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KATEDRA SOCIOLOGIE, ANDRAGOGIKY A KULTURNÍ ANTROPOLOGIE

Everyday life experience of female students in Pakistan

Bakalářská diplomová práce

Obor studia: Kulturní antropologie

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Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Martin Fafejta, Ph.D.

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Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou diplomovou práci na téma „*Everyday life experience of female students in Pakistan*" vypracovala samostatně a uvedla v ní veškerou literaturu a ostatní zdroje, které jsem použila.

V Olomouci dne. …..……….. Podpis …………………….

Poděkování

Na tomto místě bych chtěla poděkovat vedoucímu práce Mgr. Martinovi Fafejtovi, Ph.D., za trpělivé vedení práce, cenné komentáře a podporu. Také jsem moc vděčná za možnost uskutečnění terénního výzkumu. Velký dík patří participantkám, které byly ochotné se zúčastnit tohoto výzkumu a pomáhaly mi během celého pobytu v Pákistánu. Neméně děkuji svoje rodině za permanentní podporu.

Anotace

Jméno a příjmení:	Aksana Shytsikava
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Název práce:	Každodenní zkušenost studentek v Pákistánu
Anotace práce:	Bakalářská práce se zabývá tím, jak vnímají svoje postavení studentky v Pakistánské společností. Jak se formuje jejich životní zkušenosti a jakou roli hraje sociální a kulturní konstrukce prostoru, omezená mobilita žen, jejich rodina a vysokoškolské vzdělaní.
Klíčová slova:	Genderová nerovnost; sociální a kulturní konstrukce prostoru; Pákistán; vzdělaní
Title of Thesis:	Everyday life experience of female students in Pakistan
Annotation:	The bachelor thesis is dealing with the topic of how female students perceive their social status in Pakistani society. How such factors as social and cultural construct of space, limited mobility, religion, family, university education are interconnected and shape women's life experience.
Keywords:	Gender inequality; social and cultural construction of space; Pakistan; higher education
Názvy příloh vázaných v práci:	
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Introduction

This thesis is dealing with the topic of gender in Pakistani society. Initially, during the preparations for my field work the plan was to concentrate on gender policy in higher education in Pakistan, but after entering the field it became obvious that it is impossible to describe only this phenomenon per se without putting it into a broader context. In view of this, this paper is focusing on several issues which influence women's everyday life, and which are interconnected with each other.

Firstly, there is a description of methodology and field itself, interviews, sampling and field limitations.

Secondly, there is given a short overview of the most prominent gender concepts as viewed by West and Zimmerman, Butler and Bourdieu, and it is described how gender is examined from the intersectional perspective.

In the practical part, composed by data collected during the field research, there is a depiction of certain domains of day-to-day life experience of female students in Pakistani society, how it is influenced by religion; in what way and why women's mobility is often limited; how social and cultural construct of space is created within the city and in what manner it brings different meaning for women and for men, why some places are viewed as particularly unsafe for females. Further I would like to depict how some life common decisions are made and which role in it play the family of a person. And in the end, there is highlighted the importance of higher education in women's lives within the context of Pakistani society.

The purpose of this thesis is to make a description of day-to-day life experience of female students in Pakistani society through which I would

like to show how women's experience is shaped, how is it influenced by various factors and how it affects the position of women in the society.

Conducting field work research, the main aim was to describe the position of female students in a context of Pakistani society with emphasizing the urban area of Islamabad city, by outlining everyday life activities. Which role does education play in women's lives, what are the expectations put upon them? This research is focused on gender roles of women and how they are different from those of men.

1 Research questions

The main question of this research is:

How do female students perceive their social status in Pakistani society?

To specify it there are secondary narrower research questions:

How the space is socially and culturally constructed and how can it occur different symbolic meanings for male and female students?

How does limited mobility of female students influence everyday-life decisions? How do family decisions shape their experience?

Which role in women's lives does higher education play and are there any limitations of achieving it?

2 Methodology

My research is based on the field work, which I have conducted in Islamabad city, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, from September 2018 till February 2019. I have used the method of participant observation, where I've become an active part of the observed field.

For getting into the field I've taken an admission for one semester in one of the universities in Islamabad and I was living in a campus within the university, which provided me with perfect access to the field. I was involved in everyday activities as a regular student, which included participating in classes and exams with engagement into the university life. Life in a student hostel (dormitory) gave me an access to another dimension, usual workaday activities as shopping, chatting, solving everyday issues, going outside with roommates and class fellows etc.

Due to the deep involving in that life, similarly as an ordinary Pakistani student, I got the best opportunity to find participants for conducting the interviews, furthermore I could be a part of other activities as walking, informal conversations, visiting participants' families and so on.

2.1 Social settings and field

Islamabad is a capital city of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which is geographically situated in the province Punjab but administratively it creates a separate unit of a capital territory. Built in the 1960s, it was a place specially created for a new capital and in it has replaced the former capital, which was situated in Karachi. The aim was to build a developed modern city and to move there all the representatives of political power in Pakistan; also to

create some area for foreigners (Daechsel 2017). The city is connected to Rawalpindi, satellite city of Islamabad.

It is important to describe this particular geographical location, because the same questions and issues discussed in this thesis will not be similar in another areas of Pakistan (especially rural).

There is no system of public transport in Islamabad, there are only so called "metro busses" which follow a very limited route, mostly connected Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Unlike the other cities in Pakistan, there are no rickshaws in Islamabad as well. The only way to move around the city is by taking a taxi. Most of the people, especially women, are not using services of local taxi drivers, rather they prefer using mobile applications like Uber or Careem (more popular in that area), due to the security issues. By using these applications, the whole route can be traced, and data of a driver are also available. It was the first thing I was introduced to after the arriving to Islamabad, I was taught how to move around the city, how to use these particular applications. Once during my stay in Peshawar, my friend was trying to book a ride on Careem, but it was not possible due to the rush hour, and she was asking me about if I am ok with going with a local driver, because very often it is viewed as unsafe and insecure.

The university I have been studying in, is a co-educational institution, where male and female students are studying together. Which is another factor which influences female students' experience. The same issues will be probably viewed differently by the students who are attending only female/male universities. Universities can basically belong to private or governmental sector; private universities are more expensive one. The university I was studying in belongs partially to public sector and partially to Pakistani Navy.

The University provides big variety of study programs, and I was involved in social sciences. Ethnically it is not a homogeneous institution, but majority of students are Punjabis. The language spoken by all the people is predominantly Urdu, but educational process is in English, and English has a status of official language in the country, that is why there was no problem with communicating and conducting interviews.

The university is situated in army sector, that is why entering is highly protected by security forces, to get into the university a person has to cross main gate and go through several security checks, then the next gates are segregated for males and for females, where the persons' student card is checked. There is a dress code check-up as well. It is impossible to enter the campus after 10 p.m.

There is a possibility of getting accommodation in a female dormitory which is situated within the campus. Living area of the dormitory is situated on the second floor, passing the first floor there is a first security guard, the second one is situated at the reception desk. At the receptionist desk there is a registration book which should be filled in with the information like the time of leaving and arriving to the dormitory, name and number of the room. Being there the only foreign student, in case of leaving the university area I was required to put down the particular place in the city where I am going to and telephone number of people I am going to spend time with.

Dressing-up is also checked at the reception of the dormitory. It is impossible to enter or leave dormitory after 9 p.m. For some special occasions, if the person is willing to leave student hostel for one or more day, there is a special form to be filled and submitted by the warden and warden assistant.

There are also cafeterias available on the territory of the campus, which are segregated, there is one cafeteria for girls and three for boys. Cafeterias which are not allowed to serve female students can got a fine for breaking the rule. Even though this is a coeducational institution, cafes are separated, but there is no segregated area within the campus itself, students still can meet and sit together.

There is a dress code rules applied in the university: female students are not allowed to wear sleeveless T-shirts, tights, jeans. Required clothes are shalwar kameez, which is wide trousers and long shirt named "kurta". Scarf "duppatta" is compulsory.

Classes are held every day, except from Saturday and Sunday, from morning till 14 p.m., except of long classes on Friday due to pause for Jumma (Friday) prayer.

The field work was conducted within the urban environment of Islamabad city where the dominant citizens are Muslims belonging to Sunni school of thought.

Pakistani society is considered to be strongly patriarchal in the way that women's status is influenced by *zar* (wealth), and *zamin* (land), and in the way that the degree of men's honor depends on the custody and control of wealth, women, and land (Chauhan 2015: 57).

Lack of access to the resources like accommodation and transport, also lack of the resources which begins at birth in form of the strong preferences of sons, who seem to be family supporters in future, rather than daughters (Chauhan 2015: 58). After marriage in the most cases daughters move to the family of in-laws and practically become separate from their own family. Sons stay within the family and support their parents.

The situation is different from area to area within the country, for this reason it is important to put the research into regional context and take into account that the issues described will be relevant in urban area of Islamabad, all the participants came from upper middle-class families, and all of them are getting university education. Nevertheless, each girl has some specific life situation and different views on some problems. Not all of the participants came directly from Islamabad and not all of them belongs to the family background. Common features are that all of the participant belong to Sunni school of thought and are Muslims.

2.2 Ethnography

Ethnography is a method in which observation and participation are interwoven with other procedures, with a strong emphasis on exploring the nature of a particular phenomenon, rather than setting out to test hypothesis about them. Current ethnographic research is characterized by an extend participation in the field, which studies a flexible research strategy, employing different kinds of methods and its focus is on writing experiences in that field (Flick 2018).

According to Clifford Geertz there are certain characteristics of ethnographic description: firstly, it is interpretive; it is an interpretation of the issue of social discourse; and this interpreting of some phenomenon is the form of researcher's attempt to rescue the "said" from its disappearing occasions and to fix it in some text which can be carefully re-examined.

In Geertz' understanding, ethnography is pointing on the role of symbols, which regulate practices in our culture. Function of culture is to create a meaning of the world and to make this world comprehensible. The

role of researcher is to interpret the meanings, which are the most significant for understanding culture. Research analysis consists in classification of semantic structures. During the data processing is important not only to explain the actions or behavior, but also to put it into context, to make it clear and understandable for people out of the culture (Geertz 1973: 21-86).

Ethnomethodology refers to the investigation of the practical actions as contingent ongoing accomplishment of organized practices of everyday life, studies of the routine grounds of everyday activities (Garfinkel 1984).

Ethnography is considered to be a time demanding method, but due to the possibility to stay for longer time in the field I have decided to choose this particular method.

2.3 Interviews

In my research I gave the priority to the semi-structured interviews, because according to my opinion participants' viewpoints are more likely to be expressed in an openly designed interview situation than in a standardized one, alongside with different types of questions about several topical areas, introduced by an open question, which applied to reconstruct the interviewee's subjective theory (Flick 2018: 207). I have used formal interviews with audio recorder, alongside with them I have given the attention to informal interviews, by which I mean an ordinary conversation with putting some questions connected to the research on the relevant topic for gaining information about their version of some problems and their experience, when at the same time I was creating field notes.

2.4 Sampling

The general problem of sampling is how to select cases or examples from a wider population. My principle of choosing participants for interview was based on a random sampling, where every member of the population has the same chance to be a member of the sample (Flick 2018: 167-182). All the participants belong to the same university and same ethnical group of Punjabis, Sunni school of thought within the Islam, which is dominant in Pakistan.

At the time when I was conducting the interviews, I have known the participants for some time and I can say, that we were in a good and close relationships with them; furthermore I had some background knowledge about them, which enabled me to make interviews comfortable for the respondents and also made it possible to avoid gap within a researcher-interviewee relationship.

2.5 Problems in conducting the method

One of the issues, I was thinking about before conducting my field work research is "gendered nature of fieldwork". Gender differences can be a crucial aspect, particularly when planning to observe some places, where the possibilities of access and moving around are much more restricted due to the particular dangers for women than for men. Women's perceptions of such restrictions and dangers, however, are much more sensitive, which makes their awareness of some issues peculiar, and most probably they are more likely to notice things differently, compared to male observers. The suggestion given by the author is a use of mixed-gender team in observational studies (Flick 2018: 311). It can bring both positive and

negative aspects, firstly, talking about negatives, I would admit that some places are really of limited access for women in Pakistan, but also, they are of limited access for foreigners as well. Although, I cannot say, that it has brought some impediments to my research, because most of the time I was making observation within the university area, and the one place where I had no access was male part of the mosque and male cafes. As a big positive fact, I can underline that I was very close to the participants with whom I have conducted interviews; being a female researcher, it was easier for me to gain trust and spend more time with the participants, than it might not have been that much easy or possible at all for a male researcher.

Research is always an intervention into a social system and a disruptive factor for the system to be studied, so it can bring specific changes of the behavior in the field. These can be a reason of possible failure, but it is possible to minimize the risk of failure by developing enough trust (Flick 2018: 161). I might highlight that at the beginning of my studies in Islamabad, I could feel a certain type of disruption of a students' normal routine and dormitory life as well. It was the most visible at the very beginning of my stay, for example some student felt shy to speak English in my presence, because they've considered me to be a native speaker, but within passage of time many things have changed a lot and my class fellows felt more comfortable and did not take me as something unusual in their routine. I took it into account after entering the field, thus I have decided to conduct interviews later, during my last months there, after I got a feeling that we are in a close relationship and participants would be feeling more comfortable and relaxed with me.

2.6 Ethical Assurance

All the participants were informed about the purpose of the study; as well they were informed that the participation is not obligatory. All the participants are guaranteed with anonymity and confidentiality. Data collected from the interviews is occurred only in this thesis.

2.7 Reflexivity

While conducting the field work I was trying to be open-minded and unbiased, keeping in mind that cultural practices in Pakistani society will not be always understandable and clear for me. I was attempting to be empathetic, delicate and sensitive toward the participants as much as I could. My primarily aim was to give voice to the participants and make an effort to understand and describe their particular perception of reality, keeping it away from my own perspective by being apart from judging and giving emotional connotations on various issues. I was aware of my personal focus and opinion on specific question, and as a consequence I was rethinking what could have provoked certain feelings and created definite assumptions, therefore I was re-evaluating the conclusion. Additionally, I was putting down notes about my own feelings after each interview.

3 Theoretical part

3.1 Gender

Gender is considered to be one of the most fundamental – if not the most fundamental – social category structuring human life (Eckes & Trautner

2012: 3-32). Gender can be studied from different perspectives, but one of the common points which will be shared by all of them is that gender is conceptualized as a category of difference. There is an emphasis on horizontal differences, but also some approaches considered the potential hierarchical implications of gender in terms of status, power, access to resources, etc. (Volkmann 2019: 59-78).

3.2 Doing gender

Concept of "doing gender" was introduced by West and Zimmerman in a same-name article published in 1987, where authors have announced new understanding of gender "as a routine accomplishment embedded in everyday interaction". "Doing gender involves a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine "natures", gender is not a set of traits, nor a variable, nor a role, but the product of social doings of some sort. Gender itself is constituted through interaction." (West & Zimmerman 1987: 120-135)

Social world is not given, it is more a construction of social reality through everyday practices, it is important to conceptualize every aspect of dichotomy (sex vs. gender) as a product of social and cultural construction and reject the idea of differences as biologically given. This view suggests the analytical distinction of three concepts: sex, sex category and gender. Sex is determined by applying "socially agreed upon biological criteria" for classifying people as female or male. Gender categorization is based on a person's identificatory displays such as clothes, person's voice or facial hair, also every activity is assessed as to its manly/womanly nature when interacting with others (Volkmann 2019: 59-78).

Gender is "the activity of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category" (West & Zimmerman 1987: 127). According to Goffman, gender is a socially prescribed dramatization of feminine and masculine behavior, which is displaced publically (Goffman 1976).

3.3 Butler and Bourdieu

One of the authors who conceptualized gender from a discourse-theoretical perspective is Judith Butler, with her significant book Gender Trouble published in 1990. Her theory includes ideas of Derrida and Foucault; and speech is playing a pivotal role in Butler's concept, actually speech is something that creates gender. Gender is viewed not as performed, but rather performative. By "gender is performed" Butler means, that gender is an acting role, which is presented by us to the world; but according to her theory gender is rather performative, it produces a sense of effect and consolidate an impression of being a man or a woman, it is a phenomenon which is produced all the time and reproduced continuously. The category 'sex' is viewed the same constructed as category 'gender'. Butler is not questioning or denying the importance of biological aspect, rather highlighting the illusion, that gender is presented freely. Drawing on Foucault, Butler argues that discourses provide positions that are available to individuals to be comprehensible to others and at the same time, the hegemonic discourse also limits the positions available; "an individual only is readable for others within the norms provided by this discourse" (Volkmann 2019: 68). A person only exists in as far as she or he can be understood by others. "Heteronormative regulative discourse, which has the power to determine, which subjects are produced. And, drawing on

Derrida's notion of citationality, it is through referencing certain positions in the discourse that power unfolds. Thus, in order to be comprehensible to others and, consequently, have a right to exist as a human being (Butler 2004) one has to cite gender positions in this hegemonic heteronormative discourse" (Volkmann 2019: 68). Butler also pays attention to the power enabling certain sexual identities and excluding others. And speech through which gender is reconstructed is not a matter of individual's choice, but can only take place within the hegemonic discourse, as outside the discourse it won't be understandable for others. Here the hegemonic discourse is a regulatory framework for sexual identies (Volkmann 2019).

Bourdieu's approach is comprising of 'symbolic economy of gender relations.' He considers gender differences a cultural product through powerful discourses that relies on binary oppositions as active/passive, big/small, hard/soft. These cultural oppositions are so deeply implemented in persons' minds, that they seem to be very natural. There is a binary of a cultural system itself (Bourdieu 2007). "In order to gain a more distanced perspective, one has to make an analytical detour: Bourdieu suggest experiencing something foreign first, in order to be able to experience what is familiar as foreign, too." (Volkmann 2019: 70)

Bourdieu emphasizes, that symbolic gender domination is embedment into a more general system of symbolic power, and this makes masculine domination historically so stable. While masculine domination is the "paradigmatic form of symbolic domination" (Volkmann 2019: 70), he insists that if the gender order is to be revolutionized, the general symbolic order is to be revolutionized first. Male domination in this perspective is only a special form of social inequality and is closely linked to macro social structures of inequality and domination. Gender relations, masculine domination and feminine subordination depend on a person's social,

economic, cultural and symbolic capital. Especially important is cultural capital, i.e. education. Linguistic competence of a person is present in every interaction and is also significant. It is not depending on what someone says, but who is this person in a social structure (Volkmann 2019).

3.4 Intersectionality

The idea of intersectionality is based on feminist and critical root theories, the main approach of those is to analyze the meaning and consequences of various categories of identity, difference, and disadvantage simultaneously (Cole 2009: 170-180). According to this perspective gender is not the only one relevant category, and must be analyzed alongside with another categories as class/ethnicity/race/religion etc. Experience of white middle class woman might be very different to experience of working-class woman of colour. Women can't be homogenized as a unitary entity. Discrimination which is experienced by women of colour is different to white women's experience (Volkmann 2019: 73-78).

During the analysis social categories can't be just added together, connections between these categories are considered constitutive of intersectionality and have to be analyzed in their own right, these connections are linked to the history and specific context. Also, these categories of inequality may change over the time and that the triad of class, gender, and race/ethnicity is also provisional as new categories may be added. Intersectional approaches offer the possibility to conceptualize changes in gender relations (Volkmann 2019: 75).

There are three approaches within the intersectionality: the 'intercategorical', the 'anticategorical', and the 'intracategorical' approach.

"In 'intercategorical' approaches, existing analytical categories such as gender and class are adopted in order to examine whether structural relationships of inequality exist (or to what extent) between already constituted social groups"; 'anticategorical' approach considers fixed categories social constructs that simplify social life's complexity and – by creating differences – also create inequalities. Consequently, this approach aims at deconstructing these categories using qualitative methods in order to also deconstruct the inequalities they produce. And intersectionality within this approach do not deny the importance of categories, but instead analyze the processes by which they are produced, experienced, reproduced and also resisted. (Volkmann 2019: 75).

Within the context of Pakistani society ethical aspect is playing a crucial role, for instance there are many prejudices towards Pakhtoon people (and other minorities as well), in compliance they are treated in a different way than the majority one. People with darker shade of skin are often called as *karo/kari (black in Urdu),* which is an offensive way to highlight that the person is inferior. For this reason taking into account intersectional approach within the settings of Pakistani society is absolutely indispensable.

All the concepts described above are constructivist, and they conceptualize gender as a product of social processes and as a product of interactions or discourses, they do show that gender is constructing in social processes. Some of these theories can be criticized for denying a person to be autonomous and critical, who is capable of acting and changing gender relations. Intersectional concepts offer a possibility of changes in gender relations, but the impact of gender can be neglected, this perspective tends to uphold the relevance of gender in terms of social disadvantages rather than focus on changes in gender relations toward more equality (Volkmann 2019: 79). Nevertheless, within these concepts power plays an important role, and

is viewed not as something concentrated in someone's holdfast, but rather decentralized and distributed.

3.5 Public vs. Private

Here I would like to highlight a question of public and private domains, as this issue might be seen different for Western point of view. "To understand gender from a non-Western point of view is indeed to tread on unfamiliar cognitive terrain" (Channa 2013: 4).

Talking about the dichotomy between public and private spheres of life, it is important to realize that I was taking a perspective, that private sphere is considered as something less valuable and important, and retrograde I do recognize this attitude as eurocentric.

Michele Rosaldo in her article Women, Culture and Society defines 'domestic' institutions and activities as those that are organized around mother-child groups, while 'public' sphere 'refers to activities, institutions, and forms of association that link, rank, organize, or contain particular mother-child groups' (Rosaldo, 1974: 23). Women are most often seen as an essential part of domestic sphere and this sphere is considered less valuable, on the contrary men belong to public sector and this sector is the superior one.

However, both the categorical separation of the 'domestic' and the 'public', and their relative relationship are open to question (Moore 1988: 22) and there is no evident and clear edge between public and domestic spheres (Brettell 2017: 104).

Strathern emphasizes that the degrading nature of domestic sphere is a Western construct and should not be confused with some cross-culturally valid quality of the 'domestic' sphere (Moore 1988: 40).

Women's domestic orientation was structurally and culturally constructed and insofar as woman is universally defined in terms of a largely maternal and domestic role, according to Rosaldo we can account for her universal subordination, but it does not necessary mean, that women are powerless, rather they exercise informal influence (Brettell 2017: 101).

A more appropriate conception would be to recognize two domains: one occupied by men and another by women, both of which were internally ordered in a hierarchical fashion and both of which provided 'personnel' for domestic and extradomestic activities (Brettell 2017: 103).

It is impossible to divide women's lives in Pakistani society into two separate domains of private and public spheres, also it is necessary to consider that private sphere is not necessary less valuable that public one.

3.6 Influence of Islam

According to Sonia D. Galloway in her decertation dedicated to the impact of Islam on gender inequality, religions have a patriarchal view of the relationship between genders and the problem regarding gender inequality within Islam is typically shown through cultural practices and traditional patriarchal and male-dominated religious interpretations which used to subordinate Muslim women for centuries. Within Islam conflict has arisen on different levels, specifically regarding Muslim women's involvement in political leadership, women's positions in the household, women's positions in marriage, and women's rights to read and interpret passages in the Holy

Quran and the hadith (Galloway 2014: 5). As I've observed, Islam plays an important role in Pakistani society and influences women's lives and their lived experience.

Islam, as a religion, posits gender equality and egalitarianism, while at the same time guaranteeing women certain rights: the right to life, to education, to conduct business, to inherit and maintain property, and to keep their names (Galloway 2014: 32)

Many critics of Islam is talking about the approach that there is a significant gap between what the Quran says and the way in which its teachings are performed, other critics argue that Islam is basically a religion which provides men with status, control, and authority over women and which supports a system of inequitable relations. I am not going into details and not concentrating on Islam from the religionist point of view, here what I consider to be important is to describe how do the participants perceive impact of Islam on their lives.

Many of the participants claimed that people in Pakistani society tend to misuse the teachings of Islam, and often use only patterns which are suitable and convenient for them.

Participant E: Because even in our religion, our religion has given different rights and different opportunities to every gender. The males have their own stand and the women have their own stands… First open the holy Quran, read instructions what Allah has said and then talk on it. They are just misusing the facts. And that's not a good thing to do […] in 2019 every person is just using Islam for their own personal matters. Selectively. For the things they think are right they would selectively use Islam, and for other thing they would leave it.

Participant G: Islam says that the girl has right to get married to a person she loves, she is independent, she should have right to choose a partner and parents

should give the liberty to the daughter to choose […] but society has mixed up these things with Quran, they follow only these things which give them benefit, they don't follow these things which are not in line with their own ideas.

Answers like this very often arise and are linked to the questions of marriage, where women very often have a lack of autonomy and personal choice. Despite the fact, that religion provides women with the right of free choice of a partner, in practice it functions in another way, arranged marriages are much more common and decisions connected to the marriage are taken by fathers or elder brothers. It is not the Quran but rather some social conventions of patriarchal cultures that explains why women in Islamic countries are deprived of equal status in the society (Galloway 2014: 30 - 62).

"Specific concepts of girls' and boys' roles have enduring bases in Muslim cultural norms. Muslim children are trained early and at length in the tenets of Islam and the roles of Muslim men and women". In the case of Pakistani society, Muslim norms have historically placed extensive restrictions on the lifeworlds of girls. The idealized girl stays close to home, helps her mother, serves the boys and men in her family, takes care of her younger siblings, contributes to the family livelihood, and upholds the honor and reputation of the family" (Falah 2005: 22).

Participant E: woman has her own stands, so a girl looks better when she is covered, or she is shy, when she has some kind of shyness in her eyes. He walks in a soft way, she talks in a soft way. The girl is recognized that way.

In this example there is a participant's perception of how the good girl is supposed to be in this particular society, how to act in front of people to be taken as a decent and proper woman.

"Indeed, parental and state interpretations of religious and social values regarding girls' marriage, education, seclusion, veiling, and mobility intersect with broader debates about the compatibility of Islam, modernity, and globalization. Recent feminist papers on Pakistan have begun to trace the manner and extent to which the spatial experiences of girls are shaped by the influences and intersections of gender discourses, ideals of Islamic practice, and development policies adopted in different parts of the country" (Falah 2005: 23). Assumed, to be future wives and mothers, girls are placed at the very heart of upholding Islamic values, a Muslim religiocultural identity, and notions of family and nation that are seen as crucial to the perpetuation of social order and the resolution of wider socioeconomic dilemmas (Falah 2005: 25). Islamic belief and practice are key components in the construction and negotiation of gender images and expectations. Islamic teachings represent a moral discourse on roles and responsibilities that prescribes what girls should know and be prepared to do when they become adults (Falah 2005: 34).

One of the religious thinkers, an imam, Shah Ahmed Shafi, cited in 2013 newspaper articles: You women should stay within the four walls of your houses . . . Sitting inside your husband's home you should take care of your husband's furniture and raise your children, your male kids. These are your jobs. Why do you have to go outside? The imam compares women to, "a fruit that any man would like to taste." He asks, "Why are you sending your daughters to work in garment factories?" Girls should stop school after four or five years, just enough to allow them to keep their husband's accounts" (Casanova 2017: 154).

Islam in Pakistani society takes pivotal role in women's lived experience and influences everyday life from girls' birth. It imposes specific

gender roles for men and women, very often influences girls' mobility, permission for education, marriage, building a career etc.

4 Practical part

4.1 Social construct of space

According to my opinion the topic of social space's role in the society is essential and is interrelated with the topic of gender, since all the areas in the city are genderized and also do show an unequal distribution of power in the society. For example, Henry Lefebvre proposes that power survives by producing space, Michel Foucault proposes that power survives by disciplining space, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari suggest that to reproduce social control the state must reproduce spatial control. What Edward Soja claims, is that the space of the human body is perhaps the most critical site to watch the production and reproduction of power. (Soja 2014: 114)

There are certain approaches in sociology of space and one of the most prominent is "The third space approach" by Edward Soja, which shows space in three different dimensions: as "the first space" which means the space, that is measurable and physical; " the second space" is that, which comes from our thinking and ideas; and "the third space", that is lived space or social space, is a social product and this space is created by the society. Gendering of space in daily life and the spatialization of patriarchal power can be seen in the architecture, designs of constructions, in the fabric of urbanism and daily life in the city, stronger emphasis is put on real-and-imagined urban spatiality rather than material spatial forms (Soja 2014: 110).

"Sociology of space has problematized the limits and contradictions of an ideology of space constructed on these lines. Spaces are conceived today as processual, relationally ordered systems" (Low 2006: 120). Genderization of spaces is effected through the organization of perceptions (Low 2006: 121). In perceiving and placing, we create spaces. We produce spaces by drawing symbolic and/or material boundaries in the expectation that others will recognize them through a synthesizing cognitive act. People perceive the placing practices of others and at the same time orient their own placings to what they have perceived. When boundaries are crossed by gazes, by touches, by invasion, by language, etc., or when different spaces do not coexist in harmony, it is social power and domination that take over (Low 2006: 128). Construction of public space influences the production of the insecure woman or the self-assured man. (Low 2006: 129).

My aim was to find out how the participants perceive different places in the city and within the campus of the university, or some micro spaces, like for example a female part of the bus in public transport; which symbolic meanings are given to the particular areas.

Participant A: There is a front side, that front side is for the females and the back side is for the males, but of the part of the bus most of it is dominated by the men, most of it is like covered by the men, it is a very little space there for the females… in some sectors, I wouldn't be walking like this, in F 10 or F 11. I mean this has happened with us and we had been stalked, but in F6 and F7 and F8, especially F6, F7 and F5 I see them as very safe sectors. Because I think a lot of foreigners are moving around as well, it is pretty common, you can find any kind of people here.

Many participants told me, that despite the fact, that the bus is divided into two parts, it doesn't make the ride safe, because "*it is like covered by the men, it is a very little space there for the females*". There is always a threat

of being touched or harassed, any men dominated space are symbolizing insecurity.

Participant E: (talking about female café) I got my privacy there, I can sit there without my hijab.

In this example it works in opposite way, places, which can be occupied by women only provide with feeling of secure and own privacy, this is the place, where boundaries cannot be crossed by men.

Participant G: I usually when I am in Islamabad and I am going somewhere like Centaurus (big shopping center) or you are going really good place, like fancy one, or you are going like liberal area, I don't usually cover my head. But if like some market place, or some such place, I prefer taking scarf or dupatta. Because here people literally they can rape you with their eyes.

The specific meanings which are given to certain places create some kinds of invisible barriers, crossing these barriers can be unsafe and mostly it means entering a male-dominated territory. Some "purely female" places, like some cafes within the university or special "family rooms" in the restaurants or bus stations are only for women and there no one feels fear of being disturbed or harassed. Some places keep the opposite meaning, and mostly these are overcrowded places like bazaars, city markets, bus stations.

Most of the participants consider big shopping mall to be a safe area, and I think that it is important to underline, that a man alone, or man without a family or female accompaniment, is not allowed to go inside any shopping mall, which might give women this feeling of being safe and being in "liberal area".

Crossing the road is one of the spaces which are also perceived as highly insecure, because very often men do stop the car and offer to sit in or give some kind of comments on women's appearance, so called "catcalling".

Basically while going to cross the street or going for shopping to the local bazaar, women are trying to be properly covered and veiled. But at the same time they are always awaiting that some kind of harassment can happen any second, they prescribe this type of behavior to men irrespective of their age or social status, women take into account some particular areas, which are male dominated and men there have more power.

"The associations between gender norms and expectations and the broader concerns about moral uprightness and the maintenance of codes of family honor have practical and ideological consequences for girls' geographies, including their **use of space** (Falah 2005: 21)" The gendering of space in Pakistan is mirrored in spatial and social boundaries which are marked in accordance to gender norms. Girls are rarely encouraged to go beyond the realms of house, except when accompanied by a parent, or an older relative, or a brother. The roads, bazaars, bus stations, and schoolyards are coded as male spaces of social interaction.

Usually women don't go for shopping alone, don't go to the medical check-up unaccompanied. As one of the participants told: *"Even if it is her two years old brother, she would better go to the hospital with him but not alone"*.

The gendered nature of these spaces has important implications for women's access to transportation services and health facilities. A routine visit to the health center or school located in the middle of town requires crossing these invisible boundaries into the male domain. This experience of walking through the bazaar can be an incredibly uncomfortable one for even young girls, and attempts are made to avoid it (Falah 2005: 28)"

Here I wanted to show how one place can have opposite meaning for women and for men, how different will be every day social practices for women and will be shown up in different behavior and dressing patterns.

Mostly places which are connected with male dominance, overcrowded, areas where boundaries can be crossed both physically and symbolic, for example by men's gazes, are provoking feeling of insecure and are tending to be avoided by women, if not avoided, women will be most likely practicing veiling or taking accompaniment.

4.2 Mobility

One of the themes which has emerged during the field work and is connected to the social construct of space, is the theme of mobility, limitations of mobility in particular. It includes mobility within the city, moving from home to the university or to some shopping place, and mobility within the country, from city to city. Most of the time limitations of the mobility are linked to the security issues and are imposed by the family. Additionally, social construct of particular spaces plays crucial role and create genderized areas, where some locations are regarded as extremely unsafe for women and they are more likely to be male dominated.

Here I would like to clear some factors which are connected to women's mobility within the city and country and take a look at the participants' perception of this issue. As I've mentioned before, Islamabad has no system of public transport, so the only way to reach some place is to go by taxi or on foot. Going on foot is considered to be less safe by reason of possible harassment or stalking by someone. The factor of mobility influences everyday life decisions, like for example choosing of the university: university which provides girls with opportunity of living in the dormitory is more preferable, due to unnecessary of moving from one place to another. I was asking the participants about any kind of mobility issues,

how do they manage their travelling and moving around the city, which factors lead to mobility limitation.

Participant A: This is really complicated, I am not allowed to travel alone like outside to any other city, or even with a friend […] And I want to travel as well, you know, I want to explore new cities, I want to see a lot of stuff, but I hate that I'm stopped.

Whenever the participant wants to travel somewhere, she tends to tell her parents, that It is going to be a trip with classfellows and the teacher will be present here, because it gives parents feeling that their daughter will be safe.

Participant C: Travelling and all that, that's the problem. Like I'm free to choose what I wanna study, and where I wanna study, but if It is far, then it becomes a matter […] mobility, it is a concern because of security issues. I want to be able to go so that's easier for me and for them (for parents) as well, they don't have to take me from places all the time, but that's is the problem. Like I can't.

Participant D: They (some girls) are not allowed to go through careem (taxi service), because again it comes about security issues.

There are certain components which comprise the term "security issues" highlighted by all the participants. The main domain of it is a high possibility of harassment of various types, starting from catching men's gazes and being stared at, to be touched in public transport or some crowded place like bazaar or bus station. Some fears accrued less often but still they did, and it is a fear of being kidnapped and raped.

Very often one of the participants and I used to have a short 30-minute walk in the city center from F6 to F7 sector, which included crossing the market, housing-living area, bridge, small green zone alongside the bigger park and reaching F7 "markaz" (center) and main market there. She used to

underline that she had never done this kind of walk before, both alone or with someone, again considering security issues. When we have practiced it for the first time, we used to face some inadequate reactions, some of the cars used to stop and ask if we need to go somewhere with an offer to sit inside the car, after ignoring this kind of attempts, cars usually tended to follow us slowly for some time. These offers made the participant feel very nervous, anxious and insecure. When I've asked her whether she would like to take some action, answer in a rude way or just kindly ask to leave us, she demanded not to interact with this kind of people, because of the possibility of *"they will only react aggressively or even kidnapped us."* Furthermore, she used to criticize taxi drivers, who used to stop their cars and offer their service. *"Oh man, two females walking in Pakistan It is not possible, they probably do need a drive!"*

A crucial moment of our walking was the moment of crossing the bridge, firstly because of the need to cross these roads three times before entering the "bridge area". The bridge seemed to be a too open space, where we were too visible for males, which can provoke additional attention and again some people could give offers to sit inside their car. Once I have asked her to stop at the bridge and take a photo, because I have interpreted this place too simply, as a beautiful bridge with a nice view and appropriate zone for taking a picture. On the contrary, for my friend it seemed as an area with totally opposite meaning: too open and too dangerous. Nevertheless we used to go for this walk repeatedly and within some passing time, we started to stop at the bridge.

It seems to be a perfect example of how the issue of mobility can be deconstructed in the case of a small walk, it becomes obvious and clear some simple things as stopping somewhere and taking a photo sometimes demand some extra courage from women and can be provided with feeling of

insecure. Only within some time I started to realize, that I have seen many people moving freely in both parts at F6 and F7 but have never seen such an amount of people between these sectors of the city, especially women walking, neither together nor alone.

Participant A: You know alone woman, ALONE, a single woman walking on the road, more chances of you getting stalked, getting harassed, and you got the fear of getting kidnapped and raped or something like that.

After few months of walking she used to tell me, that she is going to continue with this walking, that it provides her with feeling of secure and self-confidence; additionally, it helps with getting new experience, but she has to do it secretly from her family, because family members will never allow to do something like this alone.

Participant C: When I had to come to meet you, I preferred to go on the van, to the university first, and then going together, rather than coming alone to the destination.

Here she wanted to say, that there was a possibility of coming direct to a café, where we had to meet, and it would be more practical, but in her perception less safe. So, it was reasonable to come to the university first and meet there, only after went together to the city, avoiding going alone by taxi. This is one of the participants, who is not allowed to travel alone at all, going somewhere by public transport or taxi (with an exception of the university van, which brings students from remote areas to the university).

Always these rules and any kind of restrictions are decided by family members, which is a sigh of infantilization, treating women as if they were children, uncapable of making decision but some girls do not obey and develop specific strategies how to manage moving within the city or from one city to another. Many participants linked it to the necessity of getting life

experience, which gives them some kind of independence and makes them self-confident. Additionally, they do perceive these restrictions as a form of unjustice and overprotectiveness from their families, which keep them from becoming independent.

*Participant A: I think It is injustice. From their perspective It is reasonable, they see it from security point of view, **that's there as well**. But you should let me have my own experience as well […] Now I know where I am bright, and I know how to go into certain area, how to walk in a certain area, how to talk. If you never gonna let me experience, then how would I ever be strong enough to face such a situation myself, because sometimes I still feel scared or nervous but now I've gotten used to it […] if you are never allowed to go outside to a social setting like that and to interact with males and shopkeepers and with taxi drivers and stuff like that you will never know how to deal with such a situation*

In this example the participant is talking about everyday practice, of taking decision and acting according to appropriate way which is mainly settled by the family. Paradox is that she does agree, that some level of unsafety still prevails, but without knowing the social setting and without getting any experience, girls cannot be confident enough. Own experience, ability to explore and become self-confident should prevail over staying at home without risking facing some unpleasant situation.

Participant B: In some families it is compulsory, to go with male member, but in some families, it is allowed to go alone, but only if you are capable enough and you are mature enough.

Participant C: I really haven't tried going alone yet. Maybe if I get this experience and know that it isn't that's bad, or maybe It is even worth, so I don't know.

One of the participants is not allowed to move alone around the city using taxi. She hasn't underlined the importance of getting some specific experience to feel confident, but rather stand the opinion of being safe and follow the rules of the family.

Participant D: allow your daughters to explore the world so they come to know how to secure themselves […] so this is all about knowledge and exploration […]. It is about that girls should know how to live […] besides the study you should know what is happening in this world, what is surrounding you, people surrounding you, and what about city where you are living? It is all about how to tackle the things. Until you do not face the problem, you cannot come to know how to sort it out […] I came alone to the university and I felt a little bit insecure. Then I've started going from university to hostel, from hostel to the university, then I come to know that what type of people are staying here, what type of cars are here, so, the only route I uses is from hostel to the university, so I know the way.

This participant came with criticizing of restrictions oriented on women's mobility, according to her opinion, it is illogical to reduce freedom of moving, because of security issues. It follows with the explanation, that being confident is the most important feature for women, but it is impossible to feel confident without having any experience, and the only way to get this experience is to examine different areas by your own.

Participant F: I think It is unjustice. I think that we as a girl or a woman, I feel that we should have a little less strictness, but a bit concern is fine, experience the things on our own, and learning from my mistakes, I guess that should be allowed at least […] I book a taxi and I go. I am not allowed to go after 6, but I do.

In this case the situation is slightly different from others, the participant is not allowed to travel alone, she was not free to choose the

institution for getting education because of limited mobility, but she do try to move around the city alone despite the fact It is forbidden by her parents.

Participant B: If a girl goes alone outside the house, outside the home, she will be suffering with a lot of problems. Like she'll being harassed, or staring, touching is very normal in Pakistani society. Touching is very normal if you are going by public transport, if you're going to any market, this is quite common […] Yes, this is very normal again, like if you are on the road a driver will pass by and he will be giving you very cheap and sometimes dirty comments on you. And this is quite normal to offer to sit in his car, "where you want to go, I can drop you". This is very normal. Like they'll be asking you. No matter from which group do they belong, no matter from which family background are they. No matter they are having a very lavish kind of car with them, but their habits and mentality is really cheap.

In this statement I found very impressive the perception of going outside and being harassed as something common and normal, moving outside, going by public transport is primarily linked to such troublesome circumstances.

The possibility for women to explore some public spaces within the city will never make the person feels safe and secure, specifically in certain areas, but will tremendously increase the level of women's confidence in public spaces. In some feminist Pakistani groups on Facebook, I've noticed motivational posts for young women to go and explore some new area, go there in a group of girls to have certain support and not to face it alone. Nobody denied the fact, that going outside is still insecure, but women see the opportunity to explore the local areas as essential part of everyday life experience.

Sometimes it functions like a vicious circle, some of the participants are not allowed to travel and move around the city alone, that's why they have no means of getting this experience and further confidence.

I've assumed, that the limitations of mobility tend to keep women more in private sector (or can function like justifying of keeping women away from crossing the boundaries of home) of the household and are not letting them to go outside due to the security concerns and it might be connected to the phenomenon of *purdah*, which means figurative separating of men and women in everydaylife. "In many parts of Pakistan it is practiced through the use of veiling in public or through limited access to public space and limited mobility outside the home" (Falah 2005: 23). Quite often seeing male or groups of males is associated with some threat, possibility of being harassed, stared or stalked. Gaining experience of moving around the city will give more confidence and determinations to women.

4.3 Public transport

All of the participants haven't recognized public transport, which offers routes from one city to another as safe. Main security issues, which lie beneath the respondent's answers about safety, are harassment and staring. Public transport seems to be male dominated, that's why it gives feeling of insecurity, despite the fact, that buses are always divided into male and female part.

"I don't take public transport […] I'm kinda scared of it as well, of going alone. Because I feel there are a lot of males over there and sometimes you know you might get subjected to some kind of harassment, or you might be stalked, or you might be followed"

Interviewer: Have you ever felt insecure in Islamabad or within the university?

*Participant G: I do, when I go to the public transport, or local transport, there are a lot of men staring at you, **even you are covered, your head is covered**, they look at you in a very bad way, they are very backward. I feel there insecure, when I go to the local transport or some local area ".*

In this example is the next question, which arises, is dressing patterns in public places. Despite the fact veiling is not mandatory in cities like Islamabad, furthermore it is very common to see unveiled women, all the participants claimed to prefer being covered in public spaces.

Participant A: What would make me feel good that may sound very prejudice, when I am like fully covered I feel like that is ok, this is something that would attract less attention […] but I just want to be careful here. Because you know I don't want any kind of attention on me especially when I am out at the public space, I just want to look completely ordinary and completely mundane, so it, you know, doesn't catch really much attention, especially if I am alone.

Participant A: […] on days when I am too dressed up for a presentation I feel really nervous because there're a lot of cars that are coming and a lot of people just staring at me, so sometimes I pretend to be on a call, sometimes I pretend to look down or I try to find a narrower part besides the cars that are parked so that I don't catch much attention. Because yeah, that is the nervousness that prevails.

This situation can be an example of how social setting influences the way of behaving. Usually when a young woman is going to cross the road or going by a taxi from her home to the university, she prefers to be covered and as the participant told "no to attract much attention". Here the situation is not typical, because the participant is in area which is labeled as public and unsafe, and she is "too dressed up" for the presentation, so it provokes unwished attention, catcalling etc. Unable to avoid it the participant is trying

to change her behavior to become symbolically 'invisible' by pretending to be on call or trying to hide among the cars parked.

Participant B: I always try to cover my head and even if I wear some clothes through which I think it may be seen through dress, I always wear some kind of inners, my body parts shouldn't be shown. I have to cover myself, because this is only me who can protect me, no one other can.

All the participants admit, that whenever they go to some public space, or overcrowded area, they pick covering themselves, take longer dresses and scarfs.

Participant F: But you are to some extend a bit insecure over here about dressing up the way you want, in some places weird people and harassment…

Veiling and covering, taking bigger scarf, avoiding wearing jeans and tights, work in two ways:

   a. it cares for avoiding needless attention, helps women to feel safe
   b. can be a symbol of self-identity, especially religious identity, as far it is viewed as a traditional way of dressing, culturally acceptable and then more appropriate

Participant G: if you are wearing jeans, and if you are wearing top, they'll feel that they have access and they can harass you easily […] some market place, or some such place, I prefer taking scarf or duppatta. Because here people literally they can rape you with their eyes.

Very often personal boundaries can be crossed by men's staring and gazes and provoke very strong feeling of insecure. All the time women are trying to avoid attracting attention by reducing make up and dressed up in a not provocative way, which means covering their hair, wearing loose clothes, traditional shalwar kameez. Here veiling and hair covering goes in a self-

evident manner with safety. Scarf or duppatta and big chaddar function as a symbolic source of protection.

4.4 Family impact

In previous chapters I was discussing several topics which are also connected to decision making of women in Pakistani society, that outline everyday life. Such aspects as choosing of the university, dressing, mobility and marriage are determined by the family members. I consider it to be one of the crucial factors in women's lives. A major factor shaping young women's life experiences is a strong gender preference for sons rather than daughters. "Attitudes toward women affect their ability to control their lives and, since their status is typically interpreted as lower than boys, they have little influence over decisions about their own education or marriage" (Falah 2005: 28).

The contribution which Marilyn Strathern's work makes is to remind us that gender constructs are linked to concepts of self, personhood and autonomy. Any analysis of such concepts necessarily involves some consideration of choice, strategy, moral worth and social value as they relate to the actions of individual social actors (Moore 1988: 41).

No matter at what age the participant was, family's decision is taken as final and the most important one. Mostly it is related to the questions of getting education (any level), everyday life decisions, having a boyfriend, choosing a spouse, marriage, divorce, job preferences etc.

Participant A: family does influence my lifestyle a lot, it is a **huge** *part of it. It influences my daily life decisions, being a woman like every moment of my day is affected by it. And I am not allowed to go out any time I want to. And guy can go*

anytime and anywhere he wants, but It is not the same for me. And I want to travel as well, you know, I want to explore new cities, I want to see a lot of stuff, but I hate that I'm stopped.

Despite of any kinds of disagreement with the decisions taken by the family, the responded has to follow them, very often she sees them to be very unjustice comparing with the fact, that men to not face these limitations.

Talking about choosing a partner:

*Participant A: It depends on your family **a lot**. Even I at this age and I have not yet graduated, I'm half way in my degree and I've already started to feel pressure from my parents about marriage, about wedding because the thing is my age right now is the ideal to prime age to get married to a guy… They think that It is something important, but at the same time my parents don't think that I should discontinue my education. My mother sees that It is also something necessary, marriage and wedding at this age, something really necessary… I'm not allowed to have a boyfriend, I'm not allowed to meet guy alone like that.*

Topics like this are often connected to the decision between love marriage and arranged marriage. It seemed very practical from family's point of view to go for arrange marriage, because it is the only possible way to give the daughter to the well-known family. Opposite to this none of the women voted for arranged system, rather for love marriage, emphasizing, that it is not possible to marry an unknown person. From informal interviews with my male friends and colleagues I got opinions, which also support arrange marriage system. According to them, they as taking the role of elder brothers, are more socialized and do know *"which guy is better, who is addicted to some bad habits, who has some tendency to violence, who is from descent family…"*. In this issue women are often compared to children, who are not

capable of taken some decision because of the lack of information about the people and environment.

Participant B: my family was quite conservative regard to women freedom, female freedom, like we were not allowed to move outside our homes alone but at the same time we were having freedom to get good education…

Participant D: and It is ancestral tradition to become a doctor in our family, if she is a daughter she has to be a doctor.

Higher education plays a pivotal role in women's lives in Pakistani society, it provides women with a certain possibility of being independent, get some job and be able to support herself. But if the women can get education, and what kind of the university it can be is decided by the family.

Participant E: Every families' views are arranged marriage. But my family, I don't know what my family expects from me.

Participant F: my father is very career oriented about me and he wants that I should as a woman myself be independent. And not under male dominance.

Still the main decisions in the family are taken by fathers, as they are keeping social role of the head of the family.

Participant G: nowadays studies is the main priority for parents, so it wasn't difficult to convince my parents to send me to Islamabad for higher education… My parents are quite liberal in this sense compare to the other parents who don't allow their women finish their education.

By liberal parents the participant means family members, who allows women to get higher education, even in co-educational intuitions, who allows to travel to another city, who is not pushing pressure and not advocating arranged marriages.

Participant G: parents will not allow to have girlfriend boyfriend, they are hiding from their parents.

All the respondents agreed that family decides and creates the life of women, most of the life choices hinge on whether a family is liberal and moving towards education of their daughters or prefer limit women's mobility and keep them in private sphere.

4.5 Role of higher education

Getting education of any level in Pakistan is not accessible for everyone. The educational system is divided into private and public sectors, both of which are not free of charge. Public education is cheaper but considered to be less qualitative, where private sector provides students with better facilities, proper education and thoroughly gives better opportunity for taking university level of education.

The main topic which was discussed with the participants is which role does the higher education play and if is it complicated to get admission at the universities, which factors do influence this.

Participant D: In this sense I'm very fortunate, my parents, as they also educated, they are also doing job, they have never degraded me, they have never asked me that you can't continue your study. They always support me on this.

In this example the participant underlines, that she had luck to be allowed getting education in the university, due to the fact that her parents are also educated. But in further discussions, she agreed that it is not always depended on whether family members are educated or not, in many examples, women are not allowed to get university education, because it is

seemed as destruction of family name and family honor, women, who is attending university can be viewed as 'spoiled'.

Participant A: Some of the parents they only send their girls to universities because if god forbids, if something happens to their husband in the future, or if something happens and she will get divorced, she would at least have some degree and she can support herself and her children possibly, that's what they see at us.

Participant B: To cope with this problem (divorce) usually parents they allow their daughters to study, so if this happens like this, they can stand, they can support themselves

Completed degree gives women a certain amount of power and helps them to be independent in case of unsuccessful marriage. After marriage women move to her husband's and in-law's house, where they become a part of this lineage. Very often, especially before the birth of a child, women have lower status within the family, and can be treated in a bad way; furthermore, divorce and coming back to the parental house is stigmatized. Having completed higher education may provide women with more free choice regarding their own lives.

Interviewer: Why did you got support from your family and another part of the family is not like this?

Participant G: It's because the situation we see around is girls who don't study, they have nothing to do when they get married and her husband don't support, her in-laws are not good, the other thing that girls can support themselves, they can do work, if they don't get education, they'll do nothing, it is very important for girls to study [...] It's like being more independent. We can talk more like on good subjects, we can support girls who are not getting permission, the parents who don't allow their daughters to go and study [...] if I leave studies, then there's nothing for me, because I can't remain suppressed by some in-laws, I can't do that.

In this quotation we were discussing the situation in the particular family, where some female family members are not allowed to get education, because of the "family name". The participant sees the possibility of education as not only useful for herself but also as a source of inspiration and encouraging other women; additionally, underlying education as a tool of protection in case of unsuccessful marriage.

Participant G: there is a lot of inequality in Pakistan, everywhere we have gender inequality, they are very intelligent when it comes to every field but simultaneously they face a lot of inequalities, as well in the society. Firstly, they are not given education right, which is far most right for a girl. They should get education, it is one of the most biggest inequality done to the women, they are thrown into the marriages, they should do compromise with their family, it's the main inequality here.

Getting higher education plays a very important role in shaping women's experience, it functions as a source of getting more power and control on women's lives, furthermore it is a tool of becoming independent and autonomous. It is an example and encouraging for other young women and families, who are afraid to allow their daughters to study.

Conclusion

As stated in the beginning, the main goal of this thesis was to make a depiction of certain domains of everyday life experience of female students in Pakistani society; to show how it is influenced by religion; discuss why women's mobility is often limited and how do the participants perceive these issues; how social and cultural construct of space is created within the city and in what manner it brings different meanings for women and for men, why some places are viewed as particularly unsafe for women.

In further chapter the research is put into a specific region and geographical location of urban area of Islamabad city; the methodology is discussed alongside with the issues of sampling, interviews and possible field limitations during conducting the method. Ethical assurance is given to highlight that all the participants were informed about the purpose of this research and their anonymity is protected as well as collected data are used only in this thesis.

Theoretical part is composed by brief introduction of the most prominent gender theories of Judith Butler, Pierre Bourdieu, Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman alongside with the intersectional perspective as well. In addition there is a short discussion on topic of private and public spheres of women lives. Despite the fact, that this thesis is not dealing with the religious problematic, it is necessary to demonstrate this dimension as influential, shaping women's experience from their birth and implementing specific gender roles. Religious factor is interconnected with lived experience of women in Pakistan.

Moving further towards practical part which is mainly composed by data collected during the field research, first question for discussion is a social and cultural construction of space and the way it is perceived by women. Spaces have different symbolic meaning for women and for men and are culturally and socially constructed. Some places are viewed as not suitable for visiting by females alone, for example, crowded bazaars and streets, places which are full of men, or as one of the participants notices "covered by men" are perceiving as highly insecure. On the contrary, purely female areas, like cafes in the university, give women the feeling of being safe and having some personal space. There are invisible barriers which are created within the city, and which can be crossed not necessarily physically, but also symbolically, for example by men's gazes and staring. The gendered

nature of these spaces has important implications for women's access to transportation services and health facilities.

The next theme which has emerged during the field work and is connected to the social construct of space, is the theme of mobility and its limitations for women in particular. There is a strong tendency prevailing to keep women within the boundaries of their houses, the rules are settled by family members, but it is always up to the particular person whether to obey or not. Violation of rules has its limitations and is determined by the personality of an individual. It also shows how specific norms are reproduced and repeated. The strongest emphasize was given on getting own experience by women and as a result receive self-confidence, in order to be able to cope with any problematic situations which can arise outside the house. The participants used to criticize such kind of restrictions oriented on women's mobility, according to their opinion, it is senseless to reduce freedom of moving, only because of security issues. These restrictions can be connected to the phenomenon of *purdah*, which means figurative separating of men and women in everydaylife.

Using public transport is also connected to the problems of security for young women, some of the participants are not allowed to use it at all. The others who do practice going by taxi or by bus from one city to another, claim to change their dressing patterns towards veiling and covering, taking bigger scarf, avoiding wearing jeans and tights, in order not to attract much attention and feel safe.

Discussing family impact it is imperative to mention the problematic of women infantilization, treating of them as uncapable of taking life decisions regarding education, mobility, partner etc. by themselves. All the respondents claimed that family determines and creates the life of women, most of the life choices depends on whether a family is liberal and moving

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towards education of their daughters or prefer limit women's mobility and keep them in private sphere.

In conclusion, discussing the impact of higher education, it is essential to stress that higher education gives women a possibility of liberation and some sort of autonomy, makes them feel socially safe and capable of being independent.

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