge, that is, men are instrumental, aggressive, and tough, whereas women are emotionally expressive and submissive, is enough for children to act likewise. Finally, the findings drawn from field information and secondary data validate the assumption that differential parental socialization inside family leads to the development of gender stereotyping and gender role formation.

Differential Treatment in Family and Gender Stereotyping

The available literature and secondary sources highlighted that gender stereotypes are deeply rooted within the realm of sociocultural structure and are transferred to next generation through the process of socialization (Basow, 1992). In this regard, most of the traditional societies have made strong distinctions between the traits and attributes associated to gender, whereas this is not the case with few developed societies (Davidson & Gordon, 1979). Children in familial environment are socialized differently, where the parents try to prepare their offspring for appropriate gender roles. In this connection, Basow (1992) extracted from her research findings that due to differential treatment in family, children behave and develop their role differently. For example, in most of the traditional cultural setups, boys are discouraged to cry; they are also prepared to be emotionally strong in painful and unfavorable situations. An expression of bravery and strength is given by resembling them to tigers where it is assumed that tigers do not cry, whereas this is not the case with girls, because they are considered weak. Keeping such notions in view, boys being strong and brave are socialized to be competitive and success-oriented (Booyesen & De Witt, 1995). Furthermore, parents use their internalized differential treatment while socializing their children, which means that their beliefs and values will affect their parenting skills. What knowledge and beliefs regarding gender and gender role parents have acquired will be transferred consciously or unconsciously to their children. In this regard, to clarify the

theme of current research study regarding differential treatment and gender stereotyping in the context of family, views of the respondents are illustrated as follows:

. . . In our traditional family system, males and females are treated differently. Our parents tend to encourage male children to be active and girls to be passive. Most of our parents are very close to their sons as compared to daughters. (Interviewees 7, 15, 16, 23, and 24, respectively)

There seems an obvious demarcation between male and female segments pertaining to treatment by the parents. In this regard, views of one of the female respondents have been elaborated as follows, where she expresses,

. . . treating male and female differently is a passion as well as fashion in the current scenario of cultured and traditionally founded societies. Although I have not been deprived of the rights that are deemed necessary in my survival, growth and well-being yet if I analyze my life critically there seems some kind of discriminative treatment with us. I (even all the females in my home) am treated differently than my brothers and other male members at home in different aspects of life. Here I would express that discrimination in serving the food to males earlier than that of males is discrimination as it hits the sense of inferiority. In addition, we have always been suggested and directed while selecting a dress for us where males had the authority to wear what they desired for. Besides, I have observed an obvious difference in my schooling where I hadn't any say to select the institution and field for my studies which solely in the hands of my elder males. The most irritating and important decision of life is considered as mate selection to whom we are liable to spend the whole life, is thoroughly out of our access where males have the authority in this context. On the basis of such differences, it is obvious that there is a gendered culture in our society that restricts our mobility and movement as well and makes the female segment a dependant and oppressed stream.

Similarly, an example can be extracted from the work of Basow (1992), where she argued that it is evident that parents' differential treatment and reaction affect children's behavior in the future endeavors of life; for example, parents have been observed reacting negatively to their children, especially girls, whenever the girls are observed in masculine character and boys in feminine character. Deferential treatment of parents has also been observed in case of toy selection that the buy for boys and girls, while its intensity becomes high and significant, whenever parents prefer to assign household activities to girls and outdoor chores to boys.

Furthermore, in most of the research studies, it has also been observed that parents' differential behavior with boys and girls in a single familial environment sharpen the prevalence of gender differences in daily life. Mostly, the parents follow the traditional, already defined, and socially constructed notions, that is, stereotypes while socializing children, where these stereotypes represent the collective knowledge,

customs and traditions, and convictions and conventions of the society concerned (Macrae, Stangor, & Hewstone, 1996). Through the help of this projection, individuals learn to develop a stereotypic belief regarding the group with whom they belong, which in the long run affect their behavior or role. Such stereotypic behavior is learned, transmitted, and changed in the course of socialization. With respect to socialization, family reinforces the existing stereotypic knowledge to the youngsters.

The aforementioned discussion indicates that gender differences are not biological, but rather sociocultural and relational, where these differences are primarily identified and then inculcated in family. Likewise in other societies and cultures, family is considered one of the basic and primary sources of socialization where children, youngsters, and adults are socialized. Family holds the responsibility to teach individuals about gender appropriate behavior and guide them regarding the cultural and societal expectations of the sex-typed activities. Inside family, boys and girls are socialized differently under the existing socially and culturally defined patterns regarding males and females. Furthermore, they are trained to adopt specific masculine and feminine roles; these gender roles are assigned to them under the prevailing stereotypic image of males and females, which are considered constant and pervasive.

The information obtained from secondary sources and field data validate the proposed assumption that differential familial environment, parental socialization, appreciation, and discouragement lead to the development of gender stereotyping and role formation. This assumption also adds knowledge to the Social Learning Theory which focuses upon gender socialization, imitation, as well as reward and punishment that find children while living in family.

Division of Labor in Family and Gender Stereotyping

In the course of gender socialization, parents treat their children differently and assign them different tasks considered appropriate to their gender. In this context, parents follow the already defined notions—stereotypes that are constant and pervasive in each and every society and culture of the world. Furthermore, in family sphere, activities are divided between males and females on the basis of their gender where males are supposed to handle outdoor activities such as farming, business, shopping, and other having masculine or energetic characteristics, whereas female are assumed to handle domestic chores such as cooking, washing, sweeping, and taking care of youngsters. This sort of division of labor is also prevalent in *Pakhtun* society where on the basis of pre-determined notion—stereotyping regarding males and females—they are viewed fit for certain activities. Among *Pakhtuns*, this division seems very much unique because of its strict nature where both genders are restricted to follow the expected pattern of behavior as well as the larger societal

expectations. The domestic sphere, which is specified only for females, is highly emphasized, and their participation in outdoor activities is strongly discouraged. Similarly, male members in *Pakhtun* society are directed to be the followers of masculine expectations and not to be indulged in feminine activities.

Relevant to findings extracted from secondary data, filed information analyzes the mentioned phenomenon addressing *Pakhtun* culture with its uniformity and variability. In the context of cultural uniformity, just like other cultures, *Pakhtuns* also exhibit the patterns related to division of labor between two genders; they confine women to domestic chores and men to outdoor activities. However, as far as the variability is concerned, *Pakhtun* culture has certain different and unique ways to assign domestic sphere merely to women, and activities out of house are regarded as men-oriented with strong prohibition for both genders not to participate in the sphere of opposite gender (supported by majority of respondents). Furthermore, to validate the argument about stereotypic division of labor in *Pakhtun* familial sphere, views of the interviewed respondents are illustrated where they were of the opinion that

... family is the place where we are socialized and come to know about their gender as male and female. To them, gender role identification is carried out through clear and strict division of labor where parents prescribe certain activities specific for boys and girls. These activities are considered gender appropriate in our culture. Under this division of labor males are supposed to handle outdoor activities like farming, shopping, business, earning etc while females are confined to domestic chores like cooking, washing, take care of youngsters, helping mothers, etc. (Response of the Interviewed Respondents 1, 3, 8, 14, and 15, respectively)

In this connection, Interviewee 15 (male respondent) reflects unique information where the division of labor expresses the gender stereotyping in the area. He expresses,

... I have been taught to behave as a traditional Pakhtun following all the codes of Pakhtunwali and obliging the expected role. In response, I persevered not to compromise on my manly-Pakhtun outlook and deal things and situations as expected. At some stages I feel the situation of my sisters very pathetic and poignant where they work from dawn to dusk having no acknowledgment. I also have tried to discuss the issue with my parents that being members of the family and house it is also our obligation to take care of the different activities such as cooking, or washing the floor, which was denied. At few moments, I assisted my sisters in washing the floor and helped them out when they were cooking. I was amazed that even my mother scolded me and taunted that these are womanly jobs and men should not be involved. In addition, she reflected that men having assistance to women in domestic chores bring bad omen to the family home, which was distressful for me. Besides, my father was informed when I didn't abrogate the assist them, who in response treated me harshly and threatened for bad consequences if I didn't abandon what I was

doing. It seems as if the tasks assigned to us are heavenly and prescribed in the Holy Scriptures because they are enforced too strictly.

With reference to division of labor in the family, field data show that to sustain familial matters, activities are divided among family members on the basis of gender where the philosophy behind division of labor is to assign different roles to males and females. This sort of division of labor in family creates a dichotomy and promotes gender stereotyping which play its role in gender role formation.

Similarly, various research studies have supported the prevalence of division of labor creating gender stereotyping. It has been observed that men and women perform different jobs; men work outside the home, whereas women work inside the home as unpaid housewives, where such dichotomy is internalized by children from very early age, and they remain attached with such stereotypic gender roles in their future (Gleitman et al., 2000). In addition, in domestic sphere, parents also assign different tasks to boys and girls on the basis of attached characteristics to each gender; boys are given the responsibilities to do maintenance-related activities, such as mowing the lawn, and girls are expected to handle the tasks of cooking and washing (Basow in Witt, 1997). The mentioned segregation of gender-related tasks creates awareness among individuals whereby they come to know that certain tasks have been restricted to males and are known as masculine tasks and others to females referred to as feminine tasks (Witt, 1997).

It is concluded from the discussion that family is the place where individuals come in contact with family members and find them a source for their upbringing and socialization. Equally important with the role of other family members, parents play a pivotal role to socialize their children. Familial environment shapes and reshapes individuals' attitudes and personality and guides them for gender appropriate behavior. In family, parents start teaching children's roles shortly after birth, for example, boys are cuddled, kissed, and stroked less than girls, whereas girls are less often tossed and handled roughly. In playing with their infants, parents appreciate and praise the activities of boys for being tough and hard due to which boys realized themselves as superior. From then onward, in peers' company, in schools, and even in workplace, the idea that males are superior is reinforced. This gendered and biased family relationship is internalized by the individuals and then used as an institutionalized mechanism. Under this mechanism, most of the decisions such as marriage, business, economic, and so on, are carried out by the dominant male segment in the family. It further restricts the roles of both males and females in different spheres of life such as education, jobs, or other decisions. Finally, in the light of concluding remarks, the proposed assumption that "differential family environment, parental socialization, and gender socialization in family lead to the development of gender stereotyping which further puts stress on traditional

masculine and feminine gender roles,” is approved and validated.

Findings and Conclusion

The data reveal that gender stereotyping is a sociocultural production, which is developed and inculcated in the network of institutions, social interaction, and social relationships. In contributing sources, family is the dominant one, which is a milestone in the inculcation of gender difference through gender socialization, gender differentiation, division of labor, and differential parental role in the context of *Pakhtun* patterns of males and females or masculinity and femininity. The data show that family teaches individuals about gender appropriate and inappropriate behavior and guides them regarding the cultural and societal expected channels. Such roles are assigned to individuals and are ensured through division of labor and differential association in their daily life of traditional gender stereotyping where the traditional gender roles are emphasized and even encouraged, whereas contemporary social roles especially for females are discouraged. The extracted findings indicate that differential treatment of parents to view their daughters as delicate, weak, emotional, sensitive, and dependent, and sons as strong, aggressive, brave, and independent encourages children to behave respectfully.

Similarly, parents’ differential and stereotypic treatment projects gender differences and segregation when they dress their children, decorate children’s rooms, give them toys to play with, and so on, by following certain defined and approved patterns of *Pakhtun* culture that inculcate gender stereotyping and form gender roles. In addition, in family, parents assign certain activities to males such as outdoor matters such as earning, farming, shopping, and so on, whereas females are confined to domestic chores such as cooking, washing, and caring of youngsters, which directly or indirectly project gender stereotypic division of labor. The study findings show the gendered and biased familial environment which is internalized by individuals in the context of boys and girls differently and becomes a base for institutionalized behaviors as males and females in various spheres of life when they come out of family such as peers association, education, and employment.

The overall discussion thus concludes that gender stereotyping and gender role formation are not biological but rather sociocultural and relational where such entities are the outcome of gender socialization, differential familial environment, traditional and stereotypic division of labor, and parents’ differential role with children. Family in *Pakhtun* society as a biological and social unit socializes children, youngsters, and adults in the respective manners—predetermined notions of masculinity and femininity which play a substantial role in the development of gender stereotyping. Similarly, gender role formation is a relational process embedded in the sociocultural realm of *Pakhtun* society where individuals are assigned different roles specific to males and

females and expect them to perform their roles according to a normative order. In this mechanism, society adopts the socially defined and culturally approved notions to make a criterion for the assignment of roles to males and females on the basis of their sex characteristics or qualities where these notions become compulsive and are referred to as gender stereotypes. Gender stereotyping as a process reflects the meanings of what men and women are and what they should be, creating a dichotomy of gender role in different spheres of life such as family sphere, peers, education, workplace, and so on.

Recommendations

In the light of findings and results extracted from current research study, few recommendations are put forwarded to sort out gender stereotyping embedded in the sociocultural fabric of *Pakhtun* society especially in the sphere of family. The recommendations are given below.

Familial Environment

Gender stereotypes are primarily developed in family in early ages and then strengthened by gender socialization, differential parental treatment, and parental role model of behavior toward children. These stereotypes have long-term effects over the lives of individuals such as their education, employment, and other spheres in which they participate. Therefore, it is essential to sort out gender stereotyping at the earliest age, thereby changing parents’ psyche and attitudes. Their behavior with children should be free of discrimination and stereotypic attitudes. In this regard, there is need to convince parents especially fathers to adopt gender-balanced behavior while socializing and treating their children. In addition, to prevent children from adopting gender stereotyping belief systems requires conscious efforts from parents to challenge stereotypes and also for the roles and behaviors adopted by adults themselves to become de-gendered.

Gender Mainstreaming

To address gender concerns holistically, it is essential to mainstream gender in all institutions of society especially in family. Gender mainstreaming is the process whereby an assessment and implication for men and women of all planned actions such as legislation, policies, or other programs at all levels is carried out. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all socioeconomic and political spheres so that women and men benefit equally.

Role of Media

Media constantly reinforces the traditional stereotypes of women and men and thus needs to be addressed to promote

gender equality by using a gender lens sensitively. Media should project positive aspects of society, thereby highlighting the negative stereotypes, especially women's stereotypes, in the context of family. Media should play a role to discourage women's confinement merely to domestic chores and men's roles to outdoor activities. As such type of projection is apparent in both electronic and printed media, where through different advertisements, pictorial presentation, stage dramas and movies. In addition, media should highlight that women's role in life is changing worldwide as well as in Pakistan; it is, therefore, necessary for media to motivate women for adopting new and demanding roles that are deemed necessary for their socioeconomic empowerment and development.

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Notes

1. *Pakhtun* is an ethnic group mostly living in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa having distinct lifestyle under the umbrella of *Pakhtunwali*.
2. *Patriarchy* is an important concept of sociology used to cover various aspects and dimensions of human life, but for the purpose of current research study, this term has been defined and used in a single frame, that is, the domination of man over woman merely in familial and related aspects.
3. The selected universities in the area provided a ground where male and female students and teachers easily shared their knowledge and experiences regarding gender stereotyping. Being educated, female teachers and students of the universities are not fully free from the deep-rooted cultural restrictions. Although there are certain spheres where females' position is in transition and whereby they are not more caged in the culturally constructed gender dichotomy of masculine and feminine role structure in the traditional Pakhtun society, being part of this culture and society, they have passed and are passing from the experiences related to gender stereotyping. Therefore, females (students and teachers) were included in the samples of 8 respondents making 50% of the whole from each university. In this regard, the sample of 8 respondents has been taken with the ratio of 2 male students, 2 male teachers, 2 female students, and 2 female teachers, which further gives the justification of gender equality and research objectivity. Similarly, the researcher has taken a sample size of 24 respondents for this research study.
4. Folk and indigenous games mostly played in the rural areas of *Pakhtun* society.

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