Pakistan Journal of Gender Studies
Vol. 17, 2018, pp. 279-298, ISSN: 2072-0394

Gender Differences In University Students' Attitude Towards Gender Roles

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Abstract

Gender role attitudes indicate the dynamics of gender relations in any society. As gender equality is now considered an important indicator of development for any country. Therefore, it is imperative to comprehend the societal especially youth acuity towards gender roles in a culture. This paper examined the university students' attitude towards gender roles by employing Gender Roles Attitude Scale (Zeyneloglu & Terzioglu, 2011). The objective was to understand whether the attitude of youth towards gender role was egalitarian or traditional. For this purpose, a survey was conducted by taking a sample of 513 respondents conveniently from various universities of Lahore, both descriptive and inferential statistics data were used for data analyses. The results revealed significant gender differences in respondents' perception, as male students' approach towards gender roles was found more egalitarian than females. Furthermore, residential cities and socioeconomic background of respondents' parents was found important in shaping their approach towards gender roles. Findings suggested that parents' role in the socialization of children may be deemed first critical step towards nurturing gender sensitized society along with the incorporation of gender aspects in academic curriculum across the discipline at the different educational level in Pakistan. Moreover, government and social activists may advocate gender sensitivity by using various programs and policies.

Keywords: Gender Roles, Attitude, Belief, Residence, Family.

تلخیص

صنفی کردار کسی بھی معاشرے میں صنفی تعلقات کا عکاس ہوتا ہے۔ لہذا کسی معاشرے میں بہتر منصوبہ سازی کے لئے نوجوان نسل کا صنفی کردار کی طرف رجحان سمجھنا ضروری ہے۔ موجودہ مقالہ جامعات کی طالبات کے رویے کا صنفی کردار کے حوالے سے مطالعہ کرتا ہے اس مطالعے کے لیے زینلگلو اور تریزگلو، ۲۰۱۱ء کے صنفی کردار کا سوالنامہ استعمال کیا گیا ہے جو کہ موجودہ

سروے کے لئے لاہور کی مختلف جامعات سے ۵۱۳ طلباء و طالبات سے معلومات اکٹھی کی گئیں۔ جمع کی گئیں معلومات کا شماریاتی تجزیہ کیا گیا ہے۔ نتائج میں صنفی فرق عیاں ہوا اور مرد طلباء کا رجحان خواتین طلباء کی نسبت صنفی مساوات کی طرف زیادہ پایا گیا۔ علاوہ ازیں، رہائشی، سماجی، اقتصادی پس منظر بھی صنفی کردار کے بارے میں خیالات اور نقطہ نظر تشکیل دینے میں اہم پائے گئے۔ یہ تحقیق بچوں کی تربیت کے حوالے سے والدین کے کردار اور پاکستان کے تعلیمی اداروں میں تعلیمی نصاب میں صنفی حساسیت کے حوالے سے کام کرنے کی تجاویز دیتی ہے۔ اس کے علاوہ حکومت اور سماجی کارکن مختلف پروگراموں اور پالیسی کے ذریعے صنفی حساسیت پر کام کر سکتے ہیں۔

کلیدی الفاظ: صنفی کردار، رویہ، عقائد، رہائش، خاندان۔

Introduction

In Pakistan, gender relations and roles are considered to have deep roots of religion principles and political discourses in different governments and used these principles to define these roles (Shaheed, 2010). Additionally, these are based on the notions of production and reproduction, and certain masculine and feminine traits (Ali & Gavino, 2008; Mahmood &Sultan, 2006) derived from social values and tradition created and nurtured by patriarchal ideology (Zaman et al., 2006 & Bari, 2000). Therefore, socio-cultural system run by patriarchal forces established gender relation and hierarchies contrary to the concept of women empowerment (Jamal, 2015).

Moreover, gender seems to play key role in determining the sexual division of labor in the public and private life in Pakistan. Consequently, the difference in the status of women can be witnessed in terms of classes, development and socioeconomic background, which leads them towards a systematic internalized subordinate position in society as dominant norms in culture recognize the earning role of men as more superior over the role of women in the private sphere (Bari, 2000).

Thus, determination of gender roles and attitudes of any society towards them directly affects the life experiences of people such as aspects of conjugal and family affairs, occupational processes and segregation, and other social relationships. In this regard, holding a conventional belief about gender role fosters the perpetuation of gender discrimination in the fields of education, politics, work and other areas (Ridgeway, 1997).

Like in Pakistan, more than half of the women's population does not have access to the basic education, whereas only a limited number of women are financially independent. The majority of them are confined to their homes to do household chores and are excluded from decision making (Rabbani, et al., 2008).

In spite of the fact that the Constitution of Pakistan supports equal rights for the welfare and advancement of women (Mahmood & Shaukat, 2006), the rights of women have always been violated in Pakistan. The subordinate and vulnerable image of Pakistani women signifies deeply embedded patriarchy in the society. According to report of Gallup (2009) politics, education, employment, and other important areas of life are still dominated by men. This reflects on the rigid gender divide in the Pakistani society. Even though, emancipation and empowerment have always been documented in many policies and laws, but still a lot needs to be done to achieve women empowerment (Weiss, 2012). Global Gender Gap Report (2016) revealed, Pakistan ranks 143 out of 144 countries in the gender inequality index. The report highlighted the progress towards gender equality in education, health, economy and politics, however, the status of the wage gap and the literacy rate between men and women is not found satisfactory.

By exploring the negative consequences of having traditional gender roles, researchers highlighted that strictly following the conventional gender roles can have negative effects on children as these stereotypical beliefs can restrict their drives and development in education, profession and other fields of life (Liben, et al., 2002). Furthermore, adherence to these roles limit their ability to think about alternatives and explore their future potential beyond the socially constructed boundaries (Rainey & Rust, 1999).

Mokhtari & Enayat (2011) explored the social settings and conditions, which shape the common attitude about men and women and consequently lead to the formation of gender roles (Bazik, 2011). Similarly, researchers studied various demographic factors which may influence gender role attitudes, such as age, gender, race, education, and marital status, parents' educational level and mother's occupational status; and other variables such as political affiliation and religious beliefs (Beyerlein, 2007; Davis, 2007 & Kiani et al., 2009). Bryant (2003) found no relationship between age and egalitarian attitude of the respondents. Socio-economic factors of the family were also studied as one of the important factors which may affect gender role attitudes in children. Antill et al., (2003) found that children having an economically sound family are more likely to have egalitarian gender roles. Similarly, Fan & Marini (2000) explained that mothers' working status was linked with the development of egalitarian gender role attitude in their children in later life.

Additionally, Kiani et al., (2009) highlighted the role of biological and psychosocial factors such as attitude of parents and the influence of social media in constructing gender role attitudes. Khamse (2003) argues that some families nurture their children through reinforcing flexible attitudes. Therefore, attitude about gender roles is transmitted across generation. Farré & Vella (2013) explored the importance of family size and found that people living in larger families are more likely to have traditional gender role attitudes. Other studies exploring gender differences in gender role attitudes reported that

female students were less likely to believe in traditional gender role attitudes than male students (Keith & Jacqueline, 2002; Kimberly & Mahaffy 2002).

Previous literature reported that women have made more progress in adoption of egalitarian gender roles than men, whereas shift in men's roles, especially in the household is not changing in the same trend. (Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2001; Riley, 2003). Verick (2014) discussed that transformation in gender roles brings the shift in traditional family set up where the female participates in the labor force. Esplen (2006) indicated that a small number of males is now accepting the changing trends in gender roles of women in developing economies. They are open for change in gender roles. Similarly, various researchers reported that gender role attitudes are changing over time (Moen, et al., 1997 & Verick, 2014).

Although studies conducted to investigate college students' behavior, perception and qualities are available; however, very few have focused on the concepts and beliefs of youth or university students towards gender roles. As discussed, gender roles are not fixed, therefore changes in society can influence the perceptions of youth to accept or challenge the existing norms and gender relations. Lueptow, et al., (1995) found otherwise in their study. They found that even in the case of changing social structure, gender stereotypes were still found in college students.

In this scenario, it is important to study the possibility of these transformations in Pakistan and perception of youth about it. Young women and men are the ones in any country who are supposed to run the country in future, and their belief about gender roles will shape their family patterns and career goals (Thornton and Young-DeMarco, 2001).

Review of Literature

Formation of gender within the society set different patterns of behavior and expectation for both men and women (Van Hoven & Hopkins, 2009 and Zahra et al., 2013). Dökmen (2004) described gender roles as responsibilities, manners and behavior assigned by society to women and men. A demonstration of gender roles also indicates major differences in the choices and opportunities available to men and women in their public and private lives (Akın & Demirel 2003 & Dökmen 2004). It is observed that variation in gender role attitudes exists widely and has been debated in different contexts. In this regard, the most debated perspective is; traditional versus egalitarian gender role attitudes. The traditional gender role ideology is based on patriarchy and gender based division of labor (Peplau, et al., 1993) whereas, egalitarian gender role ideology advocates for gender equality and rejects the conventional gender norms related to gender roles (Zeyneloğlu & Terzioğlu, 2011).

Theoretical debate maintains gender role attitudes as outcomes of concepts and behavior transmitted, imparted and demonstrated in childhood that establish bases of engaging in private and professional relationships (Martin, 1995; Martin & Halverson, 1981). Therefore, gender role attitudes are often considered as a stable concept in later life, but role theory proposes that development of roles is a continuous process of reexamining and assessing self and others grounded on personal interaction, experiences and changes in understanding and thinking (Thornton & Nardi, 1975). Research has shown that gender role attitudes are considered to remain stable, but may be transformed in the context of individual social experiences such as college life, marital relations, child birth, and changes in the workplace (Bryant, 2003; Fan & Marini, 2000; Lucier-Greer & Adler-Baeder, 2011). Different experiences in life provide opportunities for learning, development and perhaps changes in assigned social roles and behavior, so gender role attitudes may not be stable or fixed.

Likewise, the social role theory explains that division of labor and the stereotypical social roles influence the behavior of men and women regarding their adoption of roles (Eagly, 1987). Thus, it would be assumed that people with more traditional beliefs about gender roles are less likely to engage in roles defined beyond societal norms.

Gender role attitudes have also been recognized as indicators for decision making processes and behavior (Davis & Greenstein, 2009; Vespa, 2009), possibilities and potential of future labor force participation in different activities such as getting higher education, choices for profession and job market participation (Corrigall & Konrad, 2007; Crocket & Beal, 2012; Davis & Pearce, 2007). So gender role attitudes determine the academic and social prospects in any society, it is therefore important to understand the dynamics of gender roles in future generation. Gaining insights regarding the youth attitude can lead to interventions to inculcate the gender egalitarian attitude in future generation.

Increasingly, social scientists and researchers are exploring the different potential of young population living in developing countries. In this regard limited literature might be seen regarding gender role attitudes among youth living in developing and known as patriarchal countries compared with developed countries, where theories of gender socialization and identity formation have been widely studied and published.

In Pakistan, gender roles are slowly transforming and men are found to report more traditional gender role attitudes than women. Furthermore, professional and people with higher education are found to have an egalitarian gender role attitude compared to others (Ahmad & Kamal, 2000; Khan, & Sabir, 1993). The present socioeconomic and political conditions in Pakistan are controlled by patriarchy and capitalism; however, various national and international initiatives have been taken by the government for the last two

decades. These efforts have at least resulted in, visibility of women in almost every field of life; however, a lot needs to be done to achieve the target of gender equality.

The question which arises here is whether young people in Pakistan adhere to the traditional or egalitarian gender role attitude. As discussed, males are presumed to be dominating in their relations with women, whereas women are expected to be generally submissive to men following social norms and roles given by society to them. In this context, following study examined the gender roles among university students in Lahore.

Objectives

- To examine the gender role attitudes of university studentswhether it has traditional or egalitarian orientation
- To study the factors which might contribute in shaping the gender role attitudes of students.

Method

A comparative study was conducted to examine the attitude of university students regarding gender roles in Lahore, Punjab Province by carrying out a cross sectional survey. As the purpose was to study the gender role pattern of university students it required accessing large number of students enrolled in different discipline in universities so a close ended questionnaire was used in a cross sectional study design.

Sample

The population of this study was the university students of Lahore city. For this purpose, a sample of 513 respondents aged between18 to 25 years was conveniently selected from four (public and private) universities of Lahore. This sample selection was guided by following the estimated trend of students enrollment in different disciplines of university programs. Additionally, the selected tool has 38 items , so 14 students against each item was selected. Overall 532 questionnaires were distributed , out of which 513 respondents responded. Additionally, 266 males and 266 females were selected out of which 262 male and 251 female students responded.

Instrument

Data was collected by using Gender Roles Attitude Scale (Zeyneloğlu & Terzioğlu, 2011). This tool consists of 38 items which covers the five sub scales of gender roles (egalitarian gender roles, female gender roles, marriage gender roles, traditional gender roles and male gender roles). The author of the scale clarifies that egalitarian attitude has further sub-scales named female gender roles and egalitarian gender roles, for example;

"decision to have a child should be made by both spouses in a marriage". Similarly, marriage gender roles, traditional gender roles and male gender roles are the sub scales of traditional attitudes" for instance, "The head of the household is man". The instrument's total Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient of this tool is 0.92. The instrument is developed to score on a 5-point Likert scale. Higher scores on this scale indicate egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles and the lower scores indicate a traditional attitude towards gender roles.

Additionally, information about demographic variables including; gender, age, residential area, educational discipline and enrolled program, religion, caste, family type and socioeconomic status of parents was also collected.

Procedure and Data Analysis

Data was collected after taking permission from universities administration and informed consent from students. Moreover, anonymity and confidentiality of respondents' information were completely ensured. T-test, ANOVA and Correlation were used for analysis.

Table: 1
Demographic Information of participants (N = 513)

Variable	*f*	*%age*
Gender		
Male	262	51.1
Female	251	48.9
Age		
18-22	369	71.93
23-26	144	28.07
Area		
Lahore	468	91.2
Other Cities	45	8.8
Academic Discipline		
Social Sciences	126	24.6
Natural Sciences	44	8.6
Applied Sciences	91	17.7
Management Sciences	85	16.6
Humanities and Arts	96	34.1

Medical Sciences /Engineering	64	12.5
LLB	7	1.0
Academic Program		
Bachelors	430	83.8
Masters	76	14.8
LLB	7	1.4
Family Type		
Nuclear	339	66.1
Joint	174	33.9
Father's Income		
High Income	148	28.8
Middle Income	138	26.9
Small Income	197	38.4
Missing Information	30	5.8
Fathers' Education		
Below Matric	46	9.0
Matriculation	71	13.8
Intermediate	96	18.7
Bachelor	165	32.2
Masters /Above	135	26.3
Mother's Income		
High Income	6	1.2
Middle Income	8	1.6
Small Income	30	5.8
Missing Information	469	91.4
Mothers' Education		
Below Matric	511	99.6
Matric	1	.2
Intermediate	1	.2
Bachelor	0	0
Masters /Above	0	0
Enrollment Reasons		
Gender	74	14.4
Family Pressure	97	18.9

Peer Pressure	55	10.7
Media	54	10.5
Passion	189	36.8
Others	44	8.6

Results

The results overall, showed that more than half, 69.0% of the respondents' attitude toward gender role positioned between egalitarian and traditional gender roles, whereas 16.8% showed egalitarian attitude and 14.2% showed traditional attitude towards gender roles. The range of scores of gender role attitude was 77-158 against a possible range of 38-190 and the mean score was 119.39 with standard deviation 13.60.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to study relationship between participants' age, gender, father's education, mother's education, and dimensions of gender roles attitude. The results showed a significant direct relationship of age, father's education and mother's education with egalitarian gender role attitude. A significant direct relationship of gender was observed with egalitarian and marriage gender role. It indicates that women exhibited significantly higher egalitarian gender role attitude.

Table 2
Pearson's Correlation between Study Variables (N=513)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Age	-	-.22**	.02	.05	.13**	.03	-.04	.09*	.00
Gender		-	-.09*	.06	.36**	.10*	-.08	.00	.09*
FEdu			-	.00	.15**	-.02	.07	-.00	.13**
MEdu				-	.11**	-.02	-.01	-.02	.09*
Egali					-	.13**	.17**	.16**	.43**
Tradi						-	.40**	.40**	.25**
Female							-	.35**	.21**
Male								-	.43**
Marriage									-

Note: For Gender, 0=men, 1=women; FEdu=Father's Education, MEdu= Mother's Education, Egali=Egalitarian Gender Role, Tradi=Traditional Gender Role, Female=Female Gender Role, Male= Male Gender Role, Marriage= Marriage Gender Role

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$

Independent samples t test was applied to identify gender differences in gender role attitudes. It was observed that men scored significantly higher on egalitarian, traditional and marriage gender roles as compared to women. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table: 3
Independent sample t-test measuring gender differences in the attitude of egalitarian, traditional, female, male and marriage gender role scores (N=513)

Gender Role	Men (*n* = 262)		Women (*n* = 251)		*t(df)*	*p*
	M	*(SD)*	*M*	*(SD)*		
Egalitarian	29.56	(4.79)	24.56	(7.76)	8.82	.000*
Traditional	25.91	(4.83)	24.91	(4.36)	2.44	.015*
Female	25.22	(4.11)	24.53	(3.86)	1.94	ns
Male	18.53	(4.71)	18.53	(3.68)	-.009	ns
Marriage	22.98	(4.21)	23.90	(5.08)	-2.23	.026*

Table 4 shows differences in gender role attitudes across area of living. It is evident that participants belonging to urban area (Lahore) scored significantly higher on marriage gender role attitude as compared to residents of other areas.

Table: 4
Independent samples t-test comparing gender roles attitudes across Area of living (N = 513)

Gender Role	Lahore (*n* = 468)		Others (*n* = 45)		*t(df)*	*p*
	M	(SD)	M	(SD)		
Egalitarian	27.07	(6.93)	27.55	(6.37)	-.443	ns
Traditional	25.52	(4.60)	24.42	(4.82)	1.52	ns
Female	24.97	(3.98)	23.97	(4.19)	1.59	ns
Male	18.62	(4.32)	17.57	(3.122)	1.58	ns
Marriage	23.56	(4.65)	22.06	(4.78)	2.05	.04*

Type of family did not account for change in gender role attitudes as shown in the Table 5 below.

Table: 5
Independent samples t test comparing gender role attitude across family type (N = 513)

Gender Role	Nuclear (*n* = 339)		Joint (*n* = 174)		*t(df)*	*p*
	M	*(SD)*	*M*	*(SD)*		
Egalitarian	27.12	(7.14)	27.10	(6.37)	.041	ns
Traditional	25.28	(4.73)	25.69	(4.42)	-.947	ns
Female	24.85	(4.00)	24.95	(4.01)	-.233	ns
Male	18.55	(4.39)	18.49	(3.91)	.145	ns
Marriage	23.33	(4.75)	23.62	(4.53)	-.678	ns

Findings related to role of mother's working status in gender role attitude revealed differences for marriage gender role attitude only (Table 6). It was observed that children of working mothers exhibited more egalitarian marriage gender role as compared to children of non-working mothers. However, for other dimensions of gender role attitudes, insignificant differences were observed.

Table: 6
Independent samples t test comparing gender role attitude across mother's working status (N=513)

Gender Role	Working (n = 44)		Non-working (*n* = 469)		*t(df)*	*p*
	M	*(SD)*	*M*	*(SD)*		
Egalitarian	26.40	(5.43)	27.18	(7.00)	-.717	ns
Traditional	26.00	(4.40)	25.37	(4.65)	.861	ns
Female	24.20	(3.44)	24.94	(4.05)	-1.179	ns
Male	18.29	(3.71)	18.55	(4.28)	-.387	ns
Marriage	24.84	(3.69)	23.29	(4.74)	2.09	.036*

One way Analysis of Variance was conducted to compare gender role attitudes regarding reason to choose the discipline of study. These reasons included factors related to own gender, family pressure, peer pressure, media, passion and other reasons. Table 7 shows findings of one-way ANOVA.

Table: 7
One way Analysis of Variance comparing gender role attitudes across reasons of studying in different disciplines (N = 513)

Gender Role Attitude	Source	*SS*	*MS*	*F (df)*	*p*
Egalitarian	Between Groups	6795.018	1359.004	39.391 (5, 507)	.000
	Within Groups	17491.488	34.500		
	Total	24286.507			
Traditional	Between Groups	354.364	70.873	3.381(5, 507)	.005
	Within Groups	10628.996	20.964		
	Total	10983.361			
Female	Between Groups	200.566	40.113	2.537(5, 507)	.028
	Within Groups	8015.648	15.810		
	Total	8216.214			
Male	Between Groups	119.565	23.913	1.336(5, 507)	.248
	Within Groups	9076.154	17.902		
	Total	9195.719			
Marriage	Between Groups	792.601	158.520	7.714(5, 507)	.000
	Within Groups	10419.193	20.551		
	Total	11211.793			

The scores in students' attitude towards egalitarian gender roles, traditional gender roles, females and marriage gender roles differed significantly across the six categories of reasons of studying in different academic disciplines, F (5, 507)= 39.39, p<.001, F=(5, 507)=3.38,p<.05 F(5,507)=2.537, p<.05and F=(5, 507)=7.714, p<.001. This was further analyzed in the post hoc Tukey's HSD comparison. The results indicated that the students who reported their gender as main reason scored higher(M=28.32, SD=4.55) in egalitarian gender roles than students who mentioned other reasons(M=16.52,SD=5.85), Similarly, students who reported their passion as main reason scored higher(M=29.95,SD=5.44) egalitarian gender roles than students who reported reasons of family pressure(M=26.06,SD=7.25), media(M=25.70,SD=6.51) and others.
Likewise, the results indicated that the students who reported their gender as main reason scored higher (M=26.45, SD=4.69) in traditional gender roles than students who mentioned family pressure (M=24.42, SD=4.28) and other reasons (M=23.70, SD=4.08).

The results indicated that the students who reported media's influence as main reason scored higher (M=25.81, SD=3.50) in female gender roles than students who reported

other reasons (M=23.27, SD=4.22). Moreover, the results indicated that the students who reported others reason scored higher (M=27.04, SD=4.06) in marriage gender roles than students who reported reasons of gender (M=23.13, SD=3.95), family pressure (M=23.06, SD=4.61), peer pressure (M=23.87, SD=4.93) and passion (M=22.53, SD=4.40).

Discussion

Findings revealed that male students showed more egalitarian as well as more traditional attitude regarding gender roles than females, whereas female students were found to believe more in marriage gender roles than males, which is overall supported by previous literature (Ahmad & Kamal, 2000; Khan, & Sabir, 1993; Lueptow, Garovich, & Lueptow, 1995) but inconsistent with the findings of Keith and Jacqueline (2002) and Kimberly and Mahaffy (2002). These findings may be due to individual differences or the influence of other factors such as media or religious affiliation as mentioned by Kiani at al. (2009).

Moreover, the results showed that respondents living in Lahore reported higher scores on belief on marriage related gender roles, which confirmed the finding of Twenge (1997) that residential area contributes to the development of gender role attitudes. Additionally, in this context, it indicates that in spite of living in alarge urban city of Lahore where people have more opportunities to study higher education and avail jobs, they are still more likely to stick to traditional marriage gender roles in their private life, which highlights the need of working on the sensitization of educated people living in urban are as too as highlighted by Ali et al. (2011).

The study also did not find significant differences in respondents' attitude towards gender roles on the basis of their family type, which is inconsistent with the results of Farré and Vella (2013). These results may be due to the other social or individual factors beyond the scope of this study, which could be explored in the future through in depth interviews.

Students who have working mothers are found to believe more on marriage gender roles than students having non-working mothers, which is somehow contradictory to the finding of Fan and Marini (2000)& Jan & Janssens (1998). The most possible explanation of this finding might be that in Pakistani context still society is at an evolutionary stage of accepting the working role of women especially mothers in the public domain, and working mothers have to struggle hard to maintain the balance between work and family life, although government is now facilitating by offering the enabling condition such as day care centers, flexible working hours, maternity leave etc. However, deeply rooted gendered ideology has not changed the males' role in traditional marriage life, such as taking care of children, cooking and supporting in household chores, consequently, children have to suffer which might be the case in this study as highlighted byThornton and Young-DeMarco (2001) & Riley (2003). Connell's(1987) notion of gender and

power also posits that male dominated ideology of institutions in society and even in the case of family and marriage shapes acceptable norms for men by guiding them not to take care private sphere responsibilities. This causes the inequality in society.

The findings also revealed that father and mother's education have a positive relationship with egalitarian gender role attitude. These findings are supported by various previous researchers (Antill et al., 2003; Beyerlein, 2007; Kiani at al., 2009; Marks et al., 2009). This finding indicates the changing thinking pattern of youth towards gender roles with having educated parental background. As the role of the mother is considered primarily in socializing their children about cultural values, but having educated father and mother gives their children, environment to learn the values beyond the traditional setting. These parents are more likely to spend on the well being of their family, which consequently influences their children's beliefs about gender roles. In terms of the social role theory, when children learn about the less rigid environment in his/her surroundings, they are more likely to act accordingly in the future.

The scores in students' attitude towards egalitarian gender roles, traditional gender roles, females and marriage gender roles differed significantly across the six categoriesof reasons for opting different academic disciplines. The results indicated that the students who reported their gender as main reason found to embrace more egalitarian gender role attitude than students who mentioned other reasons. Similarly, students who reported passion as main reason found to belief more on egalitarian gender roles than others. The explanation of this result highlights the need to explore it further in the future as these results might be due to different background and experiences of the respondents as stated by Mokhtari & Enayat (2011).

Limitation

In this study information about other important factors such as students' social networks, caste, their religious and political affiliation were not probed which might have influenced gender role attitudes and could be counted as the limitations of the study. Additionally, the results of this study might be considered partial due to sample being selected from a few universities in Lahore.

Conclusions

It is concluded that socioeconomic background of parents, academic group andgender influence the development of gender roles in many unexpected ways. Determining the attitudes of university students regarding gender roles not only reflect the academic content which is being taught, but also highlights the role of parents .

Recommendations

Measures for preventing gender biases should be planned and then integrated into the country's strategic policies and programs. Content based on egalitarian gender role can be incorporated in the curriculum of initial year of schooling in order to nurture the gender sensitized nation in the future. This study highlights the need of education for all to go towards the journey of promoting gender egalitarian attitude.

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