Religion and Development: An Ethnographic Study of Syeda Jamia Hafsa in Islamabad.

M.Phil Thesis

By: Sara Kamal Bajwa

Supervisor: Dr. Saadia Abid

Department of Development Studies

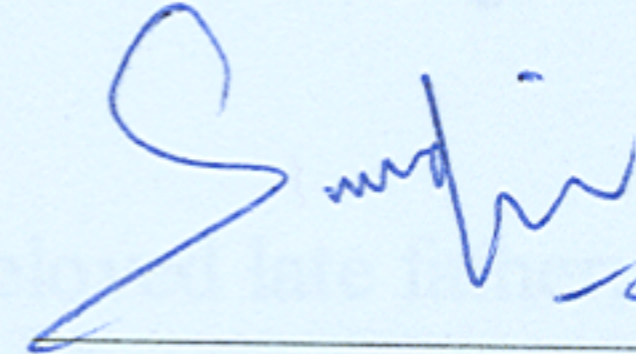**Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE)**
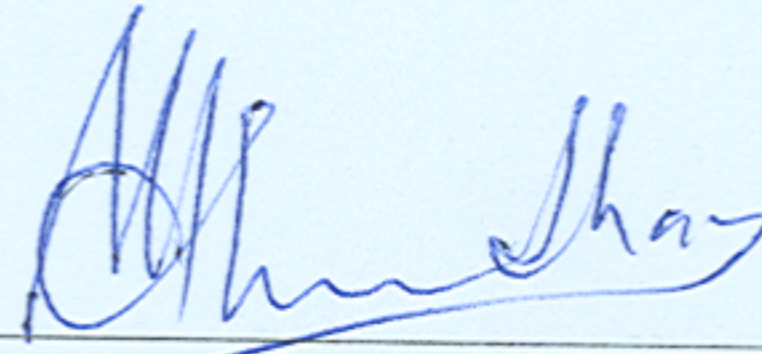
Islamabad-Pakistan

2016

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis entitled: *"Religion and Development: An Ethnographic Stud Syeda Jamia Hafsa in Islamabad"* submitted by Sara Kamal Bajwa is accepted in its present form by Department of Development Studies, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islama as satisfying the requirements for partial fulfillment of the degree in Master of Philosophy Development Studies.

Supervisor:

_____

Dr. Saadia Abid
Assistant Professor
Department of Anthropology
Quaid-i-Azam University
Islamabad

External Examiner:

_____

Dr. Muhammad Azam Chaudhary
Associate Professor
National Institute of Pakistan Studies
Quaid-i-Azam University
Islamabad

Head,
Department of Development Studies:

_____

Dr. Zulfiqar Ali
Assistant Professor
Pakistan Institute of Development Economics
Islamabad

Dedication

To my mother;

for her courage and love of learning,

and

To the memory of my beloved late father;

for his wisdom and passion for adventure,

which have been

my strength, motivation and inspiration.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

Figures

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Educational institutions in Pakistan function under three separate systems— public, private and *madrassas*. The media and the government turned their attention towards the *madrassas* only after the September 11, 2001 attacks, as there was a growing perception that terrorism in the region is fueled by these *madrassas*. Although several studies have been undertaken to analyse the *madrassa* curriculum and its impact on the female students, the role and attitudes of *madrassa* teachers, and the challenges they face, a full account of an ethnographic study especially capturing perceptions and views of the females regarding religious education, empowerment and development remains yet to be explored. This thesis is an in-depth ethnographic study that uses the grounded theory approach as the theoretical framework for analysis. The literature reviewed on the role of religion in development, gender and development approaches and studies conducted on the South Asian and Pakistani context helped in the understanding of the basic concepts, themes and processes related to this study. The data was collected through using research techniques such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, along with participant observation of the researcher, conducted with the females; students, teachers and head of administration at the prominent yet controversial Deobandi female *madrassa*; Syeda Jamia Hafsa, in Islamabad. The data has been taken primarily from a purposive sample of the population. This study seeks to explore whether religious education empowers or disempowers females at this particular *madrassa*. The results indicate that according to the perceptions captured on the field, religious education empowers the females at the *madrassa*; as they become more aware and conscious of their rights and responsibilities, and the roles that they have to play in the society. An educated woman has a role to play in the development process which can be both at; the micro and the macro level. The government does not play any role to support this *madrassa* even though the state has a responsibility towards religious education. Finally, an attempt has been made to develop an indigenous model of interaction for this *madrassa* based on the findings of the research and reflections of the researcher.

Keywords: Deobandi *madrassa*, development, empowerment, gender, Islam, perceptions, and religious education.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"No nation can ever be worthy of its existence that cannot take its women along with the men. No struggle can ever succeed without women participating side by side with men. There are two powers in the world; one is the sword and the other is the pen. There is a great competition and rivalry between the two. There is a third power stronger than both, that of the women."

— Muhammad Ali Jinnah[1]

This chapter sets the research background, gives; the hypothesis of this research, research questions, research objectives, key concepts of the study, conceptual framework, outlines the significance of the thesis, gives the research gap, and lastly, the limitations of the study are described at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Setting the Research Context

The phenomenon of development is not same for all and has different connotations for different people (Chambers, 2004). Today, development is a multifaceted terminology and encompasses all aspects of life. For decades, the top-down approaches and universalisation had been applied to the phenomenon of development and its process. But the failure and unsatisfactory results of such applications have given birth to the local, bottom-up, inclusive, and endogenous concept and methodology of development. There is no one shoe fits all approach. To achieve development in real sense, it is necessary to be aware of and consider the local sight of development. This would help in not only assessing real needs of the local people but it will make things more acceptable for them. Development methodology must incorporate the original ideas of people because they are the major development resource (Korten & Carner, 1984; Preiswerk, 1980).

---

[1] Speech given at Islamia College for women, March 25, 1940.

Madrassa[2] education has been a subject of critique in the learned circles and calls for reform come from scholars, academics and public policy makers. After 2001, at the international level, *madrassas* assumed greater importance because of their alleged involvement in violence and militancy. All of the key policy reports on *madrassas* in Pakistan since September 11, while acknowledging that only a minute fraction of *madrassas* promote militancy, recommend reforming the entire *madrassa* system and argue that even ordinary *madrassas* produce indoctrinated clergymen (International Crisis Group (ICG), 2002). There has been an abundance of papers and reports on *madrassas* produced by international think tanks. With the exception of a few studies (World Bank, 2005) all the reports present a substantially negative image of the *madrassa* system as a whole. They argue that *madrassa* education should be reformed and replaced by modern education. They make strong claims about the quality of education at the *madrassa*, the socio-economic relevance of this education, the operation, the accountability mechanism, and the basis of authority of the imam and of the *madrassa*, but the data gathering method upon which the claims are based is very limited. These studies neither draw upon extensive surveys nor provide thorough ethnographies; they rely instead on a few selective interviews that hardly justify the strength of the claims made. They argue that the *imam's* authority is not absolute or uncontested; rather, the community bases its support for a *madrassa* on many rational calculations about his efficiency and personal commitment. The need is thus for a thorough study of the *madrassa* system before embarking on any reform (Bano, 2007).

To study and analyse the *madrassa*, its objectives and purpose would require a basic understanding of the Islamic philosophy of education as a relationship between a teacher and student as reflected in the Quran: "*God is the ultimate knower*" (*Surah Baqara, ayat* 32).

Interpreting the Quran and the sayings of Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) used to be the sole authority of the religious scholars who were also the products of *madrassas*. Interpretation then was implemented as the law (*shariah*) and was followed and practiced by the judiciary, which was also a product of *madrassas* at the time. The important task of interpreting Quranic

---

[2] There are various ways in which *madrassa* is written in the literature, for example, *madrasa*, *madrassa*, *madrassah*, etc. I have picked up one particular spelling, i.e. *madrassa* for this research.

injunctions as law consistently around the world and overseeing day- to-day implementation has been the central activity of the *ulema* or religious scholars. Scholars and teachers trained through the *madrassa* mold individual lives and societies, educating and training future scholars and leaders (Bell, 2007).

Very little research exists on the female *madrassas* in Pakistan; the socio-economic background of the female students, their thought processes, and the curriculum taught, their perceptions and views about education, empowerment, development and how religion helps in forming these perceptions. This research seeks to get an in-depth ethnographic account of a female Deobandi *madrassa* in Islamabad, namely Syeda Jamia Hafsa (SJH), which aims to show that the *madrassa* system has its own hierarchy of knowledge, a well-developed criteria for measuring knowledge, and its own socio-economic relevance. This study aims to explore their environment, culture, curriculum taught and methods of teaching, hence, their educational system, their beliefs, experiences and perceptions about education, empowerment and development of the females at the *madrassa* and the role that religious education plays in developing their mindsets. It also seeks to figure out an indigenous model of interaction based on these insights and field observations.

1.2 Hypothesis

One shoe fits all approaches are not appropriate for all the development processes as 'development' has different meanings for each person, community, nation and culture. Each locale has its own distinct needs and priorities; therefore, its model of development should be in accordance with these needs and priorities.

Since education especially religious education is an important component for a developing country like Pakistan, which can either aid or hinder empowerment of women, it matters what women are being taught about themselves at the *madrassa*, their relationships and their roles in the society.

The hypothesis is that "women at the *madrassa* are disempowered by their religion and their orientation towards religious knowledge."

The broad area of my research is to explore the socio-economic status of the females at the *madrassa* who seek religious education and their perception about their role in the process of development. The aim is to find out whether these women at the *madrassa* are disempowered by their religion and their orientation towards religious knowledge. The purpose is to see how *madrassa* education which is primarily religious influences the perception of development and the role of women with reference to the same. Religion includes beliefs within a community and these beliefs along with power dictate the level of empowerment; regarding decision making, preferences for work, generation of resources, education, etc. Income generation leads to power. Empowerment of a woman is generally achieved through raising the general education of the woman. Empowerment is women with power and a voice.

1.3 Research Questions

I have operationalised my research problem into two questions:

- What is the perception about education, empowerment, and development of the female students, teachers and administration at the *madrassa*?
- What is the role of religion in their perception of education, empowerment, and development of the female students, teachers and administration at the *madrassa*? (Does religion aid or hinder them?)

1.4 Research Objectives

The overall objectives of this research study are as under:

- To explore the allocated gender roles within the *madrassa*. For this, data and perceptions of the females were captured and probed regarding their roles and responsibilities at the home, *madrassa* and the society. Some of the questions asked included their future plans, whether an empowered woman made a contribution towards development?, etc.

- To explore the causal relationship between religion and development (participation in or contributions to wider society), through a gendered lens. The objectives were achieved by asking questions such as; what is your perception about the concept of development?, where does it come from?, who brings it?, does an educated female contribute towards development?, etc. (All questions were translated in the Urdu language for the respondents).

- To develop an indigenous model of interaction between religious education, gender and development. The concepts and categories established from the data analysis were linked together for the construction of a working model.

1.5 Key Concepts used in the Study

Some key concepts or definitions used in this study are:

Perception

Generally, perception is an awareness, comprehension, or understanding of something. According to Pomerantz, (2003), perception is the process through which humans try to reach out an understanding of their surroundings via sensory information. This study interprets the perceptions and views of the females at the *madrassa* regarding education, empowerment and development, and how religious education helps in forming these perceptions.

Madrassa

The word *madrassa* is an Arabic word meaning school or place of learning (Ali, 2009). In the Middle East and most Arabic-speaking countries, the word *madrassa* is used for any school , not specifically for a religious school, whereas in the South Asian context *madrassas* offer religious education that includes rote learning of the Quran, the Arabic language, *Hadith* (sayings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H), and teachings of *shariah* (Riaz, 2008). A *maktab* is a smaller *madrassa* dedicated to rote learning and memorisation of the Quran (Fair, 2008). *Madrassa* is one of the oldest institutions of learning in the Islamic world (Bano, 2013).

Shariah

Shariah is the set of rules (Islamic law) derived from both the Quran and traditions (sayings) of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) generally known as *Sunnah* (Rehman, 2009). Interpreting the Quran and the *Sunnah* as the law has been the central activity of the *ulemas* or religious scholars trained through the *madrassas*, who in turn mold individual lives and societies, educating future scholars at SJH.

Ulema/ Mualima

Ulema (singular *alim*, scholar; also spelt *ulama*) are Muslim scholars engaged in the interpretation of Quranic injunctions. *Ulema* are also active in several fields of Islamic studies and are the arbiters of *Shariah*, Islamic law (Zaman, 2002). A female religious scholar is termed *mualima*, who draws her authority mainly through demonstrating knowledge of the religious texts as is also evident at the *madrassa* under study.

Religion

Religion is *"man's relationship to that which is sacred or holy. Sacred is conceived of in a variety of ways and forms; worship, right, belief and participation in religious institution. The most universal manifestation of religion is worship which includes prayers, sacrifice, etc. Religion also dictates man's conduct providing him with a code of existence. So, religion is basically a belief system comprising of myths that explain the social as well as religious order of rituals through which members of a community carry out their beliefs"* (Naz, 1997). The word religion is sometimes used interchangeably with faith, belief system or a set of duties; however, in the words of Émile Durkheim, religion differs from private belief in that it is *"something eminently social"* (Durkheim, 1915, p.10).

Islam attempts to not only define human's relationship with *Allah*, who is the sole creator of this universe, but in the context of my research, religion is also a way of life for the females at the *madrassa*, it is an all encompassing force that pervades every aspect of their life. In other words, religion is an ever present element of the social world made manifest in different ways, through their education, beliefs, attitudes, values, practices, behaviours, relationships, etc.

6

Spiritual Capital

Spiritual capital has been broadly defined as *"The effects of spiritual and religious practices, beliefs, networks and institutions that have a measurable impact on individuals, communities and societies"* (Metanexus Institute, 2006).

Belief

Belief can be defined as follows:

- *"Thoughts that are based on the uncritical acceptance of the inherent truth or correctness of the cognitive categories of one's culture"* (Hunter and Whitten, 1976).

- *"Belief is a mental attitude of acceptance towards a proposition."* (Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol.1, p. 451).

The beliefs of the females at the *madrassa* are derived from religion, particularly religious education. The females interpret their own circumstances according to their knowledge and information and make decisions on how to act and interact within the wider society based on these religious teachings that contain precepts on how to live a righteous life, views about the life in this world versus the hereafter, etc.

Empowerment

Empowerment is a multidimensional concept. It refers to increasing the economic, political, social, educational, gender, consciousness or spiritual strength of individuals and communities. It has become a ubiquitous goal for development programmes at all levels, with the concept often misinterpreted or diluted because of a change in its context, culture and circumstances (Visvanathan et al., 2011).

Empowerment is defined in the literature as follows:

- *"Empowerment involves people in assuming control or mastery over their lives"* (Rappaport, 1987).

- *"Empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes"* (World Bank, 1993).

According to Rowland (1998), empowerment is defined as *"women increasing their ability to act, to perceive themselves as capable, to hold opinions, to use time effectively, to control resources, to interact with others, to initiate activities, to respond to events."*

United Nations Population Information Network (UNPIN) has defined women's empowerment based on five components, which are as follows:

- women's sense of self worth,
- their right to have access to opportunities and resources,
- their right to have the power to control their own lives both within and outside the home,
- their right to have and to determine choices,
- their ability to influence the direction of social changes to create a better social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

Naila Kabeer (1999), defines empowerment as "*the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.*"

Women's empowerment refers to women's capacity to increase self reliance, their right to determine choices, and their ability to influence the direction of change by gaining control over material and non-material resources (Moser, 1989).

According to Friedmann (1992), women's empowerment is based on:

- ***Economic power*** means access to income, assets, food, markets and decision making power in economic activities.

- *Social power* means access to certain bases of individual production such as financial resources, information, knowledge, skills, and participation in social organisations.
- *Political power* means the access of individual household members to the process by which decisions particularly those that affect their own future are made.
- *Psychological power* means the individuals sense of power, which is demonstrated in self-confident behaviour and self esteem.

According to Malhotra and Schuler (2005), the five dimensions and indicators of women's empowerment in household, community and broader arena are expressed as:

1. **Economic empowerment** includes women's control, access to credit, contribution to family support and increased household ownership of properties and assets.
2. **Social and cultural empowerment** includes freedom of movement, lack of discrimination against daughters, commitment to educating daughters, participation in domestic decision making, control over sexual relations, ability to make childbearing decisions, using contraception, control over spouse selection and marriage timing and freedom from violence (decision making processes).
3. **Legal empowerment** includes the knowledge of legal rights and mechanisms and familial support for exercising rights.
4. **Political empowerment** includes the knowledge of political system and means of access to it, familial support in political engagement and ability to exercise right to vote.
5. **Psychological empowerment** includes womens increased self-esteem, self-efficacy and psychological well-being (raising consciousness).

In the context of the *madrassa* under study, the role of religion or religious education is explored in the lives of the females; whether their religious education empowers them, whether their

empowerment contributes towards development of the society, etc. Hence, the allocated gender roles have been explored within the *madrassa*.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is shown in figure 1 on the next page:

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for the Study

Religion/Religious Education

- Rights
- Beliefs
- Participation in religious institution
- Spiritual capital

Education

- Worldly vs. religious
- Girls vs. boys
- Skills/trainings

Gender through Empowerment
- Roles and responsibilities
- Perceptions about work
- Decision making
- Confidence/self-esteem
- Future directions/goals
- Rights e.g. vote/marriage, Divorce, etc.

Development

- Multi-dimensional (human, economic, socio-cultural, psychological, etc.)
- Micro to Macro

Figure 1 on the previous page shows how religion, particularly religious education influences the perceptions of education, empowerment and development of the females at the *madrassa*. The conceptual framework also depicts that perception is an outcome of multiple factors. The conceptual framework has been kept broad in view of the grounded theory approach (discussed in detail in chapter 3, section 3.5).

1.7 Time Frame of the Study

The time frame for this research has been over two years, starting from the literature review in February 2014 till the submission of the final draft of this thesis in August 2016.

1.8 Significance of the Study

Religion[3] has a great significance in people's lives, particularly, in South Asia where it is an inseparable part of their daily life. Some people have strong faith in religion and derive inner peace and tranquility. It is often a spiritual need and a source of discovering inspiration for some people. At times, some people also who give a lot of value to religious ideology get exploited by it. The primary reason is the lack of their interest in self study and lack of personal exploration about religion. It results on a form of extra dependency on religious scholars that leads them to follow preaching/interpretations of religion according to their lens. It narrows down or limits their own vision about beliefs.

Misinterpretations of religious orders are common in every religion. As ideologies are often used to control people, similarly, misinterpretations of religion are used as a tool to exercise power over them. Power dynamics plays an important role here. In a patriarchal society such as the Pakistani society, generally women are considered secondary to men and are more vulnerable to be targeted by such andocentric misinterpretations.

Madrassas in the Pakistani society play a vital role and their importance cannot be simply ignored in state policy matters. Therefore, this study is an effort to contribute to the existing

---

[3] Religion is not a monolithic term. It is practiced in multiple ways. Even is Islam, there is no singular Islam, there are many sects. This thesis focuses on Deobandi Islam in particular.

research already conducted on *madrassas* before. This study has both theoretical and practical utility as it not only contributes to the existing literature on *madrassas* as it gives an ethnographic account of SJH, it also gives a new framework to development studies in an anthropological context as it brings in the native perspective.

Such studies can also be repeated and replicated for other *madrassas*[4], across other schools of thought and can serve as a baseline for studies on a larger (national) scale not only to gauge how religion can aid or hinder development efforts but also to show interaction between religious education, empowerment and development through a gendered lens. Further studies can also identify and build benchmarks for policy makers; and also put forward some considerations on this basis specifically so that the state of development can be improved at the *madrassa*.

1.9 Research Gap

With a focus on gender, the researcher will try to fill an obvious gap in the burgeoning literature on religion and development. A new ethnographic research will be combined with an innovative interdisciplinary approach to the study of how religion and development inter-relate. The researcher feels that it is important to mainstream not only gender analysis but also considerations of religion within contemporary development theory and practice. The research is important and corresponds with recent shifts in both academic research and public policy that recognises the crucial roles that religion plays in developing countries. For many decades, religion and development has been an ignored topic; and specially, the gender implications of the religion-development nexus have been given less attention and it is this aspect that the researcher will try to bring to the fore[5].

1.10 Limitations of the Study

No research can claim to be completely representative and without any limitations which are highlighted below:

---

[4] since this research cannot be taken as a representative research, hence more sample/data needs to be collected using the same research framework.

[5] The lack of literature on the topic is discussed in chapter 2 (Review of Literature) in detail.

- I have covered only one school of thought. The study cannot be generalised across other schools of thought. This study has been confined to the views of the females of the particular *madrassa* under study. Neither can this research be generalised for the entire population of the female *madrassas* across the country as religious beliefs vary from individual to individual.

- The official website of *Syeda Jamia Hafsa* was not accessible.

- The respondents were at times hesitant to share their personal information and even their views on religious beliefs or were unwilling or uncomfortable to talk about certain issues/topics such as sources of funding, etc. they had to be convinced that the information would be kept confidential.

- Due to the length of the study, the respondents accessible in the preliminary testing were not available or willing to participate in the final stages of the research.

- Limited human, financial, and time resources restricted the size and depth of the sample. As the sample taken for this study is in no way representative of the population of SJH.

- Lack of access to non-published government data, as I did not visit any government office for the purpose of this study or to collect statistics on *madrassas* in particular.

- It was not possible to include the male teachers at SJH, in this study, due to religious and cultural constraints.

- My access to the respondents was limited and controlled as the principal cum administrator selected the respondents for the interviews. So the answers to the questions may be biased.

- I was informed by one of the teachers during my fieldwork that some of the students that I had interviewed for my research went home and told their parents about the interviews. The parents got suspicious as to why these interviews were being conducted and called up the principal expressing their grave concerns. They told her since she is the caretaker of these children at the *madrassa*, she should be very careful in granting access to outsiders. I was informed that these parents may be were suspecting me of being an intelligence agent or someone from the government or an NGO trying to collect information. So, the interviews had to be stopped altogether. Since teachers were not willing to talk or discuss anything for some time.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

This chapter elaborates the reader to some of the literature on development, the role of religion in development, gender and development, gender and Islam, gender with regards to social construction of women's role, gender and empowerment, some theories and frameworks on empowerment, empowerment and power. Lastly, within this chapter, the relevant literature is reviewed regarding the Pakistani context and a brief is given on the studies previously conducted on *madrassas* by scholars and authors such as Barbara Metcalf (1990, 1982), Masooda Bano (2012, 2007), Mohammad Qasim Zaman (2002), Saleem H. Ali (2009), Tariq Rahman (2005), Yoginder Sikand (2006, 2001), Peter Singer (2001) and Christine Fair (2008). Views from reports such as the World Bank (2005) and the International Crisis Group (2002) have also been included to give the review of literature an international perspective. The review of the literature has helped in the understanding and clarification of the basic concepts, themes and processes related to this study and also helped to refine the research questions and the research design.

2.1 Development

Development is a contested term both in its meaning and in its means of achievement. Development is a multi-dimensional word and its assessment or measure requires a range of indicators, as it tends to include both qualitative and quantitative features (Todaro and Smith, 2009). According to Clarke (2013), the main goal of development is to enhance freedom, social equity, self-determination and human dignity. Development must be participatory, transparent, accountability mechanisms must be in place and communities must take ownership of their development goals, if development outcomes are to be sustainable. They must consider the importance of gender and diversity as well.

The concept of development is often used interchangeably with economic growth. Adefila (2008) argues that the concepts are equally different in the sense that as economic growth is about a considerable raise in the gross national product (GNP) or the income per capita, development embraces not just the quantitative increase in the national output but also a qualitative progress in the condition of well-being (welfare) of the individuals as contributors to

the national growth and development. According to the World Bank[1], development means growth plus change. Furthermore, where there is development, the economy will observe a sharp decline in unemployment, dismal poverty and disparities. In contemporary economics, it has been mentioned that development involves social justice, equity and impartiality in the allocation of necessary goods and services in the society (Adelment, 1995).

Since the conception of the term "development", its meaning and context is changing. Initially, it was used synonymously for words like growth, change, progress, betterment, improvement, etc. With the passage of time, the implication and scope of the term "development" has expanded and added other features as well like human development, equity, empowerment, participation, sustainability, etc. along with growth. Today, development includes many dimensions; development is equity and equality for all, control of corruption, welfare of the masses; unity and a progressive state.

Amartya Sen's theory is based on ideas of justice and the importance of human capital in development. His framework is directly concerned with human capability and freedom in maximising people's capabilities. By maximising people's capabilities- their freedom to *"lead the kind of lives they value and have reason to value."* The capability approach broadens the human development perspective (Robeyns, 2006, pg.78). Sen's hypotheses were that skills vary from individual to individual; people picked adaptive choices and existence of choices is more important than whether they are opted or not. He proposed that evaluations should be what people can do best rather than how they can consume income (Sen, 1999a; Sen & Nussbaum, 1993). This approach takes into account the individualistic wellbeing and diverse human attributes. A major shortcoming of this approach is that there is no defined list of capabilities (Nussbaum, 2001, 1987).

Further, Sen (1999b), in his well known book, "Development as Freedom", envisions the main purpose of development is to spread freedom. He argues that development is mutually a means and an end in itself and that there are five types of freedoms: economic facilities; social

---

[1] See http://www.worldbank.org/
http://www.worldbank.org/depweb/english/beyond/beyondco/beg_01.pdf

opportunities; political freedom; transparency and security which are all different but inter-connected. To acquire development, it is important to provide such freedoms to the citizens so they can freely live and enhance their welfare and wellbeing. He emphasised the expansion of choices and prospects for the common person along with increasing human agency. He argues that removal of deprivations is essential for development. Also, equally important for enhancing development is democracy and propagation of human rights. Lewin (2000) put forward that adequate diet, freedom from ailment, food security and basic education are fundamental human wants that need to be taken care of to improve the material conditions of life.

According to Escobar, the dilemma with development is that it is exogenous and the need is to bring in endogenous models of development (1995, 1997, 2000). According to World Bank (1996), social change does not occur through outside experts in development practice. Communal input of internal stakeholders during participatory planning and implementation stages of an intervention bring about the much required social change. Dr. Abdul Hameed Khan, the pioneer of community development in Pakistan, believed that development is the result of exploiting an individual's potential. He envisioned community development to be an epicentre of development and stressed on the formation of self-help groups, supplying the technical and economic resources and guidance to the masses (Khan, & Khan, 1996).

Bryant and White (1982) emphasised the fact that development means to enhance people's capabilities so that they can improve their future. They argue that the development process should be; to empower people, to increase their capacity, the process of development should be long term and the benefits of development must reach the underprivileged segments of the society. According to Stiglitz (1998, 2002), development centres around openness, transformation, participation, voice, transparency and comprehensiveness.

Hence, development should improve the lives of people through granting them access to basic amenities and services. Every community or area has different needs for development to occur, and for bringing in development interventions, it is important to keep in mind the local culture of that particular area. Development interventions will be sustainable when the policies will be

culturally sensistive and appropriate. Realising the human potential and respecting the values and beliefs of a community, such as hardwork, honesty, integrity, etc. is a pre-requisite for development as development should remain within the religious orders and should not conflict with the religion of the community. When development considers indigenous values it incurs lower social costs and imposes less cultural destruction and human suffering then when it copies outside models. The reason for this is because, values that are indigenously rooted are the medium that people drive meaning in their lives, giving them a sense of identity and cultural integrity even in the centre of change (Goulet, 1980, p.485).

"Bottom- up" approaches or simply, "putting people first" is the basic requirement for any development intervention to be successful along with; a critical analysis, mutual learning and acceptance by the local people or indigenous cultures.

Table 2.1 Shows Various Theories and Policies of Development over Different Eras:

Eras	Theories and Policies of Development
1950s	Modernisation (Apter, 1987; Parsons & Jones, 1960; Rostow, 1960, 1990)
1960s	Dependency (Amin & Pearce, 1974, 1976; Amin & Wolfers, 1990; Apter, 1987)
1970s	Participatory Development (Chambers, 1992, 1994)
1980s	Neoliberal (Harvey, 2005; Nye Jr., 1988)
1989	The Washington Consensus (Williamson, 2000, 2009) Post Washington Consensus (Ahrens, 2000; Hayami, 2003; Stiglitz, 1999)
1990s	Human Needs and Capability Approach (Sen, 1999; Ul Haq, 1996)
Mid 1990s	Institutionalism (Brousseau & Glachant, 2008; North, 1990, 1991)
2000s	Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)

(Source: various literature cited above)

For many years, religion was effectively ignored by development practitioners and academics. But in recent years, this has been questioned. Failures of the top down approaches to development along with the disappointing outcomes of mainstream development aid, prompted a

re-conceptualisation of development discourses and practices. It was believed that the religious and the spiritual dimension of human existence needed to be given its due place in the development discourse and the need was to promote a spiritual perspective on the advancement of civilisation. It was not that the shortcomings of development were attributed to the failure of materialism and this lead to religion. Religion includes spirituality, to convey the idea that the advancement of development thought and practice required not only reflection on individual behaviour, but also it includes the structures of the society, its systems and processes, including its knowledge systems that need to be considered. Today, religion is increasingly seen as an important, though ambiguous, factor in development aid. This has created a need for practical and academic explorations of the relations between religion and development.

2.2 Role of Religion in Development

The role of religion in development is debatable as on one hand, Max Weber claimed that it was the Protestant ethic that promoted the growth of Capitalism. While on the other hand, Islam is often seen in the West as part of the reason for the backwardness of the Middle East. Weber's contention may have been that it depends upon the religion (Goody, 2003). As religions are essentially ubiquitous across human societies, it is thus natural to speculate that they may affect important economic outcomes, such as economic growth, as many have done dating at the very least to Max Weber's (1905) celebrated work. While this possibility is certainly appealing, assessing its prevalence and importance is a rather complicated task, both conceptually and empirically, not the least because religions are multifaceted social phenomena whose different aspects could most likely have different effects.

"One essential aspect that is common to all forms of religion is that they prescribe rules of behaviour, or practices that constrain followers. In other words, religious practices are a kind of informal institution (North, 1990)*, imposing constraints that structure economic, political and social interactions. As such, they can obviously affect economic growth. First, religious practices impose an immediate trade-off, as they require time and resources that are then unavailable for production. Going to temples or to pilgrimages, taking time to pray or to meditate or to study sacred books, spending money on religious rituals, not working on religious days of rest: these*

will all take away from what is devoted to (materially) productive work. Second, they could also directly affect productivity, for instance by limiting social interactions with non-believers or by imposing dietary restrictions. Third, they may shape beliefs and values that determine economic decisions such as labour supply, occupational choice, or savings behaviour" (David, 2013).

Given this ability of religion to influence it makes sense only to include it in debates and discourses on development. As already mentioned above, religion has long been excluded from mainstream development discussions, despite its pervasiveness and importance. It is now time that its impact is understood in international development. Religion should not be seen as something apart from the development processes but rather it should be seen as a part of these processes. Religion has a value and a central role to play in the culture of communities around the world and the need is to understand the nexus between religion and development. Understanding the place of religion in the personal and social lives of the people or communities may enhance development outcomes substantially. Religious belief cannot be ignored by those seeking to achieve material improvement in the living standards of people.

Religious belief is a common human characteristic as eighty percent of the people of the world profess religious faith (Clarke, 2013). As religious identity is vital to a community's culture and lived experience, excluding religious consideration will limit successful development interventions. Religion, religious beliefs and practices, have an important role to play in our daily lives, as religion is not just concerned with one's relationship to the divine but also it has relevance for the wider society as well. Belief systems vary greatly and are a reason for existence. Therefore, in order to enhance efforts to improve the lives of the people, it is necessary to conflate religion and development.

The World Bank conducted a survey on the poor people around the world, in which a common view held was that overcoming poverty required faith and prayer. According to the findings of the survey, well-being was closely associated with religious observance and spirituality:

'Tranquility and peacefulness are important to poor people, even when poverty does not decrease. Maintaining social traditions, hospitality, reciprocity, rituals, and festivals is central to poor people's self-definitions as humans'

(Narayan et al., 2000, p. 267).

Religious literacy is a key task of those seeking to enhance the understanding between religion and development as are religious values, morals, institutions and organisations. According to Clarke (2013), the development specialists might be non-believers or disbelievers about the role of religion, their intended recipients are not, especially, in a society such as Pakistan's. The exclusion of religion and spirituality from consideration severely constraints efforts and compromises the ability to improve the lives of the poor. Religious identity is integral to a community's culture and the exclusion of religious consideration will limit or restrict successful development interventions and the people within any community will not be open to new schemes.

It is often taken for granted that religion plays an important role in the formation and maintenance of individual and public moral and ethical values. It is also assumed that such values or morality may facilitate development goals in governance, gender relations, conflict resolution, justice, etc. Marquette (2010) argues that based on these assumptions; there is a greater need to use religion in the fight against corruption and other injustices, since religious people are more concerned with ethics than the non-religious. Yet, these assumptions and the positive relationship between morality and religion are problematic; countries with highest levels of religiosity, also often score high in terms of corruption. So, this relationship is fluid and discursive.

Authentic engagement with religion requires an understanding of both the limiting power of religion to control human behaviour that is detrimental to the individual as well as to the society, but also it's potential to influence more positive responses to development issues such as poverty, injustices, etc. So, it is impossible to exclude religion from development as religions are after all, human activities:

"It is the very ordinariness and unexceptional regularity of (religious) life ways that make them powerful or empowering" (Harvey, 2000, p.3).

Modern theories of development have largely overlooked the fact that spiritual capital can become a useful term and concept for economic development. In fact, the often used terms:
"human capital and social capital themselves are based to a large extent on the existence of trust, good faith, a sense of purpose, stewardship and other moral characteristics which cannot persist in the absence of the solidarity, piety and hope that come from religious and spiritual sentiments. When this is lost, societies and economies often decline rather than grow. When this abounds, societies and economies prosper" (Jeffry Jacob, Osang, 2010, p.5).

2.3 Gender and Development Approaches

This section introduces the reader to; women in development (WID), gender and development (GAD), various literature focusing on the intersection between gender, religion and development, gender and Islam, and gender with regards to social construction of women's role.

2.3.1 Women in Development

Gender initially, "women in development" (WID) was found in the 1970s and 1980s to be core in implementing better development policies and interventions. WID approaches aimed at bringing women into the development process by focusing on increased educational and economic activities. But little attention was given to the cultural or religious impediments to achieve this. It was assumed that women's situation would improve if they were given similar opportunities to men. The critique on WID was the failure to account for the underlying structural reasons for gender inequality and it was assumed that in order to end gender discrimination, women's opportunities (e.g. employment or education) should be increased (Hedman et al., 1996; Jackson and Pearson, 1998; Moser, 1993; Pearson, 2000; Rathgeber, 1990). Western and gender bias inherent within the development project itself was neither argued nor challenged.

2.3.2 Gender and Development

By the 1980s, there was a shift in focus to thinking about "Gender and Development" (GAD)[2]. According to Seguino (2011), despite the clear nexus between religious values and women's status, "Gender and Development" (GAD) had not taken the impact of religious values, beliefs and organisations upon gender relations seriously. Religion is often cited as a barrier to women's access to employment, education or health care, but this growing interaction is less often the research focus. This neglectful attitude towards religion in development has begun to recede since the past decade or so. According to Thomas (2005), particularly since 9/11, the importance of religion has resurfaced globally, underscoring the need for development to consider religion as a significant factor. Donors are directly engaging with faith-based organisations (FBOs) and religious leaders as a result of which, religious issues are receiving more deliberation in development. Additionally, a wider range of GAD-related programmes are now directly engaging with religion by directly forming partnerships with organisations that pursue women's rights within a religious framework (Bradley, 2006, 2010; Tadros, 2010, 2011).

The critique on GAD approaches is that they fail to account for the different ways that religion, shapes women's oppression as well as the strategies they employ to deal with it (Ahmed, 1999).

Literature has widely explored the extent to which the gender traditions teach that men and women are different and have different human rights, particularly with respect to Islam (Afary, 1997; Helie, 2004; Jamal 2005; Rawi, 2004; Soares, 2006). These differences between men and women are often reduced to women's reproductive role. This results in understanding the different roles and responsibilities between both genders. This leads us to our next topic; intersection between gender, religion and development.

2.3.3 Intersection between Gender, Religion and Development

Gender is a cross-cutting development issue affecting all aspects of the planning and implementing stage of the development interventions at both the micro and the macro levels. Religion shapes social attitudes about gender that can contribute towards women's

---

[2] The GAD approach insists that women cannot be viewed in isolation; rather, it emphasises a focus on gender relations when designing measures to help women in the development process (Moser, 1993, p.3).

subordination. The fact that how men and women relate within the society and how this influences development can no longer be ignored. Also it is important to stress on issues of gender equity, rights of women in development, the access of girls to education, etc. as religion reinforces or legitimises gender roles. One of the most prominent criticisms of all religions concerns how men and women are viewed and the expectations that are placed upon each in their private and social lives (Clarke, 2013). According to Tomalin (2013), while religion has often subordinated the role and position of women to men, and often confines them to their domestic sphere, however, it does contain a great probability to reverse this outcome or result and this potential is what requires a greater engagement between development and religion. Religion like Islam mostly provides very clear guidelines drawn from its sacred texts and social teachings about the gender roles, positions held within the society by each and various other issues that arise from it but it also caters to development issues such as poverty and inequality that can be affected through Islamic tenets of charity, etc.

According to various literatures (Aquino, 1993; Bradley, 2006; Dube and Kanyoro, 2004; Foley, 2004; Pena, 1995, 2007; Phiri and Nadar, 2006; Sleboda, 2001) which draw attention to; the negative impacts of religion that often support patriarchal values that have the potential to oppress women and limit their chances in life, as well as the potential of religion to empower women. Ester Boserup in her book *"Women's Role in Economic Development"* (1970) emphasises the centrality of women to the development process. In most societies, women have subordinate position and unless this was addressed, poverty was not likely to be eradicated. So, male bias is inherent both within religions and the development process. This leads us to our next topic; gender and Islam.

2.3.4 Gender and Islam

Human rights of women in religion have been explored mostly with respect to Islamic contexts, as there have been concerns with the increasing Islamisation in some Muslim areas. Kalu (2003), discusses cases that have been publicised, where women have been sentenced to death by stoning, if found guilty of adultery. This is an Islamic response to adultery. Other studies have focused on the links between Islam and domestic violence, as well as the relationship between

Islam and forced marriage (Ali, 2008; Fernandez, 2009; Sookhdeo, 2008). Ahmed (1999), explores the consequences for women due to an increase in Islamic extremism that has lead to an increase in certain practices, such as a rise in early marriages, polygamy, an increased obligation to veil, a desire for larger families, etc. in Somalia, since the 1990s. The author attributes the reason for this to lack of religious education amongst the public, meaning they are unable to oppose the use of Islamic texts to oppress women.

According to Tadros (2011, pg. 9), regarding the recent interest to religion and development, there is also a concern that there is often an assumption that *"a feminist re-engagement with religious texts within a religious framework is a panacea for altering gender bias in laws, policies and practices."* Another study by Bartelink and Buitelaar (2006) evaluates a project run in Yemen, by the Dutch government to understand and prove the assumption that Islam could empower women and how Muslim women's experiences could be incorporated into policy.

According to Tomalin (2013), inadequate research has been carried out to date on the gender-related implications of current development policies and practical initiatives that actively engage with religion. For example, development agencies mostly engage with the male leaders in religious traditions and the effect is that women's voices are marginalised. In patriarchal societies, women are unlikely to occupy positions of authority in religious institutions and FBOs. According to Tadros (2010), while religion can provide women with coping strategies and tangible support services; this may also involve gender costs where the access to assistance or service may be conditional to compliance with the FBO's interpretation of religiously appropriate gender roles and behaviour. Since it is an assumption that FBOs and religious leaders are closer to the grass roots and hence are in a better position to reflect and meet the needs of women.

There is a dire need to promote a better understanding of what constitutes the concept of women's empowerment in different contexts and an openness to include a diversity of views and strategies even when they seem to conflict with secular feminisms based on female and male equality in all spheres of life. According to Daneulin and Bano (2009), a contrast is drawn

between secular women's rights NGOs in Pakistan (which stress individual liberty and participation of women in economic and political affairs), and female *madrassas* (which focus on women's interests being best served within a stable family unit and where the emphasis is not on equality but on equity).

2.3.5 Social Construction of Women's Role

Within the literature on gender and empowerment in particular, there has been a lot of discussion related to how to attain empowerment of women and mostly on achieving empowerment through income earning opportunities (Blumberg, 2005). Since, patriarchy forms the core of our gender system and this gender system is deeply embedded in the social structure. So, the social structure or social norms hinder empowerment of women. In patriarchy, roles are allocated not only in accordance with the biological functions (procreation), but also according to the values prescribed to males and females. Often dominating and controlling social functions are prescribed to males whereas the supportive functions are the preview of females. Role allocations, certain norms such as the norms of motherhood and domesticity, values such as chastity, fidelity and practices such as *pardah* lead to stereotyping of female roles. In addition to this, Islam and family institutionalise the social placements according to the norms of the gender system. Both of these institutions socialise its members to gender differential functioning. As a consequence, women are confined to the tasks of the household and rearing of children. Female chastity, seclusion and *pardah* become important for protecting religious and ethnic purity (Engineer, 2001).

The traditional role of Muslim women, as a wife, mother, daughter, and sister, centres on household chores and household productive activities. Due to a decline in the economy, women need to work alongside men as breadwinners and this has led to changes in familial reciprocities. As a result, new roles have emerged that have combined domestic responsibilities with income generation activities; whether they are home-based or demand stepping outside their domestic domains (*chaardiwaari*). At the same time, there has been little change in the ideological structure of the society. A Muslim woman is socially defined as a housewife. This implies that she is dependent on men for her survival. Such a definition renders the work of women inside or

outside the house as invisible. So, patriarchal ideologies influence women's participation in the economy and confine them to household chores. Deprivations are largely due to the gender belief systems (Engineer, 2001).

According to Moser (1993), we need to consider that the role that religion plays in the lives of women can be important in understanding ways of approaching their 'strategic gender needs'[3]. This view of empowerment has not grown out of any theoretical debate but mainly out of the experiences of women working at grassroots level in several parts of the world (Rowlands, 1998). This brings us to our next section on empowerment.

2.4 Empowerment

This section describes various literatures and conceptual frameworks on empowerment.

People's empowerment is said to involve; acquiring skills, having the power over own lives, setting the agenda, gaining self-confidence, problem solving abilities and raising self-confidence. Empowerment is a course of action as well as an outcome (CIDA, 1999). Through empowerment, women not only gain increased control but also have access towards material and intellectual resources and can confront the institutions and structure of a society by challenging the long established gender based inequities and patriarchal ideologies against women (Batliwala, 1994). UN population and information network (UNPN, 1995) stated that:

"women's empowerment influenced their ability to not only control their lives within the domestic domain but also enables them to exert greater power in the public sphere and develop a fair and equitable social and economic order both at national and international level."

Some studies have revealed that the exposure to the outside community as well as the formation of networks with other women in the community help women foster self-confidence thereby enabling them to exercise more power both within and outside their households. Women's

---

[3] Strategic gender needs are the needs women identify because of their subordinate position to men in their society; they relate to gender divisions of labour, power and control and may include issues such as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages and women's control over their bodies (Molyneux, 1985).

empowerment can be manifested in various dimensions, such as increased participation in decision-making, a more equitable status in the family and society, and being more active and mobile in forging social networks (Li, Gan and Hu, 2011).

Kabeer (1999) has stated that empowerment as a process necessitates transformation at various levels such as at the individual level, change in the inner sense of self or in the access towards material resources and changes within the family and household associations. These changes are at diverse levels and in various dimensions. Women's unbiased representation in both formal and informal decision-making structures and their voice in the policy formulation which affect their societies are also the key domains of empowerment (Lopez-Claros & Zahidi, 2005). Empowerment constitutes some of the basic elements such as agency, self-worth, self-assurance and understanding of gender power composition (Kabeer, 2001).

According to **Kabeer's conceptual framework of women empowerment (2001),** empowerment consists of change, choice and power. It is a process of change by which individuals or groups with little or no power gain the ability to make choices that affect their lives. This framework analyses existing gender inequalities in the distribution of resources, responsibilities, power, policies and programmes. This framework focuses on two types of choices:

1. **First order choices** are strategic life choices that are critical to how we want our lives, such as the choice of whom/if to marry, whether to have children, whether to pursue higher education, whether to get employed/choice on the type of employment, etc.

2. **Second order choices** are often framed by first order choices and are less consequential. They are important for quality of life but do not define parameters of life. As empowerment is about change; it refers to the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.

Kabeer outlines three dimensions of empowerment that are pathways through which empowerment occurs:

- o **Resources:** which can be material, human or social in form and one is able to choose alternative options.
- o **Agency:** the power within to define one's goals and act upon them through decision making abilities or one's capacity to make meaningful and purposive choices.
- o **Achievements:** refers to the consequences/outcomes of the choices made.

Caroline Moser's framework (1993), aims to set up gender planning for emancipation of women from their subordination, and their achievement of equality, equity, and empowerment. This framework is based on three concepts:

1. Women's triple role (reproductive, productive and community-managing activities)
   - o **Reproductive work:** care and maintenance of the household and its members, including child bearing and caring for children, preparing food, collecting water and fuel, shopping, housekeeping, and family health care.
   - o **Productive work:** this involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade by women and men (in employment and self-employment). Women's productive work is often less visible and less valued than men's.
   - o **Community work:** social events and services-ceremonies and celebrations, activities to improve the community, participation in groups and organisations, local political activities.
2. Practical (access to employment, education or health care, etc.) and strategic gender needs (gender divisions of labour, power and control, etc).
3. Categories of WID/GAD policy approaches.

For development, empowerment has been considered significant and vital because it will establish the degree to which women will have access towards education, look for a job or seek

health care, have the freedom to decide fertility preferences and the size of their family (Bank, 2001; Caldwell & Caldwell, 1986; Dyson & Mick, 1983).

Women's empowerment is also mediated by education because of its relation to life chances and end results. Education enhances self-esteem of women, helps them to build up their confidence and gives them a perceptive of how to function in the world. The end result of all this is to empower women. When women acquire skills through literacy, they interact with many people outside their family on their own (Jejeebhoy, 1995). This corroborates with my findings from the field as well.

Therefore, women's empowerment depends on a number of factors such as; their location, social and financial status, the culture that they live in, traditions, education, age and experience. Fernando and Porter (2002) analysed that as the mobility of women increases, they have greater control over their lives and enhance their autonomy by gaining access to education, markets, work and other information related activities.

Empirical support for the economic empowerment of women comes from a study of 90 societies done by Levinson (1989) which analysed that women's lack of economic power makes them more vulnerable towards domestic violence (Heise, 1994) but if they have access towards economic resources then they are powerful enough to stand up against the violence directed towards them. When women gain access to activities that endows them with some earnings, their bargaining position begins to strengthen within the household and they become capable of participating in various strategic decisions (Hashemi et al., 1996).

2.4.1 Empowerment and Power

Power lies at the root of empowerment (Williams et al., 1994). At the level of an individual, power refers to the ability of an individual to make decisions and choices. In such a context, power can operate in the following ways:

- *Power over:* This power involves an either/or relationship of domination or subordination and is based on threats of violence and intimidation. It requires constant awareness to maintain and invites active and passive resistance to overcome subjugation at the household, community and macro-level;

- *Power to:* This power relates to the ability to solve problems and hold decision making authority. The capability and capacity to improve one's skills, income, job access, etc;

- *Power with:* This power involves organising people for a common purpose or understanding to achieve collective goals, networking, partnership, collaboration and joint action to challenge and change power relations;

- *Power within:* This power refers to individual changes in confidence and consciousness like assertiveness, self-awareness and self-confidence. It relates to how individuals can recognise their own self through analysing their experience and gain the confidence required to act to influence and change the outcome they create in their life (Rowland, 97-98; Williams et al, 1994).

2.5 The Pakistani Context: Some Literature on Madrassas

This section discusses the Pakistani context and states a few studies conducted on *madrassas*.

Bano (2013), in her research titled *"Islamic education: historical evolution and attempts at reform[4]"*, states that *madrassas* are centuries-old institutions of Islamic learning. Unlike the mosques, the *madrassa* system allowed for the residence of the students as well as the teachers and provided a library. They run parallel to the public and private schools and are well spread in the whole of the Islamic world. Back in the 11th century, when the concept of a *madrassa* came into being, its main purpose was to promote religious awareness and produce future Islamic

---

[4] The research article looks at the evolution of a *madrassa* system in South Asia in detail for a better understanding of its traditional features and teaching practices.

religious scholars (*ulema*). The *madrassas* taught both transmitted[5] as well as the rationalist subjects[6] (Bano quotes Robinson, 2007, p.238). Around the 18th century, a curriculum known as *Dars-i-nizami*[7] became the standard syllabus. It tried to combine religious education with rational sciences so that students had the choice of professions like law, administration, etc. However, *madrassas* have always concentrated mainly on Islamic education and so the students mostly became religious scholars, and preachers etc. Metcalf (1990) has also translated the Urdu text of the book called the *Bihishti Zewar* ("*Heavenly Ornaments*"), a large compendium of information and advice for women, written by one of the leading reformist scholars of Deoband, and published just after the turn of the century. As one of the most widely disseminated books in 20th-century Muslim India, a work regularly given to newly married Muslim brides, this book illustrated the ways that reformed religious ideas, the subject of Metcalf's earlier work, were transmitted to the common (literate) population. But in light of Metcalf's larger interests in the comparative study of Islam, this project took on a far broader significance. Few issues are more central to contemporary stereotypes of Islam than the treatment of women. In her introduction and annotations of the *Bihishti Zewar*, Metcalf highlights the distinctive vision of women's roles that shaped the thought of the reformist *ulema*, a vision influenced by the social pressures of society in India, and yet rooted in exemplary models from the time of the Prophet. Barbara tried to break the ideas in the *Bihishti Zewar* free from prevalent dichotomies: though far different from contemporary European visions of women's appropriate place, the ideas in the book also shared little in common with those of later Islamists, or Muslim nationalists. Barbara saw instead ideas with far older roots. Though the *Bihishti Zewar* differentiated clearly the appropriate roles of men and women, and stressed women's domestication, it also posited fundamental similarities in the innate capacities of men and women, for both of whom the Prophet himself represented the ultimate moral and behavioural model. Metcalf's translation has now become one of the primary texts used in undergraduate teaching on Muslim women in 19th-century India and one of the most compelling challenges to easy stereotypes about the relationship between Islam and women.

---

[5] Those subjects that are reliant on the religious texts. Subjects include: Quranic recitation, Arabic grammar, Quranic interpretation, jurisprudence, the sources of law and didactic theology.
[6] Those subjects focusing on logic: maths, logic and Science.
[7] *Dars-i Nizami* is a study curriculum used in traditional Islamic institutions.

According to Rahman (2004), there are five dominant Islamic schools of thought in Pakistan who operate their own systems of *madrassas* run through five boards (*wafaq*) of varying ideologies (these are Deobandi, Barelvi, Ahl-i-Hadith, Jamaat-i-Islami and Shia). Each board has its own educational policy regarding registration, examination and curriculum. These *wafaqs* are recognised by the government of Pakistan. It might be relevant to mention here that unlike Pakistan, in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Iran, the state controls religious learning to prevent sectarian disharmony in the society. According to International Crisis Group, (2002), the two main sects of Sunni Islam, Deobandi and Barelvi, dominate the *madrassa* system in Pakistan. The Deobandi sect is considered the most conservative and anti-Western.

The religious institutions are funded by voluntary charity by local people mainly in the form of *Zakat*, by foreign donors and by the Government of Pakistan for the purpose of modernising the curriculum. The actual number of *madrassas* and their total enrollment rate have always been point of contention among the scholars. The data available on *madrassas* is inadequate and contradictory. According to a study sponsored by World Bank (2005) about the total number of students enrolled at *madrassas* in Pakistan, it argues that *madrassas* account for less than 1 percent of enrollment in the country which is contrary to claims made in policy reports such as the one by the International Crisis Group (2002), which claims that 33 percent of Pakistani children in schools attend *madrassas*. Then, there is also a problem of unregistered *madrassas*. The estimates of *madrassas* remain contested because of a large number of informal or unregistered *madrassas* in the country (Ahmed, 2005). The largest numbers of *madrassas* across Pakistan are those that belong to the Deoband school of thought. The table on the next page shows the distribution of *madrassas* across the provinces, the data being gathered from five *wafaqs* in 2008 by Bano (2013):

Table 2.2: Distribution of *Madrassas* across the Provinces

Provinces	Deobandi	Ahl-i-Hadith	Jamaat-i-Islami	Barelvi	Ahl-i-Shia
Punjab	3,218	302	150	3,579	210
Sindh	1,746	45	155	302	81
Baluchistan	663	5	30	137	14
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	1,815	22	245	391	13
Islamabad	107	2	14	70	7

The data from Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Azad Kashmir is not included above. By 2011, the total number of *madrassas* registered with the government had increased to 19,366 (this registration data did not show breakdown by sect).

One cannot deny that *madrassas* do play a positive role in the society. Not all *madrassas* propagate extremism and violence; they play a significant role in promoting religious awareness and social improvements among Muslims. They provide thousands of poor children with free food and shelter. In his article, Redeeming Pakistan's *Madrassas* (2009), Ali states:

"…the radicalisation of madrassas should not lead us to give up in despair. In other parts of the world, madrassas have served an appropriate educational purpose. For example, in West Bengal, India, a survey of Islamic schools in January 2009 found that because of the higher quality education at madrassas, even non-Muslims were actively enrolling in them."

In a book by the same author, titled *"Islam and Education: Conflict and Conformity in Pakistan's madrassas",* the author discusses the detail of *madrassas* in countries like India, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. Additionally, he also discusses the various aspects of *madrassa* education in Pakistan, i.e. the socio-economic background of *madrassa* students and

violence, and the relevance of this sector in the modern world. It also contains recommendations for *madrassa* reforms in Pakistan.

Some recent scholarly literature, existing international political discourse and policy papers by international think tanks, present the *madrassa* as an overtly political entity with a particular reference to Pakistan. Masooda Bano, in one of her research papers, questions the perception of a *madrassa* as an overtly political entity and argues instead that even today a *madrassa* is basically a social and spiritual entity with a specific socio-economic role (Bano, 2007). She argues that there are substantial checks and balances on the authority, performance and reputation of the *madrassa* and the *ulema*, since the community's support for a *madrassa* is not motivated by blind ideological conviction, but very rational calculations about the quality of education, *imam's* efficiency and personal committment. According to her, the students come from diverse economic backgrounds, contrary to the perception that most *madrassa* students come from poor families. Two most important reasons for choosing *madrassa* education are; parents appreciation of religious values and poor quality of education in state and ordinary schools. According to Bano (2007, p.60), "*continuing with the Deobandi tradition of relying on contributions in cash and kind from the ordinary public, the madrasa maintains a receipt system for all kind of donations, which include zakat, sadqa, khairat.*" The vital factors that persuade an individual to support a *madrassa* are; religious inclination, the visibility of the work of the *madrassa*, reputation built over time, social networks, and the competence and commitment of the *imam*.

Rahman (2004), in his book titled "*Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education Inequality and Polarisation in Pakistan*" emphasises that the present curriculum of *madrassas* is mostly based on centuries old syllabus known as *Dars-i-Nizami*. Additionally, *madrassas* belonging to different schools of thought teach books which refute each other's beliefs. This may be the root cause of promoting sectarianism in the society.

Academic analysis of the Pakistani *madrassas* is limited. According to Metcalf and her doctoral dissertation that focuses on the history of the Muslim religious scholars of Deoband, a reformist religious seminary in Northern India founded in the 1860s (a study subsequently revised and

published in 1982 as *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900*), Metcalf (1982) challenged the assumptions that shaped a generation of historical writing on modern India. By basing her work solidly on the Urdu writings of what had been taken to be "traditional" religious leaders, Metcalf developed a historical perspective on India's colonial past that resonated well beyond the story of the *ulema*. Her analysis took seriously the terms in which the *ulema* presented themselves and their ideas, analysing these not primarily in their relationship to colonial discourse, but in the light of far older arguments and contestations. Theirs were hardly a set of unchanging presuppositions or arguments, galvanised by a colonial assault. Though Metcalf recognised and analysed the many ways in which the changing contexts of colonial India shaped their debates, she also traced their preoccupations to shifts in Islamic thinking predating the advent of British colonial rule in India in the late 18th century. At the same time, she emphasised the ways in which the school at Deoband was also a product of its colonial times; in its institutional structuring, in its reliance on newly expanding markets of print, in its quietist political stance, and its reliance not on the patronage of the state, or local rulers, but on new frameworks for popular fundraising.

Zaman's (2002) work is concerned with the politics of the *ulema*, focusing mainly on the Deobandi *ulema*. According to Zaman, he finds Metcalf's thesis—that, following colonial rule, the *ulema* in order to cope with changing times focused on individual reform and personal religious responsibility—limiting. He contends (pp. 2–3) that this thesis ignores the public and political aspects of the operation of the Deobandi *ulema*. He criticises Metcalf's emphasis on the 'social milieu' of the *ulema*, for failing to examine their thoughts and discourse, which in turn limits her understanding of how they construct and retain religious authority. Zaman's book, *"The Ulema in Contemporary Islam"*, discusses various reforms and their failures. He argues that opposition exists to government reforms due to varying degrees in the *ulema*.

Singer (2001) argues that the field of education in Pakistan is dominated by *madrassas*. He argues that since a *madrassa* is detached from a state regulatory system, it is free to determine its own teaching syllabus. He argues that graduates from *madrassas* have skills only to be *imams* or

assistants at mosques and they remain unemployed as there are not enough jobs for them. He recommends providing technical education to replace the *madrassa* system.

Sikand (2006), in his book, *"Bastions of the Believers. Madrassas and Islamic Education in India"*, has discussed *madrassa* reforms in the historical perspective. It has valuable information on the details of reformed *madrassas* in India that can serve as a guideline for *madrassas* in the entire region. Sikand's exploration of Indian *madrassas* in this book seeks to counter media accounts of *madrassas* as 'dens of terror' while also filling a gap in the academic knowledge of Indian *madrassas* since independence. So in short, the author talks about the origins and development of the institution, critiques of the *madrassa* curricula and links of the institution to militancy.

In her ethnographic studies, Fair (2008) realises that the problem of *madrassas* is not simple and that they are not what the world has labeled them. For the first time, a researcher is inquisitive enough to ask how and why an age-old institution had been degraded gradually and has lost its glory over time and whether the current perception of *madrassas* is a myth or fact. By examining various kinds of *madrassas*, as well as faculty, curriculum, and student population, Fair (2008) investigates the claims that students of *madrassas* serve as the vote bank for affiliated political parties, she also traces the root causes of militancy in *madrassas* and how to overcome this problem. The study also discusses the government's point of view for reforming the *madrassas* and also how *madrassas* approach the issue. A few *madrassas* at the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan may have some limited role in the insurgency in Afghanistan, but they are the leftovers from the time of Soviet occupation and encouraged by the United States.

Ronnow (2009) contended that most of the studies on *madrassas* were conducted in haste without an understanding of the culture, religion, tribal sensitivities, or people. For political expediency, each study followed previous studies, thereby complicating the real issue and confusing readers with internal divisions and disputes within Islam that have no bearing on *madrassas* as educational institutions.

The literature review helped me to understand and select an appropriate methodology for this study; the next chapter explains the research methodology and methods used in this study in detail.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods

This chapter starts with the research design and explains the methodology in detail. The research tools employed, the sampling adopted and the data analysis procedure is explained in the sub-sections of this chapter. Lastly, it also gives details of the ethical considerations adopted for this research and shows a section on reflexivity; depicting reflections on the field describing the societal impressions about the *madrassa* and the questions or queries raised by the respondents, etc. The researcher draws her analysis based on rich interviews and ethnographic data collected during the course of her fieldwork.

3.1 Research Design

"Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researches study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.3 in Creswell, 2007, p.36).

Qualitative data gives strength to the context and the personal lives and experiences of the respondents. It aids in the understanding of concepts and emphasises voices of the participants, as according to Creswell (1998, 2012), it is suitable to make use of qualitative techniques when trying to grasp the meaning of phenomenon and facts concerning peoples' lives and experiences. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of the participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem and it extends the literature or calls for action (Creswell, 2007). Hence, a qualitative ethnographic research design was applied to this study to learn firsthand experiences and perceptions of the respondents on the field. This methodology provided an opportunity to the researcher to directly involve with the natives; social interaction and practices, understanding of their world views, their representation

and interpretation of themselves. The qualitative research approach was undertaken with the intention of understanding and learning the following: to explore; the allocated gender roles within the *madrassa*, the causal relationship between religion and development (participation in or contributions to wider society) through a gendered lens, the interaction between religious education, gender and development, and to bring in an effective model. No preconceived hypothesis is suggested as to what the data would show. Hence this research is also exploratory in nature develop a deeper and a better understanding of the nature of the problem. Exploratory studies prove handy when we strive to comprehend differences in communication styles, interpretation schemes, superior-inferior relationship expectations, conflicts and stress among groups of people (Sekaran, 2003).

Exploratory research often relies on secondary research such as reviewing available literature and/or data, or qualitative approaches such as informal discussions or more formal approaches such as through in-depth interviews, focus groups or case studies. Exploratory research enabled me to explore the sampled population and carry out extensive interviews with the females and ask questions like what is actually happening inside the *madrassa*, teacher-student relationships, exploration of the quality of life and socio-economic status of the females at the *madrassa*, what is their perception of empowerment, education and development and what role does religious education play, does it hinder or aid empowerment of females at the *madrassa*, etc. It helped me form inter-relationships between different elements in a natural setting. Hence, this research is exploratory; using an in-depth ethnography based on qualitative research techniques.

The section below explains the data collection along with its challenges, the sources of data, the research techniques used, sampling size, type and techniques, and the selection criteria of the participants.

3.2 Data Collection and its Challenges

The data was collected in two phases: the first phase started in February 2015 and lasted till middle of April. The second phase of interviews was conducted in the month of August 2015 and lasted one month.

During the first phase, I visited the field between February and April 2015. The visits were conditioned upon approval of the principal of the *madrassa*. The IDIs and FGDs were conducted between *Asar* and *Maghrab* prayers as scheduled by the principal and mornings were reserved for participant observation. The principal told me that evenings are good for interviews as it is a better time as students and teachers are given some time off from their studies i.e. their free time. So the IDIs were conducted in the evening. During the mornings, I sat and attended three to four classes of the course called *"Doura-e-Hadees"* conducted by the principal (*Aapi Jaan*). The principal invited me to attend the course that she was conducting during the regular program. It is a fourty days course covering topics pertaining to an ideal society, ideal individual, worldly vs. religious knowledge, etc. The class consisted of over 200 students and few teachers sat in as well. So, I sat in few of the classes and took down field notes as a participant observer noticing the student to teacher interaction, lecture deliverance, etc. and it was really informative for me and helpful for my research as well. It was a good learning experience.

Apart from the above, I also attended the graduation ceremony called *"Bazm-e-Adab"* for around 300 students of SJH which is an inter-branches competition. It was a full day event with all the branches in attendance (for details on *Bazm* please refer to chapter 5).

The first IDI took some time because of non-availability of the principal to meet me because of her various commitments. She wanted me to be done with interviewing her before I proceeded with the other interviewees. Four out of five days I met up with the principal for conducting her IDI. The fifth day she was not available to meet up despite me setting up a time with her. It took me four sittings to conduct IDI with her. She had also requested me to type her interview in roman Urdu for her, before translating it in English. I told her that typing out our research in Urdu was not our university requirement. The thesis would be in English. She provided me the sample for my research from the following week onwards since she was also the key informant and she wanted me to do the IDIs first and then move on to the FGDs with the teachers. The students were to be interviewed after I was done with the teachers. I was not able to get more than two or three hours per visit as the principal was extremely busy with meetings/teaching/ supervision, etc and there were various interruptions during our interviews and so was the same with the teachers. So, the interviews (IDIs) took a lot of time. I transcribed the interviews as and

when I got time off from the field visits. The interviews were to be stopped as soon as I found out that the saturation point has been reached. It was presumed that the saturation point would be around the 25th interview.

The data collection was very slow initially due to the busy schedule of the teachers all day and also that they were being subjected to a rigorous exam by the *Wafaq* (board for the *madrassa* curriculum) but I thought once the exam was over hopefully my data collection would pick up speed as was assured by the principal herself time and again. I had to stop the IDIs for some time since all teachers were being subjected to this rigorous examination for completion/up-gradation of their degrees and this was the first time that such an exam was being conducted for the teachers. So, all teachers got busy with their exam preparations and I had to stop the IDIs mid-April. Even if there were no interviews conducted in a particular week, time was not wasted during data collection as I was also observing and taking down notes on how gender roles are constructed in the day to day life at the *madrassa*.

During an interview mid-April, I was also informed by one of the teachers that *Aapi Jaan* has requested that since the annual examinations of the students were being held soon the following month (around May 7th or 8th), she needed me to pause my interviews for until after *Ramzan* which was three months away. The *madrassa* was off in *Ramzan* and the girls had to go home in the summer break. She wanted the teachers and students to devote time to their studies and revision in their free time (between *Asar* and *Maghreb* prayers and that is the time I conducted my interviews). In the meanwhile, I visited and pleaded with the principal that I had strict deadlines to meet and had to submit my research report soon after *Eid* in August so I needed to complete my fieldwork as soon as possible. But she was inflexible assuring me at the same time not to worry. The principal told me if there is any possibility to get the required respondents for my research she would let me know. Also, upon my visits I noticed that majority of the regular students and teachers were not around and the *madrassa* bore a deserted look. The students enrolled for short courses during *Ramzan* were not the regular students that I required for my research but students of other universities/colleges (outsiders) which if interviewed would not serve the purpose of my research i.e. to capture the perceptions of the regular female students and teachers at the *madrassa*. I explained to the principal during conducting my first interview in

February that I needed to finish with my data collection by April or at least before the end of the regular annual academic year. She had assured me her full cooperation at that time and that it would be so. Hence, there was a long break in my data collection since interviews did not resume until after *Eid* as the fieldwork was dependent on the commencement of the regular academic year at the *madrassa* in August.

It was during the second phase of the data collection in August, after a gap of almost three and a half months that I managed to complete my interviews with the students. It remained a big challenge to extract maximum information in the minimum possible time available for interviews as these students and teachers kept a busy schedule all day long. So, I usually went during their break time as was allowed access by the principal at the *madrassa.* The challenges on the field keep increasing as this time the *ulema* associated with *Wafaqul Madaris Al Arabia* Pakistan, a conglomerate of seminaries, were of the opinion that an undeclared operation by the government was underway against the *madrassas* in the country. *Madrassas* were being raided and the teachers and students were harassed, questioned and picked up for interrogation. So, the *ulema* threatened to march to the federal capital and hold a sit-in there if the government continued to raid the *madrassas*. Nothing of this sort happened.

As a researcher, I tried setting aside my personal opinion and beliefs during the data collection process by withholding comments and controlling my facial expressions during each interview. I also tried to restrain my emotions and judgments while on the field.

3.3 Sources of Data

The researcher used both ***primary*** and ***secondary sources*** of data which were only qualitative in nature.

- *Primary data* was collected through a semi-structured interview guide based on questions generated in light of the objectives and relevant literature. Most of the primary data was collected through direct face-to-face interviews, FGDs and indirect discussions with the respondents.

Topical guidelines for the interview guide to conduct the IDIs and FGDs were prepared in English and translated into Urdu for the respondents. The interview guide had both open ended and closed ended questions with a list of options given to select.

- *Secondary data* was collected through reviewing various literatures in books, research articles, journals, case studies and international reports taken from the library and the internet. This was done to collect background information on the area of study, to conduct literature review and to develop an in-depth understanding on the research topic.

According to Creswell (2012), an exploratory research has to be followed by qualitative procedures to interpret a phenomenon. The qualitative tools used in this study are mentioned in the section below.

3.4 Research Techniques

The research techniques used in the study were:

- **Rapport Building**

As Russel (2006) suggests rapport builds trust and trust results in ordinary conversation and ordinary behaviour in the researcher's presence. Rapport building with the *madrassa* administration took place to get an initial contact inside the field of study and to explain to them the objectives of the study. Prior to starting the regular field work, some initial visits were made to the *madrassa* for the purpose of rapport building. It took a couple of visits, lots of persuasion and finally a visit by my supervisor in February 2015 for the administration to get comfortable with me as a researcher and to let me start my collection of data. Let us not forget that this is a community constantly being in the spotlight since the Army Public School (APS) tragedy on December 16, 2014 rather the operation conducted at Lal Masjid in July 2007 and according to the people in the *madrassa*, there is a negative image or hype that the media has played up against them, all of which is rejected or defended by the *madrassa* people (not a part of my research).

- **Participant Observation**

This technique is very useful qualitative tool in observing the respondents in their natural setting engaged in their daily routine. It helps in recording the actual behaviour and analysis of individuals who might be reluctant at some point to share any information or might be facing difficulty in expressing themselves. I felt as a participant observer, the military operation of 2007 has left this community and especially those who witnessed the entire incident, shattered and traumatised, as is evident by their irritation or agitation in their tone, body language, or expressions. Sometimes, the females broke down while talking to me about past occurrences or events or going back in history of the *madrassa* and I had to pause the interviews for a while to share their loss and grief with them. I could also see that they were at times badly affected by the negative image held by the outside world against them as they often used to bring it up during the discussions and interviews.

I was also a part of a few of their activities at the *madrassa* like I attended the *Doura - e - Hadees* classes conducted by the principal. It covered topics pertaining to an ideal society, an ideal individual, worldly vs. religious knowledge, etc. It was a class of over 200 students and a few teachers sat in it as well. I sat, observed, took down notes and observed the student to teacher interactions, lecture deliverance, and class arrangements, etc.

I also attended the *Bazm-e-Adab;* an inter-branches competition; which was also the graduation ceremony for around three hundred students of SJH. Both of these activities helped me to understand the emic view from their lens by observing their daily lives and routine, etc. which aimed to corroborate that whatever they articulated was similar to what was executed in actuality.

I as a researcher, have applied both emic and etic approaches for the analysis of the data collected from the field. The two terms "emic" and "etic' mutually determine each other through their complementary system of reference (Pelto and Pelto, 1978). Only in the continuing process of differentiation between internal and external points of view,

between "emic" and "etic" perspectives, is the reflexivity of both viewpoints recognised (Baumann 1989, p. 89-90).

An emic approach (sometimes also referred to as an "insider", "inductive" or "bottom-up") takes the perspectives and words of the research participants as its starting point. As Lett (1990, p.130) explains, from an anthropological perspective:

> *"Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the native members of the culture whose beliefs and behaviours are being studied"*.

In taking an emic approach, a researcher tries to put aside prior theories and assumptions in order to let the participants and the data "speak" to them and to allow themes, patterns and concepts to emerge. This approach is at the core of the grounded theory, and is often used when researching topics that have not yet been heavily theorised. Some of its strength lies in its appreciation of the particularity of the context being studied, in its respect for local viewpoints and its potential to uncover unexpected findings.

In an etic approach, as Lett (1990, p.130) describes it, *"Etic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the community of scientific observers."* Nettl (1983, p. 154) has summarised the difference between emic and etic as *"two sides of a coin,"* and suggests that emic and etic viewpoints might better be labeled *"the people's and the anthropologist's analyses."* Hence, in an etic approach, the primary method is observation of behaviour by the researcher.

- **Key Informant**

According to Russel (2006), key informants are people who know a lot about their culture, and are willing to share all their knowledge with you. Good key informants are people whom you can talk to easily, who understand the information you need and who are glad to give it to you or get it for you. The key informant for my research was the principal or administration head of the *madrassa* and I developed a close relationship with her during my research. She had a role and status in her community and one could

not gain access into the *madrassa* without her permission. She not only answered my research queries but also provided me with the most useful and comprehensive information and knowledge about particular aspects of the *madrassa* like the history of SJH with a particular focus on the struggles and challenges that they have faced, especially during the military operation when she was put in jail. This gave me an insight into how the *madrassa* has withstood all adversities and controversies and is still flourishing and progressing today. She talked about the locale and the social organisation of the *madrassa*. She also facilitated me in conducting my interviews as she provided me with the respondents as well as access to them as access to classrooms was restricted for the outsiders. I found her to be observant, reflective and articulate. I felt that she had deeper insights compared with the rest of the respondents.

- **In-depth Interviews**

  According to Russel (2006), an interview guide is a written list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order. It demonstrates that the researcher is in full control of what is wanted from an interview but leaves both the researcher and the respondent free to follow new leads. In-depth interviews provide the researcher with the opportunity of having detailed discussions using open-ended and closed-ended questions.

  In-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted via a self-administered, semi-structured interview guide. Before starting the interviews, I assured my respondents of anonymity and confidentiality and explained that I simply wanted to know what they thought and what their perceptions were. Sometimes, it happened that they felt they really didn't have enough information to be a part of the interview or research study; I assured them that their participation is crucial and that I was truly interested in what they had to say. I told them that I was trying to learn from them and encouraged them to interrupt me during the interviews with anything they thought was important. Respondents were asked pre-developed questions to direct the interview. In case, there was any need to clarify a respondent's answer, I probed further.

According to Russel (2006), probing is the key to successful interviewing as earning how to effectively probe is to stimulate a respondent to produce more information, without the researcher injecting themselves too much into the interaction that they only get a reflection of themselves in the data.

I made sure the questions were short, crisp and easy to understand. In case, a need arose for me to clarify my question, I readily did. It gave an opportunity to the respondents to narrate their concepts in detail and interpret the meanings of these concepts. The questions included topics on demographics and detail of respondents, the socio-economic conditions of the respondents, their opinions about the *madrassa's* system of education, community life, perceptions of development, education, and empowerment, etc. The IDIs were conducted both with the students as well as some teachers. The breakup of the eighteen IDIs conducted is as follows:

- 1 with the principal cum administrator,
- 3 with the teachers,
- 14 with the students (including 1 ex-student of the *madrassa*).

In most of the cases, the IDIs were conducted in a single day. Only the first IDI with my key informant took 3 to 4 days. Interviews were carried out in Urdu (spoken language of the research community). The length of one interview varied from one to two hours.

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

According to Creswell (2012), Focus Groups are specifically helpful for gathering qualitative data from several individuals on the basis of shared understanding and specific views. Focus Group Discussions were conducted in a small group setting to discuss, comment on and get a reflection of the participants' stances and values on the topic; that is the subject of the research. FGDs are regarded as a suitable technique for understanding several dimensions of a specific topic. In this case it included; cultural and social issues of the *madrassa*, their perceptions on education, development and empowerment, etc. I was able to conduct three FGDs, the breakup is as follows:

- 1 FGD with teachers which consisted of a group of 5 teachers,

- 2 FGDs with students; the first group consisted of 6 students while the second group consisted of 5 students.

1 FGD was conducted in a single day, lasting from 1.5 to 2 hours. It was made sure that the atmosphere was not intimidating, because women were at liberty to express their views openly. Every participant was encouraged to take part in the discussion. In case of a similar view from participants, unanimity was sought from the group. There were two team members conducting each group discussion; one was the facilitator and the other one was the notes taker. There was a formal interview question guide for the FGDs and questions were translated in Urdu, which is the spoken language of the community.

- **Informal Discussions**

FGDs worked for the teachers but not IDIs. When the female teachers were asked for IDIs by the principal and the researcher, they simply refused on the pretext that they had a busy schedule and had no time to give for interviews. It was shared that they had lots of copies of students to check and lots of supervision work which left them exhausted. Interviewing new teachers would have served no utility, so, as a researcher I had to use my skill to change the methodology in the field. In this case, as IDIs were not working for the teachers, so I as the researcher changed the strategy to informal discussions with the teachers on the same topics. The idea of informal discussions was to get teachers to open up and let them express themselves in their own terms, and at their own pace.

During informal discussions, I talked with the respondents in the field informally, without the use of a structured guide. I tried to remember the conversations with the informants and used jottings or brief notes taken in the field to help recall and write down notes from experiences in the field. This technique goes hand in hand with participant observation. While in the field as an observer, informal discussions are casual conversations the researcher might have with the people the researcher is observing. Informal discussions may happen on the spot and may not require scheduling time with the respondents. In fact, respondents might just see this as conversation instead of interviews. So, informal

discussions may foster low pressure interactions and allow respondents to speak more freely and openly.

I conducted three informal discussions with the teachers. Most of the interviews were held in the *daftar qadeer* (meeting room), where a lot of teachers and sometimes the principal was also present, and students used to come and go. The rest of the interviews were held inside the libraries; especially, the afternoon and evening interviews' as the libraries remained occupied during the daytime.

- **Field Notes**

  In qualitative fieldwork, field notes refer to the notes created by the researcher to remember and record the behaviours, activities, events and other features of an observation. Field notes are intended to note down day to day ethnographic accounts to be read by the researcher as evidence to produce meaning and an understanding of the culture, social situation, or phenomenon being studied. The notes may constitute two types;

  ➢ The whole data collected for a research study e.g. an observational project (for my research it included; noting down the description of the locale and the physical infrastructure, etc). Sometimes, I noted down things during conducting my interviews and scribbled thoughts into my writing pad.

  ➢ Or contribute to it, such as when field notes supplement conventional interview data (Schwandt, 2015). For me it included, noting down expressions of interactions during my interviews (with the respondents as it added to my participant observation technique).

The field notes were reflective as well. Field notes are a type of a personal journal. Qualitative researchers record in-depth descriptive details of people (including themselves), places, things and events as well as reflections on data, patterns and the process of the research. These details form the context and quality control that shape multiple qualitative data points into articulated, meaningful and integrated research

findings. Field notes are unique to each researcher, written in the first person and in a free a free-flowing spontaneous manner.

- **Pilot Study and Pre-testing**

  Pilot studies are studies done before running a larger study. The data instruments were pretested to ensure; appropriateness of the interview guide, to identify any problems, and to make certain additions or changes in the interview guide if required. It also helped set sampling frames, selection criteria, etc.

  The above mentioned instruments of data collection were applied to acquire a comprehensive understanding and interpreting the community's perception regarding the topics under discussion and what were their genuine concerns.

  Pilot testing was conducted with two informal interviews of teachers in the month of November 2014. About two to three visits were made to the *madrassa* to form initial contacts, build rapport and establish credibility with the community. The purpose of my research was also disclosed. Initial data about the *madrassa* was collected. During the pilot-testing phase my sister (who acted as my assistant), accompanied me to the field to take down field notes while I interacted with the respondents. The information collected on the field was thoroughly studied to test the interview guide and fill in the gaps where required.

  The formal interviews were held in two phases: the first phase started in February 2015 and lasted till middle of April. The second phase of interviews was conducted in the month of August 2015 and lasted one month. The principal of the *madrassa* was my key informant and provided me an access to the respondents at the *madrassa*.

  The purpose for taking up more than one research method was to maximise the importance and intensity of the data analysis by triangulating findings from different phases. So, as a researcher I tried applying the emic approach in this research so I could see from the natives perspective, as already discussed in previous sections, an emic code

arises from the data and is often built from a participant's own words. Apart from the emic and etic approaches, I have also applied my own reflexivity (please see at the end of chapter 4 locale).

3.5 Grounded Theory Approach

For my research, I have used the grounded theory approach which is used primarily in gathering the first hand qualitative data directly from the field. According to various researchers, the grounded theory is a method that seeks to construct theory about issues of importance in peoples' lives (Glaser,1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). It does this through a procedure of data collection that is often described as inductive in nature (Morse, 2001) in that the researcher has no preconceived ideas to confirm or refute. Rather, matters of value to respondents emerge from the stories that they tell about an area of interest that they have in common with the researcher.

The central idea of a grounded theory approach is to read and re-read a textual record (for example, interview transcripts or written texts) and tag categories, concepts, and properties and their inter-relationships, in order to arrive at a theoretical formulation or model of the reality under inquiry (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

On the basis of the findings of this study, an attempt has been made to construct a native model of development (indigenous model of interaction between religious education, gender and development) for the *madrassa* which could be of profound help for further research and also input for policy makers and development practitioners.

Model Formulation

According to Strauss and Corbin (1994), the theory or model that appears is a set of relationships that present a plausible explanation of the phenomenon under study. In accordance with the grounded interpretive paradigm, this research provides neither a 'true account' nor an end of a process. As Addison (1989) observes, any theory, model or narrative account of human activity is always open to modification and refinement, as times, conditions and contexts change, so too will accounts change. Theories are thus 'forever provisional', their very nature allows for

endless elaboration and partial negation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This study should thus be seen as part of an ongoing and unfolding series of conversations (Clegg & Hardy, 1996) where each interpretation encourages the continuation of self-reflection, and opens up differing possibilities of understanding and action within the 'contested terrain' (Reed, 1996) of what is perceived as development, empowerment, etc.

Native Model

Native refers to local or innate. A model means a set of cognitive elements sketched through a figure or a diagram. In this study, a native model means to show the inter-relationships of major concepts and categories that are used by the locals at the *madrassa*.

3.6 Data Analysis

The grounded theory approach is used to gather first hand qualitative data directly from the field. The grounded theory approach introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967) has been used to analyse the data. In qualitative research analysis, this approach is used extensively as it comprises of various *"research method approaches, from analysis of the interviews and field observations to the analysis of the unobtrusive data"* (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). It is a method that seeks to build theory or a model about topics that are prominent in people's lives. Data is gathered in an inductive way and the researcher has no predetermined ideas to endorse or reject. Thus, the transcribed record is read and re-read. The grounded theory approach is used to gather first hand qualitative data directly from the field.

Grounded theory approach was useful in streamlining and managing the data for me from the beginning of my research. I carefully reviewed the data and segmented it into large pieces and themes, concepts were identified and categories were formed to show inter-connections or relationships among these categories using a mind map. Hence, coding is an integral part of this theory. In my case, I did a micro-analysis, i.e. careful scrutiny of the data collected before I started to organise and write my chapters.

In explaining my findings, wherever required the data analysis has been presented in the form of tables and diagrams; tables show statistics in the form of percentages whereas the diagrams show

inter-connections or links concepts together. All major or minor details were taken into consideration to make sure that the data was factual and the best fit model was constructed.

3.7 Reflection of the Research Process

This section includes the societal impression about the *madrassa* and how it affected the respondents' interaction with me.

Societal Impression about the *Madrassa*

During the course of my fieldwork, there were days I noticed frustration and anger in the tone of the principal as was evident by her harsh tone and in her interaction with her staff or her students. The reason shared was the constant negative projection of SJH in the media. They are looked down upon as a community and termed illiterate and uncivilised. *Madrassas* across the country are mostly looked down with suspicion these days and often linked to militancy and terrorism, they are often raided and the staff is harassed or arrested. Many times, the talks led to the memories of the 2007 military operation of the red mosque, which has left deep imprints on the minds of the people of this community, especially the ones that witnessed the massacre first hand. It was shared with the researcher that the mass murderers of political parties roam around freely even if accused, while *madrassa* people are still terrorists and militants in the eyes of the government.

Their Questions and my interaction with them

Some of the respondents at the end of the interviews had questions of their own to ask me. The most common questions asked were: How long will it take to complete your research? How does your research benefit you? What is your perception regarding us and SJH, in view of the outside world's perception about us? How do I view the current system of democracy? etc. I had to be tactful while handling such tough questions as at times my views were conflicting with the ones captured on the field. So, I had to be sensitive, patient, tactful and diplomatic.

Generally, I told them about the purpose of my research, that I am writing a book on the *madrassa* and it is a requirement for my educational degree at the university. Students are allowed to choose their own research topics and since I was interested on gaining knowledge

about *madrassas* and the way they work, SJH is the *madrassa* I have chosen to study. As a researcher, we are told to keep our own views and perceptions away and to incorporate only the native's point of view. So, I told them that for this, I need to conduct your interviews to get information and to capture your perceptions. Whatever information is given to me, will be useful for my research. I assured them that their confidentiality will be ensured. The relationship with my respondents was based on mutual respect. Maintaining a balance of being an insider but simultaneously looking through an outsider was not an easy task. Through keeping a certain level of interaction, I tried to balance myself. So, once I informed my respondents about the purpose and the process of my research, they got a little comfortable with me as was evident by their smiles and expressions and they started to feel at ease. A few of them also remarked that I had a friendly style of interacting and communicating with them. So this helped me extract information required for my research.

The respondents were very careful in selecting their references and words especially related to the quotes from the Quran and *Hadees* as they didn't want to misquote anything. Sometimes, they crosschecked the references and got back to me the following day. I used to give them more probing questions and references to check for, which they gladly did and got back to me the next day.

3.8 Sampling

Sampling is *"the process of selecting a sufficient number of elements from the population, so that a study of the sample and an understanding off its characteristics or properties would make it possible for us to generalise such properties or characteristics to the population elements"* (Sekaran, 2003, p.266-267).

Sampling Type

Purposive sampling was used for the selection of the respondents for my research. For this type of sampling, the researcher decides the purpose that the informants will serve. There is no overall sampling design that tells the researcher how many of each type of informants are needed for the study. You take what you can get (Russsel, 2006).

The main goal of purposive sampling is to select participants for a specific reason or interest; the sampling unit is criterion based. *"This type of sampling is confined to specific types of people who can provide the desired information, either because they are the only ones who have it, or conform to some criteria set by the researcher"* (Sekaran, 2003, p.277). For example, age is a commonly used section criteria.

There is a theoretical understanding about sampling which is important but it may not be always feasible or workable in the field. I went in the field with my own specific criteria but then I had to strategise and adjust the sampling technique to the situation and the administration's concerns which led to strata of who remains included or excluded in the sample. The sample in this study is no way representative of the population.

Sampling Unit

The sampling unit in this study was the individual respondents for in depth interviews, groups of teachers or students for focus group discussions and the head of administration and principal who was a key community member and my key informant.

A sample of 24 females was interviewed; 14 students for IDIs, 3 teachers for IDIs, 1 principal cum administrator for IDI, 3 informal discussions with the teachers and 3 FGDs were conducted.

Selection Criteria of the Participants

The selection criteria or the characteristics of the chosen participants were:

- Accessibility and willingness of the respondents at the *madrassa* to cooperate and respond to the questions as initially access to rooms and records was very limited.

- Young female students, aged 15-24 (according to the UN definition of the youth) across all grades and sections. For the teachers, the upper age limit was relaxed to include more respondents.

In case of qualitative research, particularly grounded theory, it is important to gather as much information as possible, so that the relevant concepts and categories can be created regarding the phenomenon under study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). So, it is necessary to acquire a reasonable sampling size. Data is extracted until there is replication of information.

Sampling Size

Sample size is usually small for in-depth qualitative ethnographic research. There are reasons for this. Firstly, it may be difficult to maintain the quality of in-depth research across larger samples. Secondly, a small size will ensure that the sample is very rich in the characteristics and diversity it represents; for an in-depth analysis, within each sampling unit, there will be many bites of information. In order to analytically grasp and to do justice to these, sample size is required to be smaller (Ritchie and Lewis 2003).

So, in light of the reasons mentioned above, the proposed sample was small. Initial contact was made with the *madrassa* administration, who was the key informant and she provided all the respondents. All the research techniques described in the section above were applied. The frequency of the repetition of the concepts was considered for the study; all variations were not discarded, while any outliers if found were to be utilised for the case study. I didn't find any outlier; hence, there is no case study. The research was stopped once all the data was saturated and the researcher saw that no new information was coming in.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Every research has some ethical considerations and all educational researches must be careful of ethical issues (Creswell, 2012). It is equally important to show respect to the audience of your research, so the data in this study has been reported honestly. The ethical considerations adopted during the research process were:

- Consent and willingness of the respondents to participate in the interviews.
- Each participant was fully informed about the nature and purpose of the research.
- Fair treatment and no discrimination towards my respondents.

- I interviewed my respondents within the permitted timings whatever was convenient for the respondents or whatever time was allocated to me by my key informant. This was to ensure minimum disturbance to their hectic schedule.

- Anonymity of respondents. I changed the original names of the respondents to protect their identity. Confidentiality of the responses was respected. I have used pseudo names for the research, as it was important to ensure confidentiality of the respondents.

- During the interview process, I was not allowed to record anything on the tape recorder because according to them, it is not allowed to record women's voices as it cannot be heard by a *namahram*[1]. I was only allowed to write down whatever they said and communicated to me apart from my own observations. So, all interviews were written down in shorthand form. I also noted down the gestures along with the responses and the context of the conversation taking place. I tried my level best not to miss or skip anything while writing and even if I thought I had missed out on anything, I used to clarify or ask them to repeat.

- Photography of the females was not allowed at the premises of the *madrassa* because of their religious beliefs and strict observance of *pardah*.

- Mobile phones were not allowed within the premises and mine had to be deposited at the reception before entering the main premises.

---

[1] It includes all those men with whom marriage is possible.

Chapter 4: Locale

"If you want to know the religion of a man, do not look at how much he prays and fasts, rather, look at how he treats people."

- Ali ibn e Talib

This chapter explains the brief history of the Deoband *Madrassa* Foundation, gives the Islamabad area profile, explains the importance of this *madrassa* for my research, shows the map of the locale, describes a short history of Syeda Jamia Hafsa (SJH); its setup and physical layout, and the facilities available. The section ahead gives the demographic profile of the respondents using various tools of data collection described in the previous chapter on Research Methodology and Methods.

4.1 Findings

The broad findings gathered after scrutiny of all the data tools are presented below and in the succeeding chapters on education, empowerment and development:

4.1.1 The Birth of the Deoband *Madrassa* Foundation

The Deoband *Madrassa* was created as a reaction against the British in 1867. A common characteristic of the Deobandi school of thought is that they consider Islamic thought to be made up of the Quran and *Sunnah*. The *ulema* who set it up argued that in these changed times it was important for the Muslims to focus on individual reform and on personal religious responsibility (Robinson, 2001). Deoband was from the start, distinct in its support base, its organisational structure and its goals from the older *madrassas*. The Deobandi *ulema* drew most of their income from popular contributions pledged annually by their many supporters instead of state patronage which holds true for the SJH too. The Deobandi scholars aimed to train educated *ulema* who would be dedicated to a reformed Islam and to individual reform. Deoband adopted the bureaucratic model of British universities as the *ulema* of Deoband from early on encouraged the establishment of branch schools. The *Dars-i-Nizami* syllabus, which evolved at the Farangi

Mahal's[1] during the lifetime of Mullah Nizam al-Din, was adopted by the Deoband school. This syllabus remained dominant in Indian Islamic education (Bano, 2007).

At the time of partition, Pakistan not only inherited a fair share of Deobandi *madrassas* but also many *ulema* that were trained in the Deobandi tradition migrated to Pakistan. This resulted in the expansion of the Deobandi tradition in Pakistan. The Deobandi *madrassas* are not only the largest in number but also are the most prominent (Malik, 1996). During the British legacy of modernisation; the *madrassas* were perceived as backwards, out of step with modern day needs, and the religious scholars from *madrassas* were classed as illiterate.

It was during Zia-ul-Haq's Islamisation that changed the environment in favour of *madrassas* and *madrassa* degrees were given equivalence to a Masters (M.A) in Arabic and Masters (M.A) in Islamiyat. Some of the state funds were made available for the *madrassas* and this led to a dramatic increase in the number of *madrassas* in early 1980s (Malik, 1996). In 2002, during General Musharraf's era, three model *madrassas* were established in Karachi, Sukkur and Islamabad. The aim was to create model *madrassas* all over Pakistan that would not promote extremism and provide useful and modern education.

The following view is given by the principal of the *madrassa*, popularly known as *Aapi Jaan*:
"When the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) and his companions migrated to Madina leaving behind all their wealth, they made a chabootra (platform) named sufah which was residential; to eat, sleep, give dars (teach), and to preach Islam. So, it became known as sufah ka chabootra, a madrassa base. The first teacher to educate and impart training to people about Islam at this base was the Holy Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H). Masjid-e-Nabvi used to be the centre of these religious congregations. So, this was where the base of the first madrassa was laid. Women were not allowed inside the mosque as they are perceived to be less patient and engage in idle gossip freely."
"The base of the Deobandi madrassas was suffah ka chabootarah (the Holy Prophet's companions' platform), where religion was taught. In the Indian subcontinent, Deoband was the

---

[1] Old *madrassa* in Lucknow, India.

area or place where the foundation of its first madrassa; Darul Aloom Deoband was laid under
a pomegranate tree. Darul Aloom Deoband is the mother of all madrassas, was famous for its
fatwa (religious ruling), it stood up against the British revolt, it had forbidden political activities.
Later on, it branched out to other places such as Lucknow, Nizamuddin, etc."

"Whenever there was any tough time given to Islam, the companions of the Holy Prophet
(P.B.U.H) used to rise up with him. The madrassas still rise to protect Islam. Nowadays,
whenever there is any instigation or crime in the society against Islam, for instance the issue of
blasphemic cartoons, the students and teachers of the madrassas have always risen to show their
strength and opposition and to demonstrate that they have a voice too."

4.1.2 Islamabad Area Profile

Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. It is located 14 kms North East of Rawalpindi (the latter is considered as the twin city due to its close proximity with the area) on the North Eastern fringe of the Potohar plateau of the province of Punjab lying at altitudes ranging from 457 to 610 metres. To the North of the city lies the Margalla Hills.

The area of Islamabad is 906.50 square kilometres. The city is divided into five major zones: Zone I, Zone II, Zone III, Zone IV & Zone V. Zone IV is the largest in area while Zone I is the largest developed residential area. Zone 1 is divided into sectors. Each residential sector is identified by a letter of the alphabet and a number, and covers an area of approximately 2km x 2km.

Table 4.1: Area of Islamabad

Total Area	**906.50 sq. km**
Islamabad Urban Area	220.15 sq. km
Islamabad Rural Area	466.20 sq. km
Islamabad Park	220.15 sq. km

Source: Capital Development Authority

After the formation of Pakistan in 1947, it was felt that a new and permanent capital city had to be built to reflect the diversity of the Pakistani nation. Islamabad was built in 1960 to replace Karachi as the Pakistani capital, which it has been since 1963. It was considered pertinent to locate the new capital where it could be isolated from the business and commercial activity of Karachi, and yet be easily accessible from the remotest corners of the country. As compared to other cities of the country, Islamabad is a clean, spacious and quiet city with lots of greenery and natural beauty. The site of the city has a history going back to the earliest human habitations in Asia, as it has seen the first settlements of the Aryans and the ancient caravans passing from Central Asia.

4.1.3 Syeda Jamia Hafsa and the Importance of this *Madrassa* for my Research

The reason for choosing a Deobandi *madrassa* is that Deobandi *madrassas* are the largest in number in out of all types of secular *madrassas* within Pakistan. The criteria for selection of the locale, SJH for my research is; accessibility, prominence and the diverse demographic population it represents in terms of ethnicity, age, educational background and classes of the society.

SJH is one of the female *madrassas* established in Islamabad with a vision to popularise Islamic teachings and to disseminate religious knowledge among the females. SJH is not only the largest Deobandi female *madrassa* in Islamabad; it is also very prominent and active in the public sphere and this makes it a worthwhile study to observe not only how gender is constructed at this *madrassa* as it inculcates a certain religious identity but also how the females perceive; concepts of education, empowerment and development, the level of awareness about their roles in the society with reference to religious education and their role in development. So, firstly, since this *madrassa* is not against women's role in the public sphere, I chose it for my research. Secondly, since I was capturing perceptions of the females at the *madrassa*, it was beneficial for me to capture perceptions from across various ethnic backgrounds and classes of the society that these females came from.

In view of the numerous challenges that I faced on the field, especially the one pertaining to the long break in the data collection, as far as changing my locale was concerned, I couldn't change

my locale midway as all *madrassas* across the country follow the same time schedule for conducting their annual examinations and then break off until Eid for regular classes. Also, it was not possible to change the locale as I had developed a rapport over a long period of time and it took several extensive visits and finally one visit by my supervisor to the field to convince them to conduct my research there.

SJH is located in the sector G-7-3/2 of Islamabad and is in close proximity to Blue Area. Below is the area map of SJH:

Figure 4.1: Area Map of SJH (drawn by the researcher).
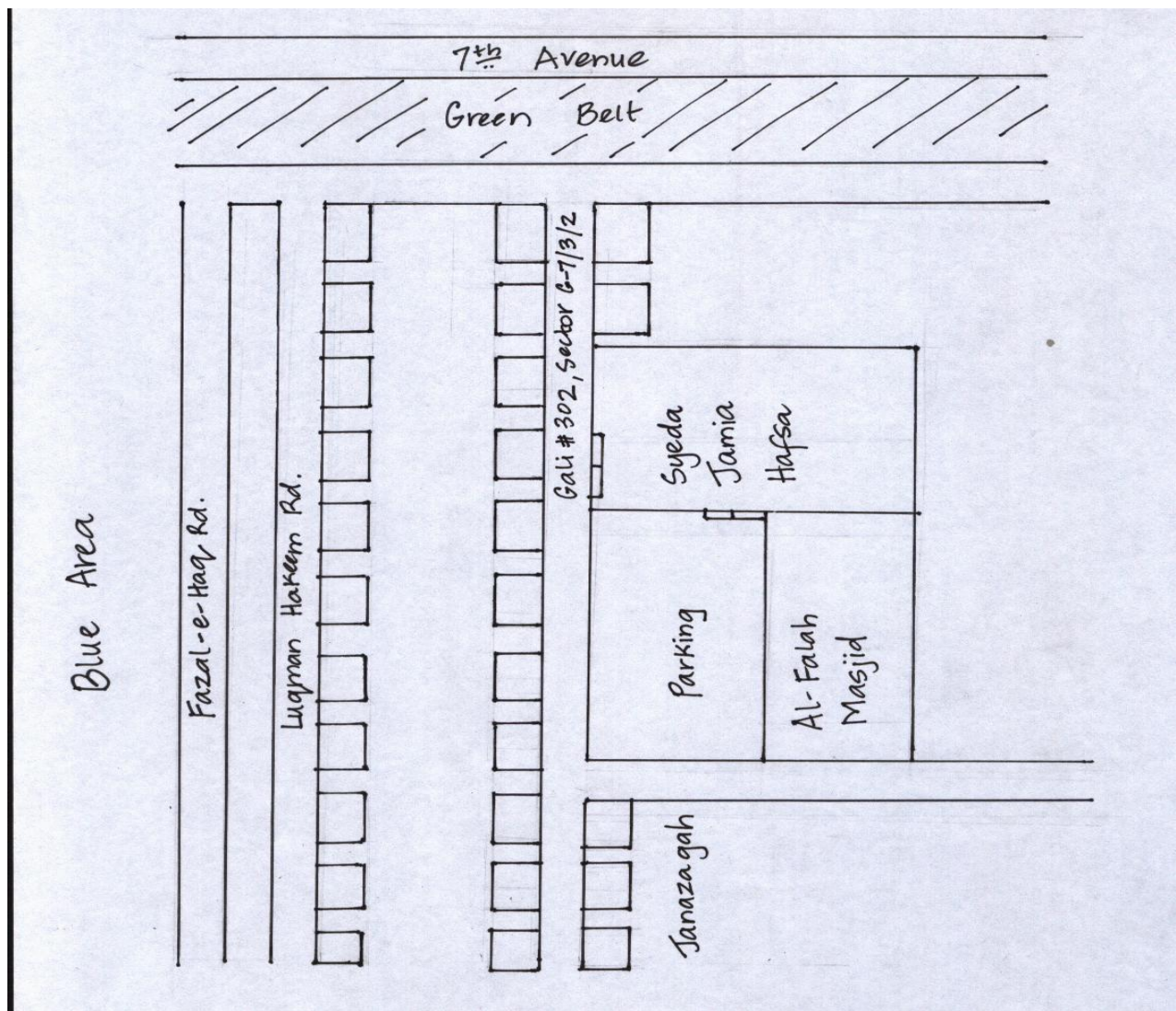
Source (fieldwork)

4.1.4 A Brief History of Syeda Jamia Hafsa

According to the principal, at SJH, a *madrassa* means *Allah ka ghar* (house of *Allah*). Syeda Jamia Hafsa (SJH), the female Islamic seminary, was started by Umme Hassan (popularly known as *Aapi jaan* at the *madrassa*) and her husband Maulana Abdul Aziz (popularly known as *Ustaad Jee*) having only day scholars. It associates itself with the Deobandi Hanafi, Sunni school of thought. The school was started out as two rooms in 1992, in sector F-8, of Islamabad, as a sister concern of Jamia Faridia, the male Islamic seminary (1984) located in sector E-7, of Islamabad; both affiliated with the Jamia mosque of sector G-6, of Islamabad, popularly known as the Lal Masjid or the Red Mosque (1970) due to its red colour structure. SJH later shifted in 1998 adjacent to the Jamia Mosque of G-6. The foundation stone of the female Islamic seminary was laid down by Maulana Adbdullah, the then *Khateeb* (a person who delivers sermons) of the red mosque. After his murder in 1998, his elder son, Maulana Abdul Aziz took over his responsibilities and the supervision of all affiliated seminaries fell over to him. He was assisted by his younger brother, Maulana Ghazi in various matters related to the mosques and *madrassas* till his assassination during the red mosque operation in July 2007. After the operation, SJH relocated to sector G-7, in Islamabad in the year 2007. The building was already being used as a branch consisting of 2-3 rooms and later it got converted into the main *jamia*. Those females, who survived the 2007 military operation at the *jamia*, took refuge and relocated to sector G-7. The *madrassa* started to flourish again.

Since the official record and registers got burnt down during the 2007 operation, there was no official count of how many females died in the military operation. The principal's only son also died during this operation. Prior to the military operation, SJH had around 10,000 students; 7000 students in the main branch and 3000 students in its various branches within Islamabad. Now, the students have been reduced to 3000 in total as of date[2] (the enrolment record is mostly kept private). The clash of the state with SJH is not new but very old and even existed during the days of the Bhutto[3] era. So, SJH has always remained controversial till today.

---

[2] Since the record of the students enrolled at SJH is not available to the public, the researcher had to rely on the statistics given by the administration.

[3] Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a prominent political leader and an elected head of state in Pakistan during the 70s.

This female *madrassa* was established with a vision to popularise Islamic teachings and to disseminate religious knowledge among the females according to the *shariah*. Initially, the classes were held between 3 pm till *Asar* prayers on *Tajweed* (reciting the Holy Quran with proper rules; includes proficiency, proper pronunciation and punctuation), *Nazra*[4] (homeage), *and Tafseer* (commentary). Initially, there was no admission of students for one entire month. Then, three sisters[5] started coming in and it was not feasible to run courses for only three people. These three sisters encouraged others to join in as well and promised that the *madrassa* will flourish. Then the *Dars-e-Nizami* started and more females joined in. Word to word translation and short *Tafseer* classes started. After about one month orientation towards the Quran started.

The three sisters that started the *madrassa* did not even complete one year of education at the *madrassa*. Two of these girls were married and their in-laws and husband came and took them away. The youngest sister was about to get married, so her in-laws objected to her attaining religious education. She had just finished three months and 15 *paras* (parts) of the Quran. Then, a teacher joined in as a helper. Soon after, two more came in. So, the work got divided amongst them. Small children started joining in and the teachers started telling them stories or tales to keep their interest. Children were happy as they were in a religious environment claims the administration. The children were taught to be honest and were rewarded at the end of every month for being honest with a gift which included; either a pen, pencil or an ice-cream.

So, the administration claims that as the demand for religious education grew, they continued to build male and female *madrassas* in different locations of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Students kept coming and the demand kept increasing. Then students started coming in from far-flung areas and it was necessary to provide them with *rahaish* (boarding and lodging). So the *jamia* became a *rihaishi* (hostel) in 1995. In the words of the principal: *madrassa taraqee kar raha thaa* (the madrassa was flourishing). The standard of education was high. There was a huge rush of people for admissions compared to other religious educational institutes. There were

---

[4] Nazra is to read the Holy Quran verbally, without translation and memorisation.

[5] The identity of these three sisters was not revealed to the researcher.

principles that were followed. But internationally, the idea of *shariat ka nafaz* (imposing *shariah*) in Pakistan was not liked, so that is why SJH, was razed to the ground after a military operation during Pervez Musharraf's government in July 2007.

According to the *madrassa* sources, the police used to come and threaten the occupants to vacate the premises. The attack took place around 1.00 am and around 100 students were injured as a result of the clash as police hit them with sticks. She remembered that the electricity was cut off and it was raining. The media followed the police. The students had to pick up sticks to control and discipline the students. Then the rangers came in with war weapons and guns. They started shelling and hell broke loose. Girls started collapsing and many died as a result of direct firing. They have no count of how many girls died as when the *madrassa* was brought down, the official record was burnt. So, there is no way to determine how many casualties took place. The girls who were martyred also included orphans from the 2005 earthquake who had lost their families and were given shelter and refuge at the *madrassa*. Since the *madrassa* has been relocated to a new location, the operation of 2007 is included as part of its history.

The principal's two daughters also teach at this *madrassa* (source: key informant).

According to the principal at the Jamia:

"*I always had faith that Allah will send more students. When the madrassa started, we hardly had any students. It didn't matter if one came or more. I was alone. Then, a Tableeghi Jamaat's*[6] *member's daughter started coming in and then, students from Gujrat joined. The madrassa started growing. With growing popularity, donations started pouring in from people. At one point, I even had to sell off my gold jewellery to support construction and expansion of these female madrassas.*"

Syeda Jamia Hafsa is the most popular *madrassa* among all its branches and the administration claims that it had over 10,000 students in total, covering all its branches in 2007, prior to the

---

[6] A movement that operates within communities to initiate internal reform among Muslims – in their effectiveness in spreading Islamic beliefs at grassroots level (Bano, 2012, pg. 145).

military operation, as is mentioned above. Now there are approximately 1600 female students at the main *madrassa* SJH and 3000 female students in total, including all its branches in Islamabad. Out of these 1600 students, 100 are day scholars and 1500 are residents at the *madrassa*. There are about 75-80 teachers[7] at SJH. Owing to its popularity and the demand to increase the number of students, the administration says it has to renovate the building from time to time and construct more rooms to accommodate the fast growing number of students.

Their motto is "*humaree manzil islami nizam*" meaning our destination is an Islamic system. It is a goal towards which they work and motivate their pupils. Also, this motto creates an awareness to outsiders as to live their lives in accordance with the rules of Islam. This motto is displayed on top of the *madrassa* front wall as one drives or walks up to the main entrance. This instruction to follow *shariah islami nizam* (Islamic system of *shariah*) is a characteristic of *madrassas* and Deobandi ones in particular.

4.1.5 Inside the *Madrassa*; The setup of SJH

SJH is a *Deobandi* (Sunni sect) female religious educational seminary. It is a *Jamia* (university) level institute providing qualified female religious scholars. It is single sex institution since according to the perceptions captured on the field, in our religion; the mixing of boys and girls is prohibited. SJH provides boarding and lodging to its students and teachers.

This section contains a description on funding, SJH being a welfare organisation, the language or styles of communication, signs of respect to the elders, their dress style, and target groups. The next section contains the physical layout, the facilities available at SJH and the area of improvements.

The Language or Styles of Communication

The population of the *madrassa* comprises of various ethnic groups and castes. Mostly, Urdu is spoken inside the *madrassa* for communicating with one another. Punjabi and Pashto are the most common ethnic languages that can be heard being spoken inside the *madrassa*. Students

---

[7] Record was not made available to the researcher. This range was given by the principal herself.

and teachers also learn the Arabic language since the religious text is mostly in Arabic. So, everyone can read and write in Arabic but they do not speak it except while referring to the Quran or *Ahadees.*

Signs of Respect to the Elders

As a sign of respect, the teachers and older women at the *jamia* are called *Baji* (elder sister). The principal is called *Aapi Jaan* (beloved elder sister) as a sign of affection by the teachers and students. Her husband, Maulana Abdul Aziz, who often delivers the lectures to the students at SJH, is addressed as *Ustaad Jee* (respected teacher).

The Dress Style and their Identity

Shalwar kameez (loose pants and a long shirt) which is a traditional dress in Pakistan is worn along with a *dupatta* (long wide scarf) at SJH. During the school hours, the students all wear different coloured headscarves which distinguish their different grades. The pants and shirts have to be loose and not fitted. No jeans are allowed inside the *madrassa.* A *burqa* (a cloth covering their entire bodies and usually black in colour) is mandatory to be worn outside the *madrassa.* Just like the beard is the identity of males in their community, pardah and the dress code is the identity of the females.

Interests and Hobbies

65% of the respondents are interested to read newspapers, while 59% of the females are interested to learn how to use computers and only 5% of the respondents are interested to watch Television (TV). The following table on the next page shows a list of interests of the females at SJH along with their respective percentages:

Table 4.2: Shows a List of Interests of the Females at SJH

Interests	Percentage
TV*	5
Newspapers**	65
Radio	41
Computers / laptop	59
Internet / facebook	24
Sports***	18

Source: Fieldwork

* TV is only watched for some important news, religious talks or current affairs.

** Newspapers mostly religious ones are read which include *Al-Qalam, Al-Mashriq, Roznama Islam, Zarb-e-momin*. Other general newspapers read include *Nuwa-e-Waqt, Daily Times, Jang, khabrain*.

*** The most favourite played sports is badminton.

A teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years, disclosing her hobbies and interests shared:

> *"I love book reading of all types....reading novels (authors such as Ummaira*
> *Ahmed...Naseem Hijazi.... Ishtiaq Ahmed) and Islamic history apart from religious*
> *books...I have learnt to stitch but I consider it difficult work which needs time...I have left*
> *it as it also strains the eyes (nazar kam ho jaateee hai) so I didn't continue.... I love to*
> *paint sceneries."*

4.1.6 A Welfare Organisation

SJH was established to provide equal opportunities of education to the females and those who cannot afford to pay for education. So, it also acts as a welfare organisation providing free meals, boarding, lodging and education to its students. The management takes care of the needs of its students, including books, stationary, bedding, medicines, clothes and other daily provisions, etc. It also provides the services of a marriage bureau; as it arranges for suitable matches if required, for its students and teachers who are of a marriageable age. During the course of my fieldwork, I also met with few women who had taken refuge at the *madrassa* as they were the victims of various social injustices and the *madrassa* was trying to help them resolve their cases through religious or legal ways.

The basic principle followed at the *madrassa* as revealed by the administration is *koi talab lay kar aaye tu khaali haath na jaye* meaning if one comes with the desire to learn then they are not returned empty handed. This principle may be related to the following *ahadees*[8] as was related by the principal herself during the interview:

>*"mujh say jo cheez seekho mairee taraf say puhanchao."*

Translation:

Narrated Abdullah Bin Amr: The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said, "Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence."

>(*Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab ul-ambia, Hadees* # 3461)

>*"Harr hazir ghayab tak mairee baat puncha day."*

Translation:

Narrated Abu Bakr: "It is incumbent on those who are present (in a religious meeting) or (conference) to convey the knowledge to those who are absent."

>(*Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab ul-ilm, Hadees* # 105)

---

[8] The *ahadees* have been verified from the field and rechecked by the researcher from the following website: http://sunnah.com/bukhari

Funding

The administration informed the researcher that the *madrassa* is being run by charity; the private donations and alms given by the people in the form of *zakat, attiyat, khairat, sadqat.* These donations help the *madrassa* meet its expenses. Sometimes, if these donations fall short of meeting all necessities at SJH, then the older students or teachers follow the spirit of sacrifice in Islam and make do with less food or even skip a meal at times. The state does not provide any financial assistance to the *madrassa*.

Target Groups

The *madrassa* authorities claim to serve the interests of three target groups;

 ➢ Those parents who cannot afford to send their girls to other mainstream schools or colleges because they are not well off to pay their educational expenses,
 ➢ Those women who come to seek religious knowledge of their own free will,
 ➢ Those men; either husbands, fathers, sons or brothers who want the women in their family to seek religious education in a secluded environment.

4.1.7 The Physical Layout

The current building that houses the *madrassa* looks old and dilapidated. It was previously a branch of Syeda Jamia Hafsa with two or three rooms but now locates the main school with over 1500 students and around 80 female teachers. The students who survived at the time of the military operation took refuge here and the main *madrassa* was then shifted to the new location. There is a mosque (*Masjid Al-Falah*) and *janazagah* (where prayers for the deceased are held) next to the *madrassa*. The building of SJH has two compounds, one side is the main *jamia* for the females, while the other side is reserved for the male visitors of the students and all males are restricted from entering the female compound. As one enters the *jamia*, which is a double story building, one is greeted by the reception area. On one side of the reception area; you can see cabins for females to go into to talk to their male visitors during visitation days. The males talk from the male compound and females are restricted to their compound. There is a small space through the wall through which visitors can pass food items if required.

After verification of the visitors through a quick call to the main meeting room downstairs also known as *daftar qadeer* (big office or meeting room), cell phones are deposited with the reception area as cell phones are not allowed inside the building. Initially, the visitors are escorted by one student from the reception area towards the main meeting room but gradually as trust develops and as one gets to know ones way around, the escort stops.

There is a *hijama* (blood cupping) clinic as one descends down a flight of stairs and a central courtyard further down in the basement which has the classrooms and other administrative offices. At the time of my research, the building was being renovated and construction was going on various storeys of the *jamia*. Each territory has its own set of; classrooms which are utilised as both lecture rooms during the day and residential rooms during the night, and restrooms. There is not enough space in the *madrassa* as the classrooms are converted into sleeping and living rooms once the classes are over. There are open verandahs all around the compound.

As one walks inside the *madrassa*, one can find important inscriptions and short prayers on the walls all around. These inscriptions help the students through; guiding them and reminding them to carry out even the routine activities in accordance with the religious rules and regulations. So that students keep on the righteous path. These inscriptions are found even in common areas, libraries and visiting areas and rooms. It was explained to me by the principal that since some of these girls are young, their minds are not mature enough to remember every minute detail. The inscriptions make it easier for them to remember the instructions and prayers. One can also find poetic verses and inspirational quotes on the walls or boards.

The meeting room had an attached kitchen and a small library within it. There was a locked steel safe for the females to keep their valuables in as well. The floor was carpeted and there were four low lying tables with floor seating for the teachers. I noticed a cold water dispenser was added towards the end of my research. A picture was framed on one of the side walls showing two crossed swords and it was understood that it meant a Saudi emblem.

4.1.8 Facilities Available at the *Jamia*

It is embedded in the mind of the females at the *madrassa* that they must uphold the spirit of sacrifice and tolerance in Islam. Sometimes these girls do not get three meals in a day. They quote the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) who used to eat one meal and then leave out the next one and then eat and so on.

According to a student, Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years:

> "*faqah sunnat hai ....[9]nabi bhi teen waqt roti nahin khaatay thay.....hum nabi ki sunnat par amal kartay hain*" meaning to abstain from eating meals or starvation is *sunnah*......even the Prophet (P.B.U.H) did not have meals thrice a day......we follow the Prophet's (P.B.U.H) *sunnah*.

Classrooms and Accommodation

The classrooms of the *madrassa* serve a dual purpose; they are used as class rooms during the day time and are converted into accommodation units for the females at night. Due to the presence of a large number of students and limited space, the mattresses are folded and bedding is rolled up and stacked neatly in one corner of the room. The floor is carpeted and carpets are dry-cleaned whenever required. Seating is on the floor. Students have low level wooden desks for study. And one desk is shared by two girls. They justify this as being in line with the *sunnah,* who used to sit on the floor while performing most of the activities.

Inside the classes, one can see religious verses or an inscription of Quranic verses and *ahadees*. The classes have a mike system installed as all male teachers deliver their lectures through mikes and are not allowed to see their female students. There is no mixing and mingling or interaction between both sexes at the *madrassa*. Mostly, there is also a nice aroma of *agarbatti* (scent) coming from these classes.

---

[9] ..... means there was a pause in verbatim.

Washrooms

All floors of the *madrassa* have separate washrooms for the teachers and students.

Muta aam **(The Mess)**

Muta aam is an Arabic word meaning restaurant. It is free and it provides three meals a day to the residents of the SJH; teachers as well as students. Students sit on the floor as per *sunnah* of the prophet and eat in rows inside the verandahs. The mess runs on zakat donations for the poor.

Canteens

There are three canteens and each canteen caters to the different demands related to food. One is located indoors, one is outdoors and the third sells items such as vegetables, fruits and milk, etc. The canteens are run by a lady who lives in the community closeby. The *madrassa* girls go to the indoor canteen for eating during their break times. These canteens are small windows that open to pass the food. One cannot see anything across the other side.

Libraries

There are three libraries at SJH that have a large collection of books. These include both *nisabi* (the syllabi books) and *ghair nisabi* (the non-syllabi books). Most of these books are in Urdu or in Arabic. A few books in Persian from renowned Muslim scholars along with English translations of popular books are also available in the library.

- ❖ *Aisha maktab* (*nisabi*)
    It also stocks items of necessity such as stationery, burqas, small gift items, etc. apart from books.
- ❖ *Darul Mutaliah (ghair nisabi)*
- ❖ *Darul Iftah (fatwajaat)* it is reserved for *Takhusus al fiqh* students also known as research students. These students or *muftias* prepare and issues *fatwas;* an Islamic religious ruling but this *fatwa* cannot stand alone. It has to be verified by a male *mufti* (a male Muslim scholar who interprets *shariah*, the Islamic legal system). *Muftia* (a female Muslim scholar who interprets the *shariah),* is a graduate from the

madrassa, who provides services to those women who come to seek religious solutions to their personal, day to day and other problems.

While conducting the interviews in *Darul Iftah*, I noticed a painting titled *shuhda-e-lal masjid* (martyrs of Lal Masjid). It was a pictorial depiction of the aftermath of the military operation with *kalma*, swords, and the flag dripping in blood. It had all the names of the martyrs of Lal Masjid written on it.

These libraries promote a habit of reading among the students and not only enhance their knowledge and understanding but also provide important references for various religious issues.

Clinics

There are two clinics at SJH:

❖ *Mustashfa* (**Medical Centre**)

There is one small medical centre which operates for the full day to provide medical services to the residents. A nurse is present at the medical centre and she holds a three years nursing experience. Medicines and first aid is available at this medical centre for minor emergencies. In case of serious illnesses or diagnosis, the residents are taken to the Poly Clinic and Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) hospitals nearby.

❖ *Hijamah* **Clinic**

SJH has a *hijamah* clinic within its premises. *Hijamah* is an Arabic word literally meaning sucking. *Hijamah* or cupping therapy is an alternative mode of treatment. Unlike the conventional medical system, no drug is administered in *Hijamah* to treat the disease. Instead, the cure lies in the removal of toxins from the body which are the root cause of almost all of the disease. It is a *sunnat* way of treatment. Almost anyone of any age or gender can get a *hijamah*. The process is that blood is drawn by a vacuum from a small skin incision for therapeutic purposes.

It is narrated by Jabir that the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) said,

"If there is any healing in your medicine, then it is in cupping operation."

(*Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab ut tib, Hadees # 5704*)

Some of the ways *hijamah* helps are:

- It boosts the circulatory and immune system,
- It cleanses and detoxifies the body,
- It treats illness and relaxes the patient,
- It helps lessen pain,

Some of the common ailments that are treated by *hijamah* are:

- Headaches,
- Joint pain,
- Pulled or tight muscles,
- Poor blood circulation and blockages,
- Constipation or irritable bowel syndrome, etc.

Transport Facility

The *madrassa* owns a Hiace van and has a resident driver to provide facilities of transport to its administration. The transport is provided for various services like shopping of daily items for the residents of the *madrassa*, purchase of books or stationery items, trips to the hospital for medical care, for inspection by the administration to other branches within the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, etc.

Electricity/Gas/Telephone/UPS/Generator

The *madrassa* tries to provide a comfortable living for its residents. There is provision of electricity, gas and uninterruptible power supply (UPS) used as backups during loadshedding. There is provision of hot water geysers in winters for bathing and cold waters in summers for drinking and bathing. During shortage of gas for heating water in winters, wood is used as an

alternative to heat the water. There is a landline at the *madrassa* and the students can use the telephone on request for calling home to communicate with their families. No wonder, during an In-depth interview (IDI), one student, Binte Hafsa, shared that "the *madrassa* feels just like her home." Most of these students come from lower income groups and far off places, where such facilities are not readily available.

Technological Facilities (Mike and Sound System)

The *madrassa* is equipped with loud speakers and microphones. The loudspeaker is used to make announcements or to call out names of students or teachers to meet the principal, to call out names of girls whose male relatives have come to pick them up during visiting hours on a Thursday or a Friday or for any other administrative issue. Men are not allowed inside the *madrassa*. The microphone system is used to deliver a lecture by the male teacher or scholar who sits in an adjacent room. One can hear the male teachers but cannot see them.

In case, a male has to entre the premises, an announcement is made to caution the women inside to cover themselves up properly or to restrict themselves to their respective rooms. During my fieldwork, I observed that the *madrassa* was being renovated and often the labourers' had to entre the premises or to go to the rooftop. Before they entered, a proper announcement was made inside the *madrassa* for the women to conceal themselves and go to their respective rooms.

The *madrassa* is equipped with a television screen and religious documentaries are shown over the weekends to the residents.

Dispenser

There is a dispenser available for clean and cold drinking water at the *jamia* in the *daftar qadeer.*

Kitchen

The *jamia* has one main kitchen for cooking and separate cooking areas for *rihaishis.*

Areas of Improvements

The analysis of the data revealed that there are deficiencies in infrastructure at SJH. There is shortage of:

- ❖ Space in terms of accommodation at the *jamia*,
- ❖ Resources and funds available**,**
- ❖ Medicines and washrooms. There are only 20 washrooms for 1500 students,
- ❖ There is no ground for playing sports like football and no swings for the younger girls.
- ❖ A computer lab is missing as they cannot afford it.

4.2 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The data analysis revealed that:

- The students and teachers at SJH mainly come from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Kashmir. The enrolment record is mostly kept private.
- Most of the students come from lower income groups and far off rural areas.
- Majority of the students claim to have come to the *madrassa* to study on their own free will.
- Majority of the respondents are residents at the *madrassa*.
- The ages of the respondents varied between 16-27 years.

The following two tables (Table 4.3 and Table 4.4) show an in-depth profile of the respondents at the *madrassa.* The first table is of the teachers and the second one is of the students:

Table 4.3: Profile of the Respondents

Madrassa Teachers at SJH	%
Ages	
Below 20 years	14
Between 20-25 years	43
Between 26-30 years	43
Educational level prior to joining the *madrassa*	
Matric	43
F.A	57
Current educational level at the *madrassa*	
M.A Islamiyat	29
Almiyah	42
Takhasus	29
Number of years with the *madrassa*	
1-5	86
6-10	14
Teaching experience with the *madrassa*	
1 -5 years	71
6-10 years	29
Grades and subjects being taught at the *madrassa*	
8-10 (Arabic and *Fiqh*)	14
Tafseer 1st year	43
Tajweed 1st year (Arabic)	43

Rural /urban background	
Teachers from rural areas	71
Teachers from urban areas	29
Languages spoken *	
Urdu	86
Arabic	100
Broken English	29
Pashto	14
Punjabi	14
Ethnicity	
Pathan	46
Punjabi	54
Caste	
Raja	14
Abbasi	28
Hashmi	14
Qureshi	14
Afridi	16
Jat	14
Number of siblings studying religious education	
None	28
One	58
More than one	14

Professions of siblings especially brothers	
Aaalim	43
Haafiz	43
Private job	14
Educational background of fathers of *madrassa* teachers	
No formal education	14
With secondary degree	36
With intermediate degree	36
Illiterate	14
Professional background of fathers of *madrassa* teachers	
Not alive	14
Customs	14
Private job	58
No job but income from agricultural land	14
Educational background of mothers of *madrassa* teachers	
Having religious education but not from a *madrassa*	43
Illiterate	57
Professional background of mothers of *madrassa* teachers	
Housewives	100
Stated motivation for joining SJH	
Education for employment motives	10
Religious inclination	90
Inclination for joining the *madrassa*	

Own free will	86
Parents influence and wish	14
Hobbies and interests	
Book reading (Islamic History)	72
Book reading (Urdu novels by authors; Ummaira Ahmed, Naseem Hijazi, Ishtiaq Ahmed)	14
Landscape painting	14
Future plans	
Opening a *madrassa* in my village and teach there	66
Online Islamic courses	10
Online Computer courses	14
Online Arabic courses	10

* A respondent can speak in more than one language, so the total may not add up to 100%

Source: (Fieldwork Nov 2014-Aug 2015).

Table 4.4: Profile of the Respondents

Madrassa **Students at SJH**	**%**
Ages	
Below 20 years	20
Between 20-25 years	70
Between 26-30 years	10
Residence of the student	
At the *madrassa*	80
Day scholar	20

Educational level prior to joining the *madrassa*	
Below secondary certificate	10
Matric	70
F.A/F.Sc	20
Current educational level at the *madrassa*	
M.A (*Doura Hadees*)[10]	10
Almiyah	35
Takhasus fil Lugah	15
Takhasus fil Fiqh	40
Number of years with the *madrassa*	
1-5	90
6-10	10
Rural /urban background	
Students from rural areas	70
Students from urban areas	30
Languages spoken *	
Urdu	80
Arabic	100
Broken English	40
Pashto	45
Punjabi	45
Hindko	5
Kashmiri	15

---

[10] All these courses are explained in detail in chapter 5.

Ethnicity	
Pathan	40
Punjabi	45
Kashmiri	15
Caste	
Mandarkhel	5
Paindakhel	5
Khusraukhel	5
Kambarkhel	5
Sajjankhel	5
Sadozai	5
Rajpoot	5
Syed	5
Abbasi	10
Arain	10
Malik	5
Awan	10
Mughal	5
Qureshi	20
Number of siblings studying religious education	
None	10
One	60
More than one	20
All siblings	10
Professions of siblings especially brothers	
Aaalim	50
Haafiz	40

Trade	10
Educational background of fathers of *madrassa* students	
Double M.A	5
M.A Islamiyat	5
Graduation	5
F.Sc	30
Matric	45
Middle	5
Illiterate	5
Professional background of fathers of *madrassa* students	
Tableeghi Jamaat	5
Military Officer	5
Private job	45
Carpenter	5
Business	20
Labourer	5
Rental income from land	5
School principal	5
Airforce employee	5
Educational background of mothers of *madrassa* students	
No formal education	20
Having religious education not from *madrassa*	20
Graduation	5
F.A	5
Matric	15
Middle	35

Professional background of mothers of *madrassa* students	
Housewives	100
Stated motivation for SJH	
Education for employment motives	10
Religious inclination	80
Other *madrassas* did not offer *Takhasus*[11]	5
Proximity to residence	5
Inclination for joining the *madrassa*	
Own free will	80
Parents influence and wish	20
Hobbies and interests*	
Book reading (Islamic History)	80
Book reading (general)	20
Sports (Cricket, Badminton)	20
Cooking	70
Stitching	20
Writing	10
Preparing debates	10
Listening to *Talawut* (recitation of the Quran) in free time	5
Gardening	20
Home decoration	10
Watching religious videos	5
Coin collector	5
Future plans	

---

[11] *Takhasus*- a degree in research. For a detailed explanation please see chapter 5.

Opening a *madrassa* in my village and teach there	60
Pursue further education	10
Service to Islam	20
Online courses	5
Open a hospital in my village and work there	5

* A respondent can fall in more than one category, so the total may not add up to 100%

Source: (Fieldwork Nov 2014-Aug 2015).

Now, we move onto the next chapter on; perceptions regarding education at SJH.

Chapter 5: Perceptions about Education

"The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life."

Plato

This chapter has two sections; the first section is regarding perceptions about education at SJH and the second section explains how a *madrassa* works as an educational institution.

The primary understanding of education at SJH is acquisition of religious knowledge. The females at the *madrassa* believe that seeking knowledge is of utmost importance for a Muslim. This takes its roots from the Holy Quran, the most revered book of the Muslims, as there are about 750 references to the significance of *ilm* (knowledge) in Islam (Rosenthal, 2007, pg.20). The Quran, calls upon Muslims, at several places to acquire knowledge. The *sunnah* of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) is highly revered at SJH too as it is believed that the Prophet (P.B.U.H) has wisdom in every advice.

An interesting aspect of this community includes taking a self-defensive position, as it believes in the knowledge that it produces and transmits and is defensive of it. Another reason for justifying the need to promote religious knowledge and for being so defensive, as often stated by them *"hum haq parr hain"* (we are on the right path) could be because of the negative image held of the *madrassa* not only by the society in general, but also by the media in particular, as perceived by them particularly after the military operation on lal masjid conducted in 2007, during the then president and also the chief of army staff, General Parvez Musharraf's regime. SJH and the Lal Masjid are considered to be breeding institutes for terrorism promoting religious extremism even now and are often remain at the centre of controversy.

The girls believe that learning of religion is of great importance in the life of a Muslim. Learning religion teaches the correct way to live and makes one a better human being. When one believes in the concept of *aakhirat* (life after death) as do all Muslims, one is bound to improve one's moral character and deeds.This life is temporary and transient whereas life in the hereafter is

eternal. The purpose of this life is to achieve success for the next life. Whatever deeds are done in this life will be rewarded in the next life. Those people who do good deeds and are righteous in this world will go to heaven and those who are not will go to hell. The life of the beloved Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) is quoted as the best example for us to follow. So, life is about learning about our religion and religious knowledge is considered the real knowledge. The females at the *madrassa* believe that Islam is a complete way of life and that life should be in accordance with the *shariah* (rules of religion).

Knowledge was divided into two main categories: *deeni ilm* (religious knowledge) and *dunyavi ilm* (worldy knowledge). These two broad categories do not fall within the same scale rather religious knowledge is superioir than worldly knowledge. The acquisition of religious knowlwdge is *farz* (obligatory) whereas acquiring worldly knowledge is considered a skill, for communicating with the rest of the world. Hence, worldy knowledge is not obligatory but preferred. This hierarchy of knowledge was confimed by a teacher, Amna, aged 26 years:

> *"both types of education are important; religious education comes first, worldly education comes second."*

So, religious education makes a pious Muslim and worldy education makes one a competitive human being. One's survival and existence depends on attaining education and implementing it in one's daily life. Moreover, the Quran at several places invokes Muslims to acquire knowledge. According to the Sayings of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H):

> *"ilm haasil karna harr Muslim parr farz hai."*

Translation:

It was narrated from Anas bin Malik that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

> *"Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim."*
>
> (*Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol.1, Book 1, Hadees* # 224).

The general perception here was that the *hadees* refers to both genders; male and female. The knowledge here basically refers to acquiring religious education. The perception at SJH is that the attainment of education by both the genders, men and women is equally important as is obligated by Islam. As discussed above, the emphasis is more towards religious education then worldly education.

Another perception was that *taleem* (education) includes both *ilm* (knowledge) and *amal* (action). Attaining education and not implementing it in ones daily life is of no use and is highly questionable in the *aakhirat* (hereafter).

5.1 Purpose of Education

When I asked the respondents the purpose of education, the general perception was that it refers to knowing the rules and regulations governing life. It was divided further into (*deeni taleem*) religious education and (*dunyavi taleem*) worldly education. Talking about the purpose of religious education, a few students shared:

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

"*taleem ka maqsad insaan ko sunwarna hai.... zahir aur baatan...takay maasharay ko faida pohanchay aur bakirdaar insaan bana day*" meaning "the purpose of education is to reform humans....externally and internally.... so that the society benefits and the individual develops moral ethics."

Further, she said, "*muqadam deen ki taaleem hai usski fazeelat ziada hai.... dunya kee taaleem bhi zaroori hai..... maasahary main harr kaam aana chahiye.... maslan first aid....insaan bunyadi zaroorat poori karr sakay*" meaning "religious education has more importance ......but worldy education is important too......one should know how to do every task for example....first aid....so that an individual can take care of ones basic needs."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"*taleem ka maqsad insaan kay andar shaoor ko agah karna hai...... isskay baghair insaan khokhla reh jaata hai*" meaning 'the purpose of education is to develop consciousness in a human being....without this a human remains hollow." Further, she said: "*taaleem achay buray kee tameez sikhaati hai*" meaning "education teaches us to differentiate between what is right and wrong."

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

"*deeni taleem ka maqsad deen seekhna.....amal karna .....aur phailana hai*" meaning "the purpose of religious education is to learn religion.....act upon it....and to spread it." Further, she said; "*dunyavi taleem ka maqsud hai insaan parhna likhna seekh jaye......rehnumai haasil karay .....khidmat-e-khalq karay.....unparh ke misaal nabeena*

kee tarah hotee hai" meaning *"the purpose of worldly education is that a person learns how to read and write....seeks guidance.....does social work....an uneducated person is like a blind person."*

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

"taleem ka matlab hai jannna.......ehkam e rasool....jannna......amal karna......dosroon ko sikhana.........Allah aur rasool kay ehkamaat aur ibadaat .....dunya kee taleem shaoor sikhati hai aur deen ki taleem donon jahanon ki kamyabi.....insaan ki zindagi ka maqsad deeni taleem haasil karna hai." meaning "education means to know....to know the rulings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H).....to act upon them....to teach others....to know the orders of Allah and actions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H).....worldly education raises our consciousness and religious education makes us successful in both the worlds.....the purpose of ones life is to attain religious education."

In one of the FGDs with a group of teachers, there was group consensus that

"ilm ka matlab hai jannna....jahalut say nikalay.....harr fard par farz hai woh farayuz jann lay" meaning "education means to know...to take one out of ignorance....it is obligatory on every individual to know what is essential."

The perception was that education, particularly religious education takes one out of ignorance and teaches one what is essential in life, for instance, the group quoted examples such as issues of prayers, issues of purity, issues of fasting, etc. The females here also quoted an example of big landlords and businessmen, who do not know the Quran, even though they are working on big posts and may have degrees. So the perception given here was that worldy knowledge is a skill and degrees do not give knowledge about religion.

In two of the FGDs with a group of students, there was group consensus that

"taleem alfaz nahi kirdar saazi hai" meaning "education is not merely words but character building."

All the above quotes from the field lead to the the perception that the purpose of education is; to come near *Allah*, to differentiate between *halaal* (permissible) and *haraam* (forbidden), to know the etiquettes and obligations, and to build one's character. The solution to various issues can be

saught through the study of religion. The *hadees* below signify the importance of attaining education in Islam:

"Jiss sakhs nain ilm haasil kiya woh ilm jiss say Allah ki raza haasil hotee hai aur iss nain dunya kay liye iss ilm ko haasil kiya tu woh jannat ki khushboo bhi nahin paa sakay gaa."

Translation:

It was narrated that Abu Hurairah said:

"The Messenger of Allah said: 'Whoever acquires knowledge by which the pleasure of Allah is sought, but he only acquires it for the purpose of worldly gain, will not smell the fragrance of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection."

(*Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol.1, Book 1, Hadees* # 252)

According to various quotes from the field mentioned below, from various students at SJH, the purpose of education in general, including both religious and worldly, is to know one's purpose of existence, what one's responsibilities are and how to fulfill them:

Ayesha, aged 21years:

"*taleem ka maqsad hai insaan maasharay ko pehchaan jaye aur insaan harr kisi ka haq ada karay"* meaning "the purpose of education is that humans understand societies and fulfill their responsibilities towards everyone."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"*zindagi ka maqsad kai hai"* meaning "what is the purpose of existence?"

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

"*taleem ka matlab hai janna"* .meaning "education means to know."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"*humaree zindagi ka maqsad jannana ilm ki talaash kay baghair namumkin hai.........bacha harr cheez poochta hai....harr naee cheez seekhta hai.......ilm shaoor ko baidarr karta hai......ilm ka samandar wasih hai....kamil zaat Allah kee hai.....insaan naqasul aqal hai.....naqasul ilm hai"*

meaning "it is not possible to know what is the purpose of our creation without seeking education.......a child asks about everything.....learns everything new......knowledge awakens the consciousness.....the ocean of knowledge is deep.......*Allah* is complete.......humans are less in intelligence......less in knowledge."

According to the principal of the *jamia*, the purpose of education is:

"*taleem ka maqsad degrees nahin hai....kabhi taraqee nahi kar saktay....kisi umar ki pabandi nahin hai.....insan ka andar badlay....zamir zinda ho jaye.....taleem ka maqsad judge paida karna hai*" meaning "the purpose of education is not to receive degrees....we cannot develop...there is no age limit....we have to change from inside....awaken our conscience....the purpose of education is to produce judges."

The perception of the principal was that education changes a person from inside through reflection, critical thinking and by awakening one's consciousness. Education should produce judges; meaning people who can judge soundly than those who are not educated.

According to the perception of the teachers, the purpose of religious education is to awaken one's consciousness, to create a better human being, to create a good society, as is quoted below: Amna, aged 26 years:

"*Quran ka pehla lafz hai iqra......Allah ka hokum hai......shaour haasil hota hai......jiss cheez ko hum jaantay nahin hain......agar taleem acchee ho tu nikhaar daitee hai*" meaning "the first word in the Quran is to read.... it is ordered by *Allah*....it awakens our consciousness....what we don't know.....if education is good it polishes it."

Shaheen, aged 27:

"the purpose of education is to create a *(behtereen insaan)* good human being and a good society to live in......a good human being is the one who does not create mischief *(kharaabi)* in the society..........doesn't think only for himself,.......involves and takes along everyone."

She quoted the example of those teachers, where progress of all students is important for the teacher and not just a few individuals or students. Further she said;

"a good society is the one which is free from evil *(bigaar)*....from the point of view of morality......a society that is based on ethics *(ikhlaqiyaat)*.....and *(maamalaat kay aitabaar say)*.....a society free from issues.......for example.......if someone is involved in trade........ the person should not lie or deceive customers."

Here she quoted the example of the police, which are known to be corrupt and resort to violence on people. One reason she believed could be because they do not understand religion. So the purpose of education she said is that;

"every individual should polish/reform themselves.......(*harr shakss ki apnee zaat ka nikhaar hai*).......education brings out the best in individuals *(nikhaar)*....it doesn't create error *(khaarbi)* in any area."

So, according to the analysis of the data, the purpose of education, particularly religious education, is two-fold; it not only creates a pious human being but also creates a better society to live in as far as moral values and existing in a peaceful manner with each other is concerned. Whereas, worldly education makes a human being competitive, as one learns new skills and how to communicate with the rest of the world. As was shared by a student below:

Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

"deeni taleem Allah ko pehchannay kay liye zaroori hai aur dunyavi taleem aik fun hai jitnee haasil karain faida hai" meaning "religious education is important to recognise *Allah* and worldly education is an art which the more is attained is beneficial."

Fair (2008, p. 43) quotes the recent work by Mathew Nelson who supports the idea that families in Pakistan value religious education as a basic feature of a good education. A sound and good education makes a good human being as according to the findings from the field, a good human being or a good Muslim is the one who has; high morals and ethics, who thinks for others and is not self-centred. A good society is the one which has high moral values and ethics, for example, honesty and justice are prevalent in such a society. This is all because of acquiring religious education and developing an understanding about religion, as it brings out the best in individuals and ultimately this leads to better societies. In short, education and particulary, religious education awakens our conscience, as one continuously seeks to understand the purpose of one's existence. It is essential for every Muslim, hence the necessity of *madrassa* as an educational system.

5.2 The Religious Education System

Basically, knowledge is divided into two categories by the females: *deeni ilm* (religious knowledge) and *dunyavi ilm* (worldly knowledge). The rating of religious knowledge is much higher. The acquisition of religious knowledge is *farz* (obligatory) on all Muslims whereas

acquiring worldly knowledge is not obligatory but is preferred. So, as I have quoted earlier, the sayings of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H):

"ilm haasil karna harr Muslim parr farz hai"

Translation:

It was narrated from Anas bin Malik that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

"Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim."

(*Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol.1, Book 1, Hadees* # 224).

Knowledge, according to the females at SJH, is perceived to refer to the learning of religious tenets. Worldly knowledge is attained just to acquire skills in order to compete in this world. Acquiring a skill is more important for men as compared to women because they are earning members of the family and need to work in order to support their families. The financial burden is always on the man. The women are always the responsibility of the man, either a father, brother, husband or a son (gender roles are discussed in detail in next chapter 6).

Before moving onto the section on worldly versus religious education, it is important to know what religious knowledge comprises of. Religious knowledge comprises of; the Quran (the Holy Book), *Tafsir* (commentary on the Holy Book), *Hadees* (Sayings of the Prophet), *Sunnah* (traditions of the Prophet), *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and *Shariah* (Islamic legal system). Learning of the Arabic language is compulsory at the *madrassa* as most of the religious scripture has originated in this language.

5.2.1 Worldly versus Religious Education

Educational institutions are instrumental in shaping how one perceives the world. In Pakistan, there are three major types of educational systems, (i) public schools (also known as government or Urdu medium schools), (ii) private schools and (iii) the *madrassa* education system. The first two can be categorised as either mainstream or worldy and the latter as religious. Each educational system teaches us the difference between what is right and what is wrong. The three educational systems of Pakistan create students who have different worldviews completely. There could be two reasons for this; firstly, the three educational systems represent products of totally different historical evolutionary processes and have divergent ideologies about education.

Secondly, because of a difference in educational curriculum, academic style, and discipline techniques, these systems create distinct concepts of "citizenship" among their students. So owing to this difference, students passing through these systems do not share the same worldview and hence form different types of "subjects" (Nisar, 2010). State education system is the largest and it has the highest student population enrolled in these schools as a degree or diploma from these institutions increases the eligibility for employment. Comparatively, elite private schools and *madrassas* have a smaller student population (Rahman T, 2005). *Madrassa* education primarily produces religious scholars who will work within the religious educational field or Pakistan's religious political parites (Fair, 2008, p.13). According to the analysis of the data from the field, it is essential to acquire religious education as with a specialised degree in religious studies, the girls opt for the teaching profession within the same *madrassa*, or desire to open up their own *madrassas*. Teaching is not only considered a noble profession but also gives them a sense of achievement and personal satisfaction by serving the society, as it is considered as a great service to their religion.

According to Fair who quotes (Andrabi et al. 2008, p.37), a lack of primary and secondary schools, impedes the literacy rate of girls. As in the case of SJH, many of these students come from far off rural areas, especially from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Kashmir. These girls complain about the lack of mainstream schools in their areas, hence their insufficient exposure to education. But their interest in attaining education does not go down and they come to seek religious education from the *madrassa* as was shared by many students during their interviews with me. They not only receive free education but can also graduate to become *mualimas*.

SJH offers an *Alima* course which is shorter in duration compared to the *Alim* course offered in the male seminaries. It takes eight years to complete the course in the male seminaries while the course is compressed to six years in the female seminaries (Fair, 2008, p.51). In the case of SJH, it is reduced to only four years. The reasons for the condensed course are education and marriage of the girls; as both are considered essential for an individual. From the female's perspective, education should be such that it should not compromise the appropriate age of marriage for them.

The religious education system is always single sex as in religion, free mixing and mingling of girls and boys is not allowed. According to Fair (2008, p.25), there are two kinds of religious formal educational institutions; the *maktab* (school) and the *madrassa*. While the former provides the elementary schooling of religion with the reading and learning of the Quran, they generally do not teach worldly subjects nor the *Alim* course, but the latter gives secondary and higher secondary education and most *madrassas* have residential facilities with full time students. The most distinguishing feature is the *Alim* course. *Madrassas* are further classified as *jamia* (colleges) and *darul uloom* (universities), which offer post graduate specialisation depending on the availability of their faculty.

According to Fair (2008, p.24), Urdu or Arabic is generally the medium of instruction at the religious schools. An important aspect of this research is the comparison of the religious education system with the worldly one. This comparison between both shows the superiority of the religious educational system against the other one. This comparison is made at different levels whether it is regarding the quality of education or creating a true Muslim identity; which is both nationalistic and religious. Urdu, (being the national language) and Arabic (being the language of the religion) is the primary medium of instruction at the *madrassas*, even SJH. The females at SJH prefer the use of Urdu to English because firstly, it is a national language and reflects patriotism, and secondly, their understanding of Urdu is far better than in English. The quality of education is considered better at the *madrassa* than of other mainstream institutions because; the *madrassa* is gender segregated which creates an ideal environment for learning as it promotes a religious ideology. Only learning is not considered enough, one has to practice what is taught.

Another major difference perceived between the two sytems of education; secular and religious, is that one promotes materialism and the other spirituality respectively. The latter has precedence over the former. According to Fair, (2008, p.42), Pakistanis value Islamic education as it has spiritual advantages that accrue not only to the individual but also to the family. According to the analysis of the data, it is believed that the mainstream system of education promotes materialism while the *madrassa* education promotes spirituality as it emphasises morality and religiosity. The

females believed that the mainstream education has become commercial which focuses on only material gains in this life and this leads to vested self-interests. Whereas, the *madrassa* educational system not only promotes the transmission of religious knowledge correctly but also that there is an emphasis to practice what is taught to them. Apart from this, the females are taught to care for each other as well as take care of the well-being of their community. Hence, the lack of religious curriculum and practice, desegregated gender environment and adherence to materialistic values has tarnished the image of mainstream education in their eyes. *Madrassa* education is placed on a much higher pedestal than the other educational systems.

Madrassas also teach their particular point of view (*maslak[1]*), which clarifies or rationalises the beliefs of their sect (Talbani, 1996). Moreover the students are trained to refute dissenting beliefs and Western ideas. A major aspect of the religious education at SJH is the transmission of *maslak*, the Sunni Hanafi Deobandi school of thought. This involves the refutation or *radd[2]* of other sects or schools of thought. The curriculum is composed by the *ulema* of their own *maslak*. According to Rehman, (2002, p.33), one important aspect of *madrassa* education in Pakistan is refutation, which means disproving *"the beliefs of other sub-sects of Islam"*. It was observed on the field; by watching sermons and during conversations with the females at the *madrassa*, teachers referred to the pioneers of their own *maslaks,* so that the views of their sect were internalised and it became their primary way of thinking. Also, adherence to its doctrine is important for stronger religiosity at SJH and for preserving its religious identity. The report on the religious seminaries of 1988 lists several books of Deobandi *madrassas* to refute *Shia* beliefs. This is in line with the findings from my fieldwork, as during attending the annual competition, *Bazm* at SJH, I observed students chanting anti-*shia[3]* and anti-American slogans during the

---

[1] *Maslak* is an Arabic term derived from the root word *salaka* which means to walk or to walk on a way. *Maslak* is a synonym for the term *madhab* or way or school of thought. Thus if someone claims to follow the teachings or ways of Imam Abu Hanifa, his *maslak* or *madhab* would be termed Hanafi.

[2] The process of rejection of all other schools of thought is called *radd.*

[3] one of the two main branches of Islam, that rejects the first three *Sunni* caliphs and regards Ali, the fourth caliph, as Muhammad's first true successor.

speeches and debates. Ali (2012), quotes International Crisis Group (2002) that the Deobandi sect is considered to be the most conservative and anti-Western. SJH also refutes Western thoughts and this rejection forms an integral part of their movement. It is believed that the infiltration of Western values leads to a neglect of their religion. So, for the females at SJH, the truth is present in the belief system of only their own sect, while they are blinded to beliefs of other sects and consider them false. Islam is perceived as a complete way of life in itself and following it in all spheres of life brings prosperity in this life and salvation in the afterlife, as is evident from my findings at SJH.

The doctrine of *Taqlid*[4] is taught to the students of the *madrassa* with faithful diligence. This doctrine implies that the law and practices of the early Islam are ideal, unchangeable and final. So, they need to be followed as they are without raising new questions. The teachers are considered as role models of an Islamic way of life and imitated.

Discipline and punishments in *madrassas* is much harsher than in the mainstream institutions. The physical punishments along with a teaching methodology which refutes all other religious or cultural points of view ensure the creation of minds that blindly follow the brand of religion taught to them. So, the minds are totally closed to the possibility that there is any reality outside their particular sect. The students idealise the Islamic system preached by their own sect and are taught the virtue of sacrificing their lives for the establishment of their system.

As far as students from the *madrassas* are concerned, the studentsy idealise following authority without questioning as they are trained to become conformists. The idealisation of an Islamic society and an Islamic state is inculcated in the minds of these students. They view Pakistan as an Islamic *Khilafa*, where all laws should be in conformity with Islam, i.e. *Shariah*.

---

[4] ***Taqlid*** or ***taqleed*** is an Arabic term. It literally means "to follow". In Islamic legal terminology, it means to follow a *mujtahid* (as an Islamic scholar who is competent in interpreting sharia) in religious laws and commandment as he has derived them, that is, following the decisions of a religious expert without necessarily examining the scriptural basis or reasoning of that decision, such as accepting and following the verdict of scholars of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) without demanding an explanation of the processes by which they arrive at it, hence adherence to one of the classical schools (*madhab*) of jurisprudence.

On the other hand, the curriculum of the mainstream institutions teaches entirely different values than the ones taught at the *madrassas*. The focus of *madrassas* is to teach students to become good Muslims through imparting religious education, whereas, in mainstream institutions, religion does not play a significant part in the curriculum of these schools as students are taught more worldy subjects in order to make them more competitive human beings and to develop new skill sets in them in order to make them survive and compete with the world. Students from mainstream schools have a great significance socially because they have a disproportionately high representation in businesses, bureaucracy, and state offices (Rahman T, 2005). Students tend to develop more liberal views towards life. The teaching methodology is also very different than *madrassas* as physical punishment is uncommon and asking questions is encouraged by the teachers. The focus is not on memorisation of facts instead, a thorough analysis is required of the examination questions along with an interpretation of the curriculum. This translates into more open and analytical minds. The social life within these schools is different as mostly the mainstream institutions of higher learning are co-educational. Additionally, the medium of instruction and conversation is English.

In one of the FGDs with a group of teachers, there was group consensus that one needs to learn both types of education, worldly and religious. One can survive on *madrassa* education but worldly education is important for communicating with the people as Muslims have to compete with the world. As, already mentioned above, there exists a gap between the curriculum of *madrassas* and the ouside mainstream institutions of learning. The need is to bridge the gap between both.

In another of the FGDs with a group of students, there was group consensus that worldly education is required to gain respect in this world; as one will not be a slave to anyone. Religious education is essential so that one can; serve religion, know what is essential and it relates to the concept of *aakhirat* (hereafter).

In one other FGD with a group of students, there was group consensus that there is no harm in seeking worldly education but for women, the *ulema* have given a *fatwa* on worldy education that it has some *farayaz* (conditions):

"Dunya kee taleem haasil karna jayaz hai magar kuch farayaz hain: azaadana mahul na ho....aurat ka munn khula naa ho....aurat parday main ho.... fitnay ka andaisha na ho" meaning "to attain worldy education is permissible but there are certain conditions: there should be no co-education..... a woman should stay quiet.... a woman should be in *pardah*.... there should be no temptation."

According to the perceptions from the field, there is a difference between an educated and uneducated person as is evident from the *ahadees* below:

Hadees 1:

"Ilm ki fazeelut abid parr aisee hai jaisee mairee fazeelut tum parr hai"

Translation:

Narrated Abu Umamah Al-Bahili:

Two men were mentioned before the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H). One of them a worshiper, and the other was a scholar. So the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

"The superiority of the scholar over the worshiper is like my superiority over the least of you."

(at-Trimidhi, kitaab ul ilm, hadees# 2685)

Hadees 2:

"Jo shaks ilm haasil karay gaa Allah uss kay liye jannat asaan karr day gaa"

Translation:

Narrated Abu Hurairah:

that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

"Whoever takes a path upon which to obtain knowledge, Allah makes the path to Paradise easy for him."

(at-Trimidhi, kitaab ul ilm, hadees# 2646)

The views of the teachers at SJH, about the purpose of education were:

Irum, aged 21 years:

"insaan ghulam bann kar naa rahay....." meaning *"one should not live as a slave".*

Further, she said one should be able to converse in the English language. Here by education she meant worldly education.

Maria, aged 18 years:

"*insaan ko ibadat kay liye paida kiya hai.... taleem ka maqsad hai islaam ki dawat daina aur isski dunya aur aakhirat sunwar jaye*" meaning "humans have been created for the worship of *Allah*.... the purpose of education is to spread Islam and to reform oneself for this world and the hereafter."

Here by education she meant religious education.

Shaheen, aged 27:

"Apart from school/college education, it is important to develop an association with the Quran as well..... a mother should know everything as a mother's upbringing is reflected in the behaviour of her child......so... I would say both worldly and religious education is important..... generally students of *madrassas* do not interact with the outside world.....they can only relate to their own circle."

The students were of the view that:

Rabia, aged 17 years:

"the general perception is that worldly education cannot come out of *madrassas*... it can....it was during the British era that the *madrassas* were destroyed....private *madrassas* exist now."

When asked whether religious or worldly education is more important, the response by the majority of the respondents was that both are equally important.

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"*deen kay ilm kay saath dunyavi ilm achee baat hai*" meaning "it is a good thing to learn worldly knowledge along with religious knowledge."

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

"*dunya ko parhna zaroori hai....iss kay zehan ko samajhna zaroori hai....aaj kal kay maasharay kay liye donon zaroori hain....dunya kee baat ko aaj kal ghour say sunna jaata hai*" meaning "it is important to gain worldly knowledge....to understand how the world operates....it is important to seek both worldly and religious knowledge these days, as people are attentive to worldly matters."

Binte Hafsa, aged 23 years, when asked the purpose of education responded:

"Taleem ka maqsad Allah kee raza hai......dunya main rehnay ka tareeqa ajaaye......deen ki roshni ki taraf ajao.......khud bhi amal karo aur dosroon ko bhi amal karwao" meaning "the purpose of education is to attain Allah's pleasure....to learn how to live in this world....to come towards the light of religion....to act on it yourself and to tell others to act on it as well."

Binte Ayesha, aged 17 years:

"madrassa bachoon ko quran aur hadees sikhata hai.....ikhlaq sikhata hai.....taleem aur tarbeeyat donon par zor hai.....baqee schools sirf dunavi taleem daitain hain......tarbeeyat par zorr naheen hai aur na deeni taleem parr" meaning *"madrassa* teaches children the Quran and *Hadees*...builds their character....emphasis is both on education and upbringing here....whereas other schools only impart worldly knowledge....there is no emphasis on upbringing or on religious education."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"aurat saheeh ho jaye tu maashira sahih ho jaye....deen kee taleem zarori hai" meaning "if a woman becomes righteous......it will reflect on the society as well....so....religious education is important."

Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

"shehri logon ka rujhaan deeni taaleem ki taraf kum hai aur dhihaat main ziada hai" meaning "the people in cities are less inclined towards religious knowledge as compared to the rural population."

According to the principal at the *jamia*:

"ilm kabhi chori naheen ho sakta......harr cheez chori ho sakti hai....dunya kee taleem zarori hai......dunya ka ilm nahin hoga tu deen ka kaam nahin karr sakain gay" meaning "knowledge can never be stolen.....everything else can be stolen....worldly education is important.....if we don't have worldly knowledge we will not be able to work fully for our religion."

Further, she shared:

"Fikar ki aik saakh aik hazaar saal ki ibadat say behtar hai." meaning "one moment of worry is better than the worship of a thousand years."

According to the perceptions from the field, education, particularly religious education, is important because it raises ones consciousness and the ability to think and reflect. *Tafakkur* (contemplation) is an activity of the educated people. The continual process of *taffakur* leads

eventually to constant awareness or remembrance of *Allah* to such an extent that one realises that there is nothing but *Allah* and eventually that one should live a life in complete dissolution to Him, including all thoughts, actions and consciousness.

In one of the FGDs with a group of teachers, there was group consensus that there is a gap in education between *madrassa* and other mainstream educational curriculum. Either cannot be prioritised, both are important. The need is to bridge the gap between both.

5.3 Is Education *Jihad*?

According to the sayings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H):

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

> *"Whoever goes out seeking knowledge, then he is in Allah's cause until he returns."*
>
> *(at-Trimidhi, kitaab ul ilm, hadees# 2647)*

When I asked the respondents whether attaining education is *jihad*, both the teachers and students were unanimous in their perception that yes, attaining education, is *jihad*; "*qalam ka jihad*" meaning "*jihad* of the pen."

According to various students at the *madrassa*:

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

> *"apnay aap ko sanwarna jihad hai"* meaning "to smarten up oneself is *jihad*."

Rabia, aged 17 years:

> *"ilm haasil karna jihad hai.....qalam ka jihad.....kyoun kay app akhbaar main column likh sakthay hain......koi kitaab likh sakthay hain"* meaning "to attain education is *jihad*.... *jihad* by the pen..... because you can write a newspaper column...... can write any book."

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

> *"taleem rehnumai kartee hai tu zarori hai"* meaning "education gives guidance so it is a necessity."

Syeda Fatima, aged 18 years:

"taleem nay tameez day dee jihad ki" meaning "education gives awareness about the concept of *jihad.*"

According to the perceptions from the field, teaching and learning is a form of *jihad* as it was narrated by Abu Hurrairah:

I heard the Messenger of Allah say:

"Whoever comes to this mosque of mine, and only comes for a good purpose, such as to learn or to teach, his status is like that of one who fights in Jihad in the cause of Allah. Whoever comes for any other purpose, his status is that of a man who is keeping an eye on other people's property."

(*Sunan Ibn e Majah, Book of Sunnah, Hadees #* 227)

It is quoted in the Holy Quran (*surah Al-Baqara, ayat* 154):

"Na kaho jo Allah kay rastay main shaheed ho jayee murdah hai balkay woh Allah kay pass zinda hai tum gour nahin kartay."

Translation:

"and say not of those who are slain in God's cause, "They are dead": nay, they are alive, but you perceive it not."

Jihad literally means to strive or to struggle. According to various teachers at SJH, the meaning of *jihad* is perceived as:

Irum, aged 21 years:

"jihad ka matlab hai mushaqat karna" meaning "*jihad* means to work hard."

Maria, aged 18 years:

"jihad ka matlab hai gunnahoon say bachna" "*jihad* means to refrain from committing sins."

Shaheen, aged 27:

"The purpose of *jihad* is the spread of faith (*deen ki tarweejh*)."

The perception among various students at SJH was:

Haya, aged 20 years:

"nafs ko gunahoon say rokna jihad akbar hai.....ilm haasil karna jihad hai kyoun kay insaan achay buray ki tameez karay gaa aur taaleem ka sahih istaamaal karay gaa..... deen ki firogh kay liye donon zaroori hain." meaning "*jihad* is to refrain from committing sins.....educating

oneself is *jihad* because a person will be able to distinguish between right and wrong and utilise one's knowledge appropriately....both forms are equally important to spread faith."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"*Allah kee rah main kufaar say larhna*" meaning "to fight in the way of Allah with infidels."

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

"*jihad literally means kufaar say muqabla....Islam ki bulandi kee khatir kufaar say jang karna*"meaning "*jihad* literally means to fight against infidels for the cause of Islam."

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

"*deeni taleem jihad hai dunyavi nahin*" meaning "attaining religious education is *jihad* and not worldly education."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"*kisi burai ko rokna jihad hai*" meaning "to stop any wrong is *jihad*."

Rabia, aged 17 years:

"*Allah ki rah main nikalna*" meaning "to go out in the way of *Allah*."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"*jadojehad karna jihad hai*" meaning "to struggle is *jihad*."

Syeda Fatima, aged 18 years,

"*haq ki awaaz kay liye larna jihad hai*" meaning "to fight for upholding the truth is *jihad*."

Types of *Jihad*

According to the data collected from the field; there are five types of *jihad* according to the *ulema*:

a) *Jihad ma al kufaar* (this is from ones hands, of ones wealth, from ones tongue and heart). It means to refrain from doing evil from ones hands or to fight with infidels to protect Islam, to refrain from using wrong words and to spend in the way of *Allah* of ones wealth).

b) *Jihad ma al fasaq* (this includes a sequence; firstly the hands, then ones tongue and then the heart). As is a *hadees*:

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said:

"jab tum burai ko daikho to hath se roko, hath se roknay ki taqat na rakho to zuban se roko agar zuban se rokne ki taqat na ho to dil main bura jano aur ye eman ki sab say

kamzor halat hai. Jo burai ko dil main bhe bura na janay us ke andar ratti barabar eman nahe hai."

Translation:

"He who amongst you sees something abominable should modify it with the help of his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue, and if he has not strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart, and that is the least of faith."

(*Sahih Muslim, kitaab ul imaan, hadees* # 79)

c) *Jihad ma ashaitan* (this is to fight against evil intentions, doubts and suspicions in ones heart)

d) *Jihad ma an nafs* (to fight with ones desires)

e) There is also a fifth category according to some females and that is "*qalam ka jihad, shaoor ki bedari kay liye haasil kiya jaata hai*" meaning "with the pen for education purposes to spread awareness."

There is no hierarchy among these five types of *jihad* as it is need based, that is, the need for *jihad* arises if there is a need for it. The believers are required vigorously to do whatever they can towards popularising, defending, keeping alive and flourishing, in the way of Islam and servility to Allah. This, in Islam, is called *jihad*. It can take many forms (as discussed above) depending on the circumstances, varying from time to time and place to place.

For example, there arises a situation in which it becomes difficult or even dangerous for a person, his/her family or community to profess Islam and to remain true to it. In that case, *jihad* will lie in doing one's best for oneself, one's family or community to stay firmly devoted to Islam. It would, certainly, be a grand *jihad* in those circumstances. Similarly, should Muslims, through their own folly or negligence, start drifting away from faith, then, at such a time, to devote one's time and energy to their religious revival and reform, too, would constitute a kind of *jihad*. To carry the Divine guidance to those who are ignorant of it, to make an earnest effort to persuade them wisely and sympathetically to accept it, is yet another form of *jihad*.

5.4 Gender and Education

Gender construct and roles are defined and static; education is a variable dependent on these strictly defined concepts whereas gender is an independeant variable. The purpose of education varies from one gender to another. Education makes one a better man or woman. It is believed that males and females have been created to perform certain gender roles; the economics is learnt by men as men are the bread winners and have to earn a living to provide for their families. Whereas, the women's domain is the private sphere of her home and the family. Since she is procreative and a nurturer, she requires some basic worldly education for survival but religious education is considered essential for her as she has to bring up her children according to the tenets of Islam.

According to perceptions from the field, when asked whether girls or boys education is more important, the response was both; by majority of the respondents. When asked whether girls should be educated, the unanimous response was yes, girls should be educated. A few of the respondents shared that girls need basic education till matric at least (worldly) and from then onwards religious education. In households, where the emphasis was on educating boys only, it was shared "*woh deen say door hain"* meaning "they are not aware of religion." The responses were further divided into (*deeni taleem*) religious education and (*dunyavi taleem*) worldly education.

In one of the FGDs with a group of students, there was group consensus that there is no differentiation between educating girls and boys. Educating a girl is like educating a society. A woman should not restrict herself to religious education only. If women were not to be educated, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) would not have educated his wife Hazrat Aisha (R.A).

According to the Holy Quran (*Surah Noor, Ayat* 31):

"Apni nazroon ko jhuka kay rakho......"

Translation[5]:

---

[5] Translation has been verified from both; the website: www.islamicity.org/quransearch and fieldwork as well.

"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and to be mindful of their chastity, and not to display their charms [in public] beyond what may [decently] be apparent thereof."

According to views of the teachers on boys and girls' education, the difference between girls versus boys in education has decreased because of a growing awareness about the importance of attaining education for girls as well, as is shared below:

Umme Amna, aged 26 years:

"Shaour agaya hai" meaning "awareness has spread."

Shaheen, aged 27, quoted Napolean:

"mujhay parhee likhee maaeen do.....main behtreeen qauom doon ga" meaning "give me educated mothers.....i will give you the best nation." Further, she shared: *"it is important to educate girls in schools and colleges but there is no implementation (amal) of education there."*

According to various views of the students on boys and girls education:

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

"larkeeyon kee taleem bahut zaroori hai.....larkee parhtee hai tu naslain parhteen hain.....larkeeyon nay auladd ki parwarish karnee hotee hai....larkoon kee parhaee apnay tak mehdood rehtee hai" meaning "educating girls is very important....educating a girl is like educating generations.....girls are responsible for upbringing of their children....education of boys is restricted to themselves only."

Haya, aged 20 years:

"agar aurat ilm haasil karay gee tu pura khaandaan taaleem yafta hoga" meaning "if a woman is educated so will be her entire family." Further, she said: *"larkay ko parhana aik fard ko parhana hai"* meaning "educating a boy is educating one individual only."

Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

"donon zarori hai.....larkee nay ghar ko chalana hota hai aur larkay nay maasharay main rehna hota hai" meaning "both are important..... as girls have to run homes while boys have to deal with the society (outside world)."

Zunaira, aged 22 years:

> *"taleem aurat ka haq hai.... jo log sirf larkay kee taleem parr zorr daitay hain jaahalat kay andhairay main hain"* meaning "the woman has a right to education....those people who only emphasise educating boys are ignorant themselves."

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

> *"aurat ko chahiye woh ilm haasil karay takay maasharay ko faida pohunchay"* meaning "a woman should seek education so that the society benefits."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

> *"donon zarori hain.....aurat nay pura khandaan sunbhalna hota hai"* meaning "both are important....a woman has to take care of the entire family."

Rabia aged 17 years:

> *"donon nay zindagi guzarni hai......donon kay liye zindagi kay asool jannna zarori hain"* meaning "both have to live this life.....it is important for both to know the principles of life."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

> *"taleem donon kay liye zarori hai....mard aur aurat"* meaning "education is necessary for both....men and women."

In one of the FGDs with a group of teachers, there was group consensus that it is important to educate both; boys and girls.

When I asked my respondents whether there is anything specifically (regarding the Quran or *Hadees)* in Islam, regarding the education of girls, the response was that there is nothing specific for females in the Quran and *Sunnah* as far as educating girls is concerned. The perception was that the term "*Iqra*" (read) in the Holy Quran is generally for both genders; men and women:

It is mentioned in the Holy Quran (*Surah Alaq*, verse 1):

> *"Parrh apnay rab kay naam say jiss nay paida kiya."*

Translation[6]:

> *"Read in the name of thy Sustainer, who has- ."*

---

[6] (translation from www.islamicity.org/quransearch)

According to the principal at the *jamia*:

> *"mazhab nay aurat ko izzat dee hai......pehlay aurat ko zinda dafan kia jaata thaa.....islam ki wajah say aurat ko izzat milee hai.....islam nay aurat ko bahut bara muqaam dia hai.....ustaad rohani waldain ki jaga hota hai."*

Meaning "religion has given women a lot of respect.....prior to the advent of Islam....women used to be buried alive.....Islam has given her a position in society.....teachers are just like spiritual parents."

Further, she shared:

> *"Aaj kal bachiyoun kay liye taleem zarori hai.....jahan bhee jaye gee.....faida hi hoga.....deen ka kaam achee tarah karr sakay gee.....taleem kabhi zaya nahi hotee."*

Meaning "nowadays education is important for girls.....wherever they go......it will be beneficial......they will be able to work better for religion.........education is never wasted."

According to a teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years:

> *"There is no restriction on education of a Muslim man or woman."*

She gave the example of Hazrat Aisha (R.A) that her house was considered as an educated house. Further, she said:

> *"It is important to impart education to females....this is an age of mischief and temptation (fitnah).....it is important for females to check their dressing......pardah is obligatory.....a woman should not be afraid to be called a Muslim...... It is our Prophet (P.B.U.H) who gave recognition to women.....as in previous times.....it was not as such......so we follow him as it gives us our identity."*

Rights of women are discussed in detail in the next chapter on perceptions about empowerment. A woman's right to education is discussed below. As discussed earlier, in the words of the Prophet (P.B.U.H):

> *"To seek knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim."*
>
> (*Sunan Ibn Majah, Bab fazlul ilm, hadees* # 224).

According to the perceptions from the field, Muslims here mean both; male and female Muslims, as women are considered the twin halves of men. A woman in Islam has the right to knowledge

and education. Allah encourages women to read and keep up the learning process. He also bestows His mercy upon all who seek knowledge and gives them high status (*Surah Az-Zumar*, *ayat* 9):

"Is one who is obedient to Allah, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)? Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allah's Signs and Verses").

According to (*Surah, Al-Mujadilah , ayat* 11):

"O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room. Allah will give you (ample) room (from His Mercy). And when you are told to rise up (for prayers, Jihad, or for any other good deed), rise up. Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do."

This is referring to religious knowledge, in the first place and to any other kind of knowledge in the second place, where one has the intention of benefitting himself/herself, his/her family and the Islamic society. A husband should not forbid his wife from going out of the house to seek basic religious knowledge unless he is teaching her at home. The Quran advises Muslims to pray (*Surah Ta-Ha, ayat* 114):

"Then high above all be Allah, the True King. And be not in haste [O Muhammad (SAW)] with the Quran before its revelation is completed to you, and say: My Lord! Increase me in knowledge."

According to the Holy Quran (*Surah Zumar, Para* 23, *Ayat* 9):

"Jannay wala aur naa jannay wala woh barabar nahin ho saktay."

Translation:

Say: "Can they who know and they who do not know be deemed equal?" [But] only they who are endowed with insight keep this in mind!"

The perception here was that it refers to both religious and worldy education here.

According to the following *ahadees*:

> *"Hazrat Abu Huraira say rawayat hai kay rasool Allah nay farmaya kay jo aadmi kisi aisay raastay par challa jiss say ilm talab karta tha tu Allah rab ulizzat iss kay liye jannat ka raasta asaan kar daita hai".*

Translation:

Abu Hurairah reported the Prophet (P.B.U.H) as saying:

"If anyone pursues a path in search of knowledge, Allah will thereby make easy for him a path to paradise; and he who is made slow by his actions will not be speeded by his genealogy."

> *(Abu Dawood, Kitaab ul ilm, hadees #3643)*

> *"Rasool Allah ka farmaan hai kay dunya malhoon hay aur iss main sab kuch malhoon hai sawaye Allah talla kay zikar kay aur iss kay saath wabastagee kay aur aalim ya ilm haasil karnay waalay".*

Translation:

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

"Lo! Indeed the world is cursed. What is in it is cursed, except for remembrance of Allah, what is conducive to that, the knowledgeable person and the learning person."

> *(at-Tirmidhi, kitaab uz zuhd, hadees# 2322)*

> *"Hazrat Inss say rawayat hai kay rasool Allah nay farmaya jo ilm ki talaash main nikla woh Allah ki rah main hai jab tak woh ghar na lotay".*

Translation:

Narrated Anas bin Malik that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

"Whoever goes out seeking knowledge, then he is in Allah's cause until he returns."

> *(at-Tirmidhi, kitaab ul ilm, hadees# 2647)*

The perception among the students regarding the importance of girl's education in the Quran and *Sunnah* was:

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

"Hazrat Asma (R.A) came to the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and said: *"Reserve a day for us for religious education"*. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) used to impart religious knowledge to women of his era in *pardah*."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"auratoon ko taaleem dainee chahiye kyounkay Islam taalem parr zorr daita hai" meaning "a woman should be educated because Islam emphasises it."

It was shared on the field that all of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H) wives were *aalimas*. They used to be taught once every week by our Holy Prohet (P.B.U.H) himself and discussion on various issues was held with him. Our prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) took people out of darkness, as girls were buried alive before his time. Women, before the advent of Islam, had no importance and rights. The religion Islam gave them a status and their rights. During the Prophet's (P.B.U.H) time, the women were educated by the companions of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H). Hence, it is obligatory to seek education and there is no differentiation on seeking educations as far as boys or girls are concerned.

5.5 Role Models: The Prophet's (P.B.U.H) Wives

Through my fieldwork, the following information was revealed by the respondents; both the teachers and the students:

The Prophet's (P.B.U.H) wife Hazrat Aisha (R.A), was the biggest *Faqeeha* (someone who gives *fatwas*) of her time in history. She was responsible for the training of all women of her time. Allah has revealed 17 *Ayats* (verses) for her in the Holy Quran. She was an authority on all *Hadees* (traditions of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) on women's issues. *Surah Noor* in the Holy Quran is a witness to her chastity, purity and piety. Our Prophet (P.B.U.H) wanted his wife to educate herself and he himself used to educate her that is why the knowledge she possessed is not held by women of present times. The companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) used to acquire religious education from Hazrat Aisha (R.A) behind *pardah* (veil). There is a difference in attainment of knowledge held by her and the women of present times. That is why women of present times cannot become a *Mufteehah* (female of *Mufti*) as she does not have that level of understanding, knowledge or research as held by Hazrat Aisha (R.A).

Hazrat Khadeeja (R.A) used to spread faith through *tableegh* (propagation). She used to discuss issues of her time. When I inquired about the details of *Tableegh i*n Islam, I was told that recently a delegation of eight females and seven men from SJH went to Lahore for three days on their own expenses. The ratio is one man who is *mehram* to one woman. The eighth woman was a daughter being accompanied by her mother or father. The women stayed in one house and the men stayed at a mosque. There are certain conditions attached for *tableegh,* which are; the women should be accompanied by a *mehram,* the women should observe *pardah,* the women sit behind the men who sit in front rows of the vehicle that they travel in, they cannot gossip or engage in idle talk and observe *Zikar* (mention of Allah), they cannot eat too much food. The duration of *tableegh* is either for 3days, 15days, 40 days, 4 months, 7 months or upto 1 year.

5.6 *Madrassa* as an Educational System

This section relates to; *madrassa* as an educational system, the admission process of students and teachers, the religious educational system, the faculties and their curriculum, the difference between the male and the female system of education, the teaching methodology, the roles and responsibilities of the females within the *madrassa*, *jamia's* principles, positive aspects about the *madrassa*, area of improvements, concept of confidence and where it comes from.

Madrassas are centuries-old institutions of Islamic learning. As mentioned earlier, they run parallel to the public and private schools and are well spread in the whole of the Islamic world. Back in the 11th century, when the concept of a *madrassa* came into being, its main purpose was to promote religious awareness and produce future Islamic religious scholars (*Ulema*). Around the 18th century, a curriculum known as *Dars-i-Nizami* became the standard syllabus. It tried to combine religious education with rational sciences so that students had the choice of professions like law, administration, etc. However, madrassas have always concentrated mainly on Islamic education and so the students mostly became religious scholars, preachers, etc.

The *madrassa* system in Pakistan is organised through five boards (*wafaq*) of varying ideologies (these represent the five dominant Islamic schools of thought in the country and each kind has its own educational policy and curriculum). These *wafaqs* are recognised by the government of

Pakistan. It might be relevant to mention here that unlike Pakistan, in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Iran, the state controls religious learning to prevent sectarian disharmony in the society.

The general perception was that the quality of education has increased over the years at SJH, and the role of the principal was appreciated in this regard; whether it was the new and revised curriculum, introduction of new books, a favourable environment for learning or facilities available at the *madrassa*. The staff is found to be highly cooperative with the students. There is zero tolerance for disrespect of elders and teachers and this creates a conducive environment for learning. There are hardly any conflicts at the *madrassa*.

According to a few students, their perception on the quality of education;
Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

> *"dunyavi taaleemi adaroon ka miyaar girr gaya hai kyoun kay deen say doori hai....deeni taaleemi adaroon ka miyaar nahin gira aur na kami ayee hai"* meaning "the standard of education in institutions imparting worldly knowledge has gone down because they are away from religion...... while the standard of education in institutions imparting religious knowledge has not gone down or lessened."

Further, she said:

> *"yahaan parr ustaad ka ehtaram ziada hai.....laraee jhagra kam hai......ustaad parhanay aatay hain aur dunyavi baatain kam kartay hain......banawat dikhawa kam hai.....deeni idaray idaray saada hain aur yahan nazam o zabt ziada hai"* meaning "over here....there is more respect for teachers....less conflict...teachers are professional....come to teach and there is less talk over materialistic things....less of show off......religious institutions are simple and more disciplined."

Syeda Fatima, aged 18 years:

> *"the kind of religious education that you get in madrassas through the ulema cannot be attained in schools and colleges."*

According to the principal:

> *"school ki taleem ka miyar girr gaya hai....bunyadi ustaad mehnat nahin kartay.....kitab kay ilawa bhi ilm daina chahiye.....taleem agar karobar ban jaye tu maasharay main*

sukoon aur taraqee kaisay hogee" meaning "the quality of education has gone down in schools....teachers don't work hard...knowledge apart from the books needs to be imparted....if education becomes business.....how will the society progress and become peaceful."

According to a teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years:

"Education is business everywhere.... not here at the madrassa as every possible effort is made to make the student understand the course.....education is for the good of this world and the hereafter and to understand the religion well."

5.6.1 The Admission Process

There are too many students seeking admission and the *madrassa* has a limited capacity for intake. So, there is a written test and interview for admissions. There is no age factor for the admissions to join the *madrassa*. Unlike other educational institutes which have an age resrtriction, girls as well as women of all ages, classes of society, educational and ethnic backgrounds can join in. The only eligibility criterion is the desire or aptitiude to learn religious knowledge. Day scholars are also welcomed. All students must agree to abide by the rules of the *madrassa*. Some girls from very poor households also join the *madrassa* and since they are unable to bear the expenses of mainstream education, the *madrassa* caters to them by providing free meals, boarding and lodging along with free education, clothes, books, etc. to these students.

The Admission Test

a) **For the Students**

The admission test for young students is both written and oral. The written test for younger classes includes, writing in English from the alphabet A to Z, filling in the blanks, column matching, etc. The test is checked to ascertain which class a female qualifies for. For older students, there are three subjective questions on the test: one each from English, Urdu and Science.

The oral test includes a viva on personal questions. The personality, interests and the mental level of a student is judged through the viva; whether the student is academic or

117

not, or can she bring a positive change in herself. The speaking ability as well as the language of a female student is ascertained. The written test for matric is based on Quaid-i-Azam's fourteen points. Formatting and writing of sentences is also checked apart from the knowledge of the student.

To get admission in the four year *alima* course, a female should have atleast a Secondary School Certificate (SSC). The *madrassa* authorities decide the eligibility of the girls to a particular grade in accordance with her previous educational qualification and experience. If a student is illiterate or cannot speak in Urdu, then such students are put in a separate class.

b) For the Teachers

The admission test for teachers is both written and oral too. Both insiders to the *madrassa* and outsiders willing to seek recruitment at the *madrassa* are tested by *Maulana Sahab* (*Ustaad Jee*) himself. He sits in the oral test to check the teacher's aptitude, experience and ethics (*ikhlaqiyaat).* If the teacher is not upto the standard, she is not admitted for teaching.

Students per Class

There are 30-40 students per class. If a class exceeds, more than 50 or 55 students, then two sections are made. Individual attention is given to younger students. There are two teachers for every class. If one teacher is on leave, the other is made her backup so that the classes continue without interruptions even in the absence of one teacher. The duration of every class is 40 to 45 minutes.

5.6.2 Faculties at the *Madrassa* and their Curriculum

At the *madrassa*, different courses are offered under the supervision of *mualima's* (teachers). The four major faculties at SJH are as follows:

Faculty of *Hifz*

Hifz means to preserve or protect. Our Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) memorised the Holy Quran and passed it on to his companions through oral recitation. This tradition has been passed on and some students come to SJH to *hifz* (memorise) the Holy Quran. The student must have passed primary level of education to *hifz* the Quran. Students who complete the course get the title of *hafiza* (guardian, protector).

Faculty of *Tajweed ul Quran*

Tajweed means to make better or improve. It is the art of reciting the Holy Quran with; proficiency, proper pronunciation and punctuation *(quwayud)* otherwise the meaning of the text changes. So, the students learn how to recite the Holy Quran according to the specific rules set for correct pronunciation. It is important to learn *tajweed* as any change in pronounciation of a word can change the meaning of the word. Also, it is believed that the Holy Quran was revealed to our Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) along with its rules of recitation.

Faculty of *Pre Alima* course

The students must have passed matric or be a SSC holder in order to register for the *Alima* course. This faculty prepares the students for the *Alima* course. It has three sub departments which operate under this faculty with syllabous that integrates the religious education and the worldly one. The level of knowledge that is provided to these students is in view of their previous schooling or learning experiences.

The table (5.1) on next page shows the equivalent grades at SJH and their equivalent to other mainstream school grades:

Table 5.1: SJH School Grades and their Equivalent to other Mainstream School Grades.

Mainstream School Grades	Equivalent grades at SJH
Class 1	*Ibtadaya awal*
Class 2	*Ibtadaya doum*
Class 3	*Ibtadaya soum*
Class 4	*Ibtadaya chaharum*
Class 5	*Ibtadaya panjum*
Class 6	*Mutiwasitah awal*
Class 7	*Mutiwasitah doum*
Class 8	*Mutiwasitah soum*

(Source: fieldwork)

If a female student is an excellent performer, she jumps a grade.

Ibtadaya

Ibtadaya is primary level at the madrassa. This programme accommodates those girls who may never have been exposed to any type of learning either at a school or at a madrassa. It is a five year programme. The main subjects taught include Urdu, Islamiyat, Arabic, English, Mathematics, Science, Computers and General Knowledge (these subjects are taught from first till eighth grade of the *madrassa*). Islamiyat is a must. The text books used are same as used in public schools approved by the text book boards of provinces (it was here that the principal of SJH appreciated the role of the Punjab government and the text books that have been approved by the Punjab text book board. It was shared that these text books have fewer mistakes compared to the Federal board and are reviewed by herself for designing the curriculum at SJH).

Salient Features of *Roza Awal, Doum or Soum*

The salient features are that a basic Quran course is held for the first 15 days. No books are given to the students and emphasis is on just learning, counting, making small sentences, etc., for 15

days. For example, how to perform *wazu* (abulution), how to perform prayers, how to talk to teachers, *duas* (prayers) and *kalimas.* Students learn to write their names on the blackboard. For example, my name is.........., my father's name is........., my *jamia's* name is........., names of teachers, names of class, etc. They are taught ABC, 123, *alaf bay pay,* etc.

Mutiwasitah

Mutiwasitah is middle level at the *madrass*a. Students of *Ibtadaya* or those who have received their primary five years of education at mainstream educational institutes of learning are accommodated. This is also a three years programme. The subjects taught are an extension of the ones taught in *Ibtadaya.* Subjects like Home Economics, is introduced in the sixth grade and continues till grade 8th. The course books of Federal Board and Punjab Board are prescribed to the students. The students who pass this level are given the degree of middle or grade 8th.

Faculty of the *Alima* Course

It is a four years course at the *madrassa*. The *Alima* course has four levels: *Aama, Khasa, Aliyah* and *Almia* or *Doura-e-Hadees.* The curriculum for the *Alima* degree is known as *Dars i Nizami.* The syllabus is adapted and composed by scholars of the Deoband school of thought. The last year of *Dars i Nizami* is called *Doura-e-Hadees.* The students must have passed matriculation or should be a SSC holder in order to register for the *Alima* course.

The table (5.2) on next page shows the degrees at SJH after matric and their equivalent to other mainstream educational degrees:

Table 5.2: SJH Degrees after Matric and their Equivalent to other Mainstream Educational Degrees.

Level	Duration	Comparable Degree
Aama	1 year	Grade 11
Khasa	1 year	Intermediate (F.A) / grade 12
Aliyah	1 year	Bachelors (B.A)
Almiyah	1 year	Masters (M.A) in Islamic studies or Arabic
Takhasus (research) *Fil Lugah* (Arabic Grammar) *Fil Fiqh* (issues)	1 year	Post M.A or PhD

(Source: Fieldwork)

Those students, who have completed their matriculation can come for the first year, *Aama* and are taught about Islam which includes; Islamic history, Quran, *Hadees, Fiqh* and grammar. *Khasa*, the second year, builds character and deals with morality and ethics. *Aliyah*, the third year, deals with issues and what Islam says about these issues. For example, issues during travelling, sickness, relations with ones neighbor, *Nikkah* (marriage), inheritance, business, banking, dowry, etc.

According to the principal at SJH:

"*hum parr karr asool nikaltay hain*" meaning "we read and then try to find theory in the light of Quran and *sunnah.*" It was here she shared that life insurance is not allowed in Islam.

Almiyah, in the final year, also known as *Doura e Hadees,* six famous books of hadiths are studied namely: *Shirul Mayyasir, Trimizi Shareef, Abu Dawood Shareef, Fiqh ul qaloob, Muslim Shareef* and *Bukhari Shareef. Bukhari Shareef* is more detailed whereas *Muslim Shareef* is less detailed. At the end of this course, the students get an officially recognised *sanad* (certificate) from their respective board. This degree is recognised to be an equivalent to Masters in Arabic and Islamiyat of the worldy education. This helps them to pursue a career in religious studies as a

teacher, or an *alima* (religious scholar). Some even can open up their own *madrassas* if they have the finances.

According to a teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years:

"We have an Aalima course.........which is a four years course at the madrassa equivalent to a master's degree......... religion asks you to educate yourself (chahye tumhain cheen jaana parray) meaning even if you have to go to China.......we have a Takhasus course here.......which is equivalent to a PhD......it is a one year course.......those students that pass the Aalima course with an A or A+ grade qualify for the PhD course after passing the written and oral admission test."

Faculty of *Takhasus* (Research)

This is a one year's course of specialisation with the *madrassa* in one of the following fields:

➢ *Takhasus Fil Lugah* (Arabic Grammar)

➢ *Takhasus Fil Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). It is also called the *ifta* course. *Ifta* is an Arabic word meaning *fatwa* or an authoritative ruling with reference to Islam. Upon successful completion of this course, the students get the degree of *Muftiyah* (a female capable of giving *fatwa*). *Dar ul Ifta*, a special library was established to provide women seeking religious solutions to their problems. These problems can be related to their domestic life, marital relationships and issues, etc. Incase a *fatwa* (a religious verdict) is issued, it requires assistance from males. The case is prepared by the females after extensive research and consulting various books on the subject and then is sent to the male department for authentication. A *fatwa* issued by a female scholar cannot stand alone and is not considered valid until it is authenticated by a male scholar.

5.6.3. Visitation Hours

Thursday is half day at the *jamia* and Friday is the weekly off. So, parents can come to meet their children either after half time on Thursday and can come meet anytime on Friday. Some of the residents go home for weekends and come back to the *madrassa* before commencement of the classes on Saturday mornings. Saturday is the first day of the week. For Sunday, visitation hours are between *Asar* (afternoon) to *Maghrab* (evening) prayers.

5.6.4 Gender and *Madrassa* Education

The *Alima* course taught at SJH is shorter in duration as compared to the one taught in male *madrassas*. It takes four years to complete the course in a female *madrassa*, whereas it takes eight years to complete the same course in a male *madrassa*. Upon inquiring the reason for the shorter course for females, it was shared by teachers and students that education and marriage both are considered essential for females. The education of a female should not compromise their appropriate ages for marriages. So, four years of education, equips them with sufficient knowledge to start a new married life.

According to Shaheen, a teacher, aged 27 years at SJH:

> *"for males the Alima course is eight years long.....for females it is four years....in order to become a Mufti (male scholar)......the requirement is eight years of education (Alima) and one year of teaching experience (8+1 years)......for a Muftiyah (female scholar)....the requirement is four years of education (Alima) and one year of teaching experience (4+1 years).....so the difference is in subjects taught......and the time duration.....the course for males is of a longer duration."*

5.6.5 The Annual Academic Year

The annual academic year starts with the month of *Shawwal*[7] and concludes in *Rajab*[8]. Admissions for the new academic year start from the 7th of *Shawwal* and end 15th of *Shawwal*. Classes start from the 13th of *Shawwal*. The lunar calendar is followed at the *madrassa*. The year is divided into three terms and each is of three months duration. The evaluation for the first two terms is done by the *madrassa* administration whereas the annual examinations are administered by the *Wafaq* (religious board of studies) for *Deobandis*, which has its head office in Multan. Annual vacation is given during the month of *Ramzan*[9] unlike other mainstream educational institutions along with *Eid*[10] holidays.

---

[7] *Shawwal* is the tenth month of the lunar Islamic calendar.

[8] *Rajab* is the seventh month of the Islamic calendar.

[9] *Ramzan* is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar.

[10] Eid is a celebration for an end to the month of fasting for Muslims.

Wazn (Weekly Debates)

Debates are held in classes every week. The class monitors select the students for preparing the debates, *naats* (praises of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H), *talawut* (recitation), *bayanaat* (speeches) and *taraanas* (motivational songs). Sometimes, the teacher just writes something in the class and the students compose it, on the spot, in the class. After three months, a debate competition is held.

Bazm (The Annual Competition)

The researcher participated in the *Bazm* competition which serves two purposes; it is an annual graduation ceremony before the final annual papers for about 300 students of the *jamia* who have completed their *Almia* course and it also serves as an annual inter-branches competition having *biyanaat* (speeches), *jihadi taranas* (religious motivational songs), *talawat* (recitation) and tableaus. The preparation for this competition starts weeks in advance and the students from every class participate and compete to be selected for the final competition. The final selection of students is made by *Aapi Jaan* herself for the final day. A full day is devoted to this activity and no classes are held on this day.

During the fiery speeches and debates by students, *Hazrat Umar Farooq* (R.A) is quoted as being the best leader ever as he was known for his *adal-o-insaaf* (justice). Maulana Ashraf Thanavi is quoted as *hakim ul umat.* The role and contribution of *ulemas* is also highlighted in this competition. The students raise their voices against; the current system of democracy, any instigation against Islam or *zulm* (social injustices) prevalent in the society. The concept of *jihad* is highlighted and those martyrs who died in the military operation of 2007 on the Lal Masjid are higly praised through chanting of slogans, motivational speeches and religious motivational songs. The girls are very confident while delivering their speeches and are constantly encouraged and cheered from the crowd through chanting of slogans and applauses. The proceedings of this competition are recorded on mobile phones of designated duty staff.

There is a panel of judges who sits and observes the proceedings of the competition and prizes are awarded to winning students on the basis of their level of confidence, fluency, how relevant and updated are the references that are quoted, student's knowledge about current affairs, *jazba* (passion), etc. *Chaddars* are distributed to the graduating students at the end of this ceremony. Food is on the house for everyone and the competition lasts till late in the evening. All those people who come from far off places are also housed at the *madrassa* for the night or two. Along with the competition, stalls are organised to exhibit paintings and stalls of home decoration items made by the students of the *jamia*.

Short Courses for the Students and Teachers

As *Ramzan* is a break from routine studies so, short courses are offered at the *madrassa*, during the first ten days of *Ramzan*. These courses include: Arabic grammar, *tafseer* (commentary on the Quran) course (40 days), cutting and stitching (15-20 days), learn basic Arabic course (40 days), cooking classes (food presentation skills, 40 days), painting classes, drawing and home decoration.

According to a student, Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

> *"Ustaad Gee kehtay hain sab kuch aana chahiye ....yahan tak keh paani ka nalqa ya switch bhi kaisay theek karna hai"* meaning *"Ustaad gee* emphasises that one should know everything .....even how to fix a tap or a switch."

Also, there are no regular computer classes as SJH does not have a full fledge computer lab since the military operation in 2007. Prior to 2007, they did have a proper computer lab and conducted computer classes. Only teachers are trained upon hiring on how to use the computers. So the computer course for *mualimaat*. Students have computer studies till grade 8th.

Umoor-e- Harab (self-defense), is a short 40 days course that *Aapi Jaan* conducts herself. There are no classes just exercise.

Fiqh-ul-kaloob is a 40 days course for teachers, training them on teaching skills, how to deal with students and how to become an ideal individual. Apart from this, a short *Tajweed* course is offered to improve ones accent in Arabic.

Board Examination

During the course of my fieldwork, it was for the first time, this year, that all those teachers who had completed their M.A in Arabic or *Alima* course, sat for a *madaris* (plural of *madrassa*) competitive board exam in the month of April. The four years *Alima* course was tested for the first time by the *Wafaq*. All teachers were successful and cleared their papers. It was mandatory for the teachers to clear the paper in order to get their respective masters degrees.

The Daily Schedule of a Student at SJH

The daily schedule of a student at SJH is as follows:

➢ The students wake up on their own for *Fajr* (morning) prayers; some wake up before *Fajr* prayers for *Tahujjud* (pre-dawn prayer*).*

➢ *Talawat* (recitation) of 1 para takes 30 to 45 mins. The recitation of the Holy Quran takes place after *Fajr* prayers of *Surah Yaseen* and *Surah Rehman*.

➢ Revision of course work till 7 a.m.

➢ In between breakfast is taken. Time starts 6 a.m to 7 a.m.

➢ *Talawat* by *Ustaad Jee* at 7.20 a.m for 15 mins.

➢ The timings of summer classes are from 7.30 a.m to 12.50 p.m.

➢ Midday break is at 10.45 a.m for 30 minutes.

➢ Classes restart at 11.15 a.m.

➢ Classes finish at 12.50 p.m.

➢ Prayer and lunch break is from 12.50 p.m to 2.30 p.m.

➢ *Talawat* after *Zuhr* (afternoon) prayers of S*urah Futah.*

➢ Afternoon nap/rest time is from 2.30 p.m to 3.30/4 p.m.

➢ *Asar* (early evening) prayers are held between 4 p.m to 5 pm. Recitation of *Surah Nabah* also takes place.

➢ *Asar* to *Maghreb* is free time to do personal work like clothes washing, playing sports, etc.

➢ It is their belief (and according to some Western research, as was shared during my fieldwork) that between *Asar* to *Maghreb* prayers, there should be no revision, as the

sun's rays are such that it is not feasible for the concentration of the mind. The mind becomes weak.

➤ Recitation of *Surah Waqiah* after *Maghreb* (around sunset) prayers.

➤ Between *Maghreb* to *Isha* (night) prayers is *taqrar* (where previous lesson of the class is revised). A group of about 6 to 7 girls is made depending upon the strength of a class. Anything that the girls do not understand during the day classes is explained by a group member during this time.

➤ After *taqrar, talawat* (recitation) takes place and if time permits *mutaliyah* (a new lesson is prepared for the next morning's class).

➤ *Isha* prayers and recitation of *Surah Mulk takes place* around 9 p.m.

➤ Dinner is eaten around 9 p.m onwards.

If a student requires individual study, proper permission is required from the administration and it can be held after dinner. Class monitors have to meet with the principal in advance to seek her permission.

➤ Student's sleeptime is 10.30 p.m. The administration makes sure that the students go to sleep on time and get sufficient sleep during the night as they have a tough schedule. There are vigilance rounds by teachers on duty as the students go off to sleep.

➤ The cut-off time is 11.30 p.m for individual study.

The schedule above shows the tough routine of the students at SJH as the administration believes that time is precious and should not be wasted. The girls hardly have any free time during the day. The studies and prayers go together.

The daily schedule of teachers could not be noted down as the IDIs did not work for the teachers and were changed to informal discussions as a strategy to collect data.

5.6.6 Extra-curricular Activities

The Library

Emphasis is also placed on learning through inculcating a habit of reading in females since a young age and not only reading the course books but also non-course books as well. For this

purpose, there are three libraries at SJH. Details are shared later in the chapter. One hour, one day a week is reserved for the library study for every class.

There are some rules of the library study:

> ➢ The voices should be kept low so not as to disturb others in the room and to concentrate on ones reading, and
> ➢ No writing is allowed on the books.

For younger students, the children's page from the Express newspaper is also put up on the notice board for stories, because it is felt that the child must be oriented towards reading and learning.

Physical Training Period

The principal conducts the physical training period herself and teaches the students various exercises so that they remain active. It is conducted in any free period, once a week for every class. Apart from this, girls like to play badminton and football at the *madrassa*.

5.6.7 Teaching Methodology

At SJH, the teachers deliver the lectures in the class while being seated on the floor. She evaluates an individual student's progress through class participation, understanding of the subject and attitude towards learning. Each class starts with the revision of the previous day's lecture. The teacher can ask random questions from the students. The teachers generally show patience towards the students' queries and are kind towards them. Sometimes, the students are reprimanded incase they fail to reproduce the lesson taught. The reprimand is to instill a sense of responsibility in the students. The children show great enthusiasm and respect for their learning as the studies are more of a religious nature and it reflects their concern towards learning their religion.

The lecture is carefully prepared by the teacher after consultuing various books on a topic. She quotes sufficient examples in the class along with explaining a topic simultaneously so that the students grasp the concept. She refers to prominent religious texts related with the topic under

discussion. The students who are seated on the floor in rows carefully note down the lecture for later revision.

Seating

Seating is according to the roll numbers of the students and it is rotated line wise every Saturday, which is the start of the week at SJH. The row in the front goes all the way to the back of the class and the back lines move a line ahead.

Also, the teachers make sure that the good students in a class are separated from each other and put individually with weak students in a class, so that the weak students can be facilitated in their studies by not only the teachers, but also the good students who can help them out.

*Doura***: The Teachers' Training Course**

This is a compulsory fourty days training course, conducted before the month of *Ramzan* in *Shabaan,* by the principal of the *madrassa* herself, for the teachers, before the start of the annual academic year. It is called *Doura.* It includes; *Tafseer,* student-teacher relationships, interaction and roles, what is a society, a good and a bad society, who makes up a society or the pillars of a society, various styles of teaching, etc.[11]

Since the researcher also attended and participated as an observer for a few of these lectures on *Doura- e- Hadees,* delivered by *Aapi Jaan,* for the students of SJH, the lecture is delivered while sitting down on the floor. The only pieces of furniture are the low rise tables placed in front of the students while the seating is on the floor. There are over 200 students in this class.

The main points from the previous class are revised before the deliverance of the new lecture. There is a general discussion with examples from the Holy Prophet's (P.B.U.H) personal life.

---

[11] For details about the types of society and its pillars, please refer to the chapter on Perceptions about Development of the thesis.

There is some talk in a lighter mode with poetry or jokes as well. There is a short *dua* (prayer) at the end of the class.

Importance of Teachers

The importance of teachers in Islam is highlighted in the class. The best role model of a teacher quoted is that of our Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H). So, a teacher has a very high status in Islam. The principal, at SJH shared:

> *"Ustaad reerh ki hadi ki tarah hai"* meaning "a teacher is like a backbone."

Student-Teacher Relationship

The student-teacher relationship is hierarchical in nature at the *madrassa.* The students place the teachers on a high altar and hold them in great esteem. They give teachers a lot of respect and really look upto them as role models. The general perception held at SJH is that:

> *"Ustaad ruhani walidain ki tarah hain"* meaning "teachers are like spiritual parents."

The love and obedience that is shown to the teachers is reciprocated through the teachers individual attention, kindness and concern for the moral uplift and character building of the students. The salient features of this relationship are that:

- The teachers relationship with the students should not be too close nor too distant,
- A teacher must be vigilant and should know how a student thinks, either negatively or positively,
- A teacher should be able to differentiate between a hardworking and a lazy student,
- The teacher must not hit the student or resort to any violence. The use of a stick is a weakness as it puts off the child from education. Scolding also disturbs the child, so instead of scolding, a teacher must speak to the student and be her wellwisher, and should be able to convey her message across to students,
- A teacher should be respectful towards other women and the importance about the respect of women should be highlighted in the class.

Attributes of a Teacher

The principal, at SJH, quoted Allama Iqbal[12]:

Nigah buland sukhn-e-dilnawaz jaan pursoz

Yehi hai rakht-e-safar mir-e-karawan kay liye

Mir-e-karawan is a teacher in the field of education. It means Allama Iqbal wants to explain to us that a teacher should have the following high attributes; great wisdom, constant struggle, determination, should be able to understand the child's issues and mind, and should be a psychology expert.

5.6.8 Teachers Education Committee

There is an education committee at the *madrassa* in which there are about 15 to 20 teachers. These teachers have a progressive academic approach. The role of this education committee is that it sets the papers for the examinations, decides what textbooks to prescribe for which grade, and sets schedule of classes. This committee meets every week and it also has emergency meetings in case the need arises.

5.6.9 Roles and Responsibilities within the *Madrassa*

It includes both the teachers and the students.

Role of the Administration and the Teachers

It is the responsibility of the administration and the teachers to provide a conducive environment for learning to the students and to show compassion and love to their younger ones.

The principle is responsible for making the test papers for the *jamia* and its branches. She supervises the branches and once every year visits each branch to discuss various issues like course issues. The branches work independently.

The administration is responsible for; looking into all types of administrative issues at the *jamia*, including monitoring the cleanliness of the entire *jamia*, supervision of the mess which includes;

---

[12] National poet of Pakistan.

checking the mess notebook, food quality and quantitiy. Other issues like transport, stock of daily provisions (clothes, stationery, food, items for personal usuage, *burqa*, *hijaab*, etc.). Also, included is invigilation and maintaining discipline at the *jamia.*

Apart from teaching their respective courses, the teachers are responsible for the training of their students. One teacher conducts not more than four periods per day. This is the maximum limit. Regarding the teacher's role and responsibility at the *madrassa*, one teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years, shared:

> "I teach grades 8,9,10, Arabic and *Fiqh* at SJH....*Fiqh* is my favourite subject.....Apart from teaching.... I am also a part of a committee (in charge) for cleanliness...The committee has three members....I check the cleanliness of the *madrassa* twice a day....It is difficult to maintain cleanliness for the first two months at the start of the new term but slowly the girls learn and there is hardly any violation of discipline.....The students of SJH are obedient and disciplined.....I am also responsible for stage decoration, arranging speech contests, and *Bazm-e-Adab."*

Role of the Students

a) Duty for Cleanliness and other Tasks

The duty for the cleanliness of the entire *jamia* rests with the second last class, which is the *Doura-e- Hadees Aalmia* and the third last class. Around 200-250 students in the *Doura-e-Hadees* class clean up the bathrooms and the common areas. Students in a particular class are responsible to clean up their respective classrooms themselves, whereas the duties of the students rotate for the administration of the reception area, keeping security checks, making trips to accompany the sick to the hospital and catering to various emergencies.

b) *Pehra* (Watch)

The elder teachers or the students, who are assigned the task to keep a watch on the *jamia*, walk inside the *jamia* and also on the rooftops at night. The *pehra* (watch) is on rotation and the duty time per shift is two to two and a half hours on duty. There are

multiple shifts during one night. The time for keeping vigilance starts after 11p.m. The reasons for the security walk are:

➢ It is considered a *sunnat,*

➢ The *jamia* was attacked at midnight around 1 am, during the military operation in July 2007,

➢ Girls get scared at times at night and need to be looked after.

An incident was also quoted as of 2014, where some people kept coming at night to the *jamia* for three months and tried their best to take its pictures in the dark. The girls on duty informed the adminsitation and the matter was taken to the police.

5.6.10 Conflicts and Conflict Resolution

The analysis of the data revealed that there are hardly any conflicts at the *madrassa* as the religion Islam teaches: patience, selflessness, sacrifice, to give preference to others and to live in peace and harmony with each other. Keeping this spirit of religion in mind, the girls are aware that conflicts will not be tolerated at the *jamia*. The researcher observed that the girls love each other and give respect to each other. During the orientation of the students at SJH, they are told that the cause of religious education is huge and that they should not waste their time here, conflicts are a waste of time and one should cooperate with and respect their elders and teachers. They are told that the sacrifices that they give will be a learning for their future.

Every class has its own monitor, if a conflict develops in the class, the class monitor tries to help intervene and solve the problem. If the conflict remains unresolved, the class teacher intervenes. Even then, if it is not resolved, it is taken to *Aapi Jaan* for resolution. Strict action is taken if the discipline is violated. Students are expelled if found guilty of theft or disrespect of their elders.

5.6.11 *Jamia's* Principles

Disciplining of individuals is of utmost importance. Obedience to those who are older, experienced and more knowledgeable all contribute towards disciplining of the individuals. Obedience is the rule that brings respect. Obedience is reflected in all the actions of the girls at

the *madrassa*. Disobedience is not tolerated and considered rebellious, and hence it is punishable.

a) The *jamia* follows follows the *shariat.*

b) Punctuality is a must,

c) Zero tolerance for theft and dishonesty,

d) Strict punishments on misconduct or wrong doing,

e) It is compulsory for everyone to wake up for *Fajr* prayers,

f) There is great emphasis on character building and on moral values,

g) Emphasis is also put on cleanliness and there is strict supervision and checking. They believe that:

> *"Sifai nisaf imaan hai"* meaning "cleanliness is half order."

h) There is a strict dress code; the clothing is Islamic with the *hijaab* (a wide cloth used to cover up the head). *Abayas* (the loose black cloth worn on a female body to cover up) have to be simple and not flashy. No trousers or pants are allowed inside SJH. Nails should be short. No fashion is permitted inside the *jamia*. *Pardah* especially *hijab* is compulsory,

i) To put *surma* (a black liquid in the lining of the eye to ward off evil eyes) daily as it is *sunnah,*

j) Great emphasis is placed on professionalism and dedication to education, and to create a favourable environment for learning,

k) Mobile phones are not allowed inside SJH for either the students or the teachers. The students can call home on the landline only with permission from the administration,

l) Unnecessary leaves of absence not allowed either by the teachers or the students,

m) Harsh punishments exist for any violation in discipline. An investigation is conducted and if the students are found guilty of theft or if they disrespect or misbehave with teachers, they are expelled immediately from the *madrassa*. No warning is given,

n) It is a moral obligation to; respect and look after the teachers and the elders, to obey their orders and to be kind and caring towards the young,

o) Respect for each other and tolerance,

p) No grouping is allowed inside SJH, either on the basis of caste, ethnicity or language, for either the teachers or the students.

5.6.12 Expulsion and Dropouts of Students

The reasons for expelling the students from SJH are:

- Incidence of theft by a female,
- If a student leaves the *madrassa* without the permission of the administration or teacher,
- Misconduct or misbehaviour on the part of the student, e.g. disrespect of an elder or teacher,
- If there is any violation of discipline and the student is reprimanded, but she cannot be reformed at the *madrassa* for bad behaviour or character.

The reasons that the females drop out of the *madrassa* before completion of their studies are:

- If a student has adjustment problems at the *madrass*a, she drops out due to nervousness:

    "dill nahin lagta kyoun kay dunya kay mahul kay adee hain"

    Meaning "they cannot adjust because they are used to a worldy environment."

- If parents do not want their child to study at the *madrassa*,
- It is a difficult course,
- In cases of extreme sickness, if the cure is not available or the illness is long term. For example cancer, kidney problems, tuberculosis, etc.
- If a female is getting married.

According to a teacher, Irum, aged 21 years:

> *"Students come here on a one year contract but if they are getting married...they drop out or if their help and support is required at their home...they are called back.....so sometimes....they join in mid-year or the next year."*

5.6.13 Positive Aspects about the *Madrassa*

Upon analysis of the data, the most talked about positive aspects of the *madrassa* were: quality of education, new curriculum and books, inner peace, strength of character of the females, discipline, principles, and moral values. The general perception was that everyone is

hardworking and dedicated, there is a favourable environment for learning, and there is no tuition fees charged from the students. Teachers are good role models and the students are inspired by them. Also, free time is given to the students between *Asar* to *Maghrib* prayers to play any sport or to do personal tasks. Emphasis is also given to extra curricular activities and exercise.

There are hardly any conflicts among the females at the *madrass*a as the religion Islam teaches one to live in peace and harmony. If there is an issue in the class, the class monitor solves it, if not then the class teacher tries to resolve it, and if not solved here, it goes to the principal for a solution.

According to a few students, sharing about what they like at the *madrassa*:
Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years;

"ghar waali baat hai yahan" meaning "it is just like home."

Ayesha, aged 21 years, sharing about the quality of education at the *madrassa*:

"pehlay kay muqablay main behtaree aa chukee hai" meaning "things have started to improve (since last four/five years)."

Further, she shared:

"taleem ka miyaar...tarbeeyat aur nazam o zabt" meaning "the quality of education... training and discipline."

Zunaira, aged 22 years:

"ghar kay qareeb hai aur yahan sab acha hai" meaning "it is near my home and everything is good here."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"parhaee.. logon ka ikhlaq aur suhuliyaat" meaning "education...character of people (moral values) and facilities at the *madrassa*."

Syeda Fatima, aged 18 years:

"yahan parr sab kuch hai.....madrassa humaree maan kee tarah hai......hum yahan bahut khush hain" meaning "there is no facility lacking here... *madrassa* is like our mother....we are very happy here."

Some of the teachers shared their views about the best aspects of SJH:

Irum, aged 21 years;

"Aapi Jaan."

When I probed her why, she replied:

"inn ka kirdar....inn ki shakal...inn ka ikhlaq...parhanay ka andaaz sab acha hai"
meaning "her character (morality)....her nature....her face..... her behaviour....teaching
style is all good."

Shaheen, aged 27 years:

"As we practice values *(ikhlaqiyaat)*.....there is no grouping.....no violation of
discipline...hardly...here everyone is aware of their responsibilities."

The students and teachers highly appreciated the fact that since a majority of these students come
for poor households and cannot afford to pay their tuition fees, the *madrassa* not only provides
them with free tuition but also these students are provided free food, clothing, books and
stationery, etc. The orphans are especially looked after well. The females also appreciated the
fact that the *madrassa* has three separate libraries for the students and a separate cooking area for
the hostilites.

Areas of Improvements

A few suggestions that were proposed by the respondents were:

a) *"Behtar say behtar banaain"* meaning "move from better to best."

b) Everyone should speak in the Arabic/English language at the *madrassa* for better grasp,
fluency and understanding.

c) Clean drinking water coolers run on electricity and the water finishes when the electricity
goes off.

d) Tanker water sometimes is inefficient for washing and bathing even though they get 2-3
tankers in summers daily.

e) Resources are limited so there needs to be more funds directed towards *madrassas,* the
state has a responsibility towards religion and should play its role. They should fund and
facilitate religious education in Pakistan. Presently, there are two sources of funding;
philanthropists voluntarily contribute towards the *madrassa* in cash or kind, and the

teachers and students at the *madrassa* collect *sadqa* (charity) and *khairat* (alms) monthly and contribute it towards the *madrassa* fund. It was suggested that even if the government cannot support the *madrassa*, it should not create hurdles for them like raids and harassment of *madrassa* staff, etc.

f) Funds need to be diverted to smaller classes like grade 1,2,3 as they need more clothes and stationery items.

g) There are space issues as far as rooms are concerned, rooms are few and the need is to construct more rooms, so more space should be allotted to the *madrassa* by the government.

h) Washrooms are few and the need is to construct new ones on top of the existing ones. Separate washrooms for the teachers and the students (*taalibaat* and *mualimaat*) are required.

i) Senior students need to train junior students on etiquettes for using washrooms properly, and not to waste water. It was suggested to assign one senior student to 4-5 new junior students for training on daily basis for first few months of their joining.

j) A full fledged computer lab should be made available.

k) In order to compete with the society there is a need for more short story books of interests for children, especially on how to become good and peaceful citizens. Short story books take less time to read and generate more interest in children of reading books.

5.7 Concept of Confidence

The perception varied when I asked the respondents their understanding about the concept of confidence. 100% respondents said they feel confident as a person.

According to a teacher at SJH:

Irum, aged 21 years,

> *"bharosa"* meaning "trust."

According to the students:

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> *" insaan samajh lay main kaam karr saktee hoon.....mujh main silahyat hai"* meaning "when one understands that she can do the work...am capable of doing it."

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

"apnay upar bharosa" meaning "trusting oneself."

Zunaira, aged 22 years:

"aitmaad ka matlab logon ka samna kaisay karna hai...haalat aur masloon ka muqabla kaisay karna hai" meaning *"confidence is how to face people.... circumstances and issues."*

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

*"Zimahdaari ka ehsas.....apnay app parr yaqeen karna".......*meaning "to feel responsible.......to trust or believe in yourself."

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

*"Apni baat dosroon tak puhanchana......apnay haq kee baat karna......*meaning "to convey your message across........to speak up for ones's rights."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

"Apni baat agaye pohanchana" meaning "to convey your message across."

The perception of the females regarding the sources of confidence were:

The responses of the teachers were:

Maria, aged 18 years and Irum, aged 21 years:

"A good religious education at home or at school...a good upbringing...appreciation and encouragement from our teachers and *Aapi Jaan."*

According to the students at the *jamia*:

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

"Taleem aur maashira" meaning "education and the society."

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

"khud say aur adara bhi daita hai" meaning "it comes from self and ones institution."

Zunaira, aged 22 years:

"Taleem aur jab hum haalat ka samna kartay hain tu aitmaad barh jata hai" meaning "education and when we accept and face situations...it increases our confidence."

Binte Somia, a student aged 21years:

"Hosla afzaee aitmaad daita hai" meaning "appreciation boosts confidence."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> *"Parwarish aur taaleemi idaray......rehnumai say aitmaad barhta hai"* meaning "upbringing and educational institutions...guidance increases confidence."

Rabia, aged 17 years:

> *"Hosla afzaee aur izzat aitmaad barhata hai"* meaning *"*appreciation and respect boosts confidence.*"*

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

> *"Taleem...tarbeeyat aur hosla afzai say"* meaning "education, upbringing and appreciation."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

> *"Deeni taleem aur hosla afzai"* meaning "religious education and appreciation."

5.8 Discussion

The analysis of my data reveals that the *madrassa* inculcates that both genders are equally obligated by religion to acquire knowledge, as it is considered a primary responsibility of a Muslim to learn knowledge as much as one can. Knowledge does not go waste. It ultimately reveals ones purpose in life. Both girls and boys education is equally emphasised because girls are responsible to bring up their children and run their homes whereas boys need to interact with the outside world and financially support their families. The analysis of the data also reveals that within the nuclear family of most of these females, at least one or two siblings are enrolled with mainstream educational institutes. Further, the purpose of education is not only to gain knowledge and awareness; it is to act upon it and implement ones learning for ones self growth.

Acquisition of knowledge in Islam is not regarded as an end in itself. Rather, its aim is to understand the will of Allah and to lead one's life according to it. Islamic concept of education aims at self-actualisation, meaning a self-actualising person becomes capable of being (Ali, (2012) quotes Akhir et. al. (2006). According to Maslow, (1968) self-actualisation means; the full use of human talent and capabilities, actualising all of *Allah's* bounties to a person. This corroborates with my findings from the field as well.

However, the emphasis at the *madrassa* is more towards religious knowledge rather than the worldly one. Religious knowledge ultimately leads to the recognition of *Allah*. The concept of Islamic education is linked with the concept of *aakhirat* (hereafter) and what *Allah* wants from humans in this life; to differentiate between *halaal* (permissible) and *haraam* (not permissible) and how to fulfill ones obligations towards others in society. The concept of worldly education will help them to understand what is happening around them in this world and how to communicate better and compete within this world. Acquiring worldy knowledge is essential too as it is compared to acquiring a skill and this is more important for men as compared to women because they are earning members of the family. The importance of attaining worldly knowledge is not negated altogether, nor are the females stopped from attaining worldy knowledge, as according to our religion:

According to a student Zunaira, aged 22 years:

> *"deen dunyavi taleem say manah nahi karta"* meaning "the religion does not stop one from attaining worldly education."

After a series of interviews and discussions with the students at the *madrassa*, it was revealed that most of these girls came to the *madrassa* on their own choice and free will, especially after the military operation of 2007 on Lal Masjid (perceived as conspiracy by the West), as interest towards attaining religious knowledge through *madrassas* increased. For 80% of the students at SJH, there has been no force or compulsion from their families to seek education in a *madrassa* (see table 4.4 in chapter 4: demographics of students). Also, the majority of the respondents shared that their interests includes reading whether course books or on Islamic history or non-course books in their free time. So, the quest for knowledge is found to be intrinsic.

The perception the researcher gathered on the field was that the reason these girls hardly watch television is because of the negative perception created by outsiders especially the media against them. These females are highly conscious and aware of this reality.

The researcher found the level of confidence was high among the respondents as their motivation is instilled by; religious education, appreciation, encouragement received from the teachers and

elders at SJH, their upbringing and the society. For example, if someone is doing charitable work, it is appreciated and encouraged by everyone and that boosts their confidence.

Now, we move onto the next chapter on perceptions about empowerment.

Chapter 6: Perceptions about Empowerment

Beginning with the question whether pupils at SJH perceive empowerment and education to be linked together, the chapter leads onto the perceptions on topics such as the concept of empowerment, sources of empowerment, gender roles and empowerment, the emancipated women role models in Islamic history and the rights of women derived from and validated by religion. The later half of the chapter describes the future plans of the females at the *madrassa* and tries to capture the perceptions about linkage between empowerment and development. In the last section, there is a short debate on women as role models and agents of change.

6.1 Does Empowerment come with Education?

When I asked the respondents whether empowerment is possible without education, it was unanimously shared by the majority that no, it is not possible without religious education but it may be possible without worldly education. Hence, religious education is important for a woman to be empowered. On further probing as to how will a woman educate or bring up her children without worldly education? How will she solve problems and issues? Some of the respondents shared that it was possible to be empowered without worldly education but religious education made a woman sensible, as she is in a better position to take decisions about herself or her family, as was shared by the following students at SJH:

Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

> *"My mother is not educated but she is empowered to make decisions regarding upbringing of her kids and how to run the house."*

Education here implies both religious and worldly education. Empowerment here means an ability to make decisions; especially regarding consumption and management of the house.

Haya, aged 20 shared:

> *"taaleem ka hona zaroori hai takay aurat ghar ka hisaab kitaab khud rakh sakay"* meaning "education is important for a woman to be able to maintain household expenditures herself."

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

> *"ilm ikhtiyaar daita hai"* meaning "knowledge empowers."

Zunaira, aged 22 years:

"aik taaleem yafta aurat behtar mashwara day saktee hai" meaning "an educated woman can give better advice."

So the analysis of the above statements means that the concept of empowerment as perceived by the females at SJH is taken as the right to make decisions; for herself or for her family. Also the level of self-awareness is raised when a woman receives religious education as it increases her religious knowledge about her roles, duties and responsibilities.

In one of the FGDs with a group of teachers, there was group consensus that empowerment of a woman is not possible without education as she will not have the knowledge about her rights and responsibilities and the role she has to play in the society. She will not be able to fulfill her role as a good; mother, sister, wife or daughter. Here education was perceived to be both; worldly and religious.

In another FGD, with a group of students, there was a mixed opinion as some of the respondents agreed that education empowers a woman as it gives her rights, but some were also of the opinion that these rights can come with religion, so worldly education does not necessarily empower women.

According to a teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years:

"Education is important....both worldly and religious....education brings (*shaoor*) awareness.....wisdom...intellect....sense."

6.2 Concept of Empowerment

This section deals with the concept of empowerment and the sources of empowerment. The analysis of the data reveals that the perception of the females regarding empowerment is that religious education; not only makes them aware of themselves but also the roles that they have to play in the society. The general perception amongst the students and the teachers at the *madrassa* was that since, a woman is considered subordinate to a man, hence she is not fully empowered and has unequal status; her power is derived through her relation to man. She has certain rights

and responsibilities and should fulfill them according to the teachings of Islam (*shara i hadood[1]*). However, the principal of the *jamia* had a difference of opinion. She shared that the principle is wrong that men and women are not equal as in *shariah*, both men and women are considered as equal.

> *"yeh kahan ka asool hai kay mard aur aurat barabar nahin.....shariyut nain donon ko barabar rakha hai"* meaning "the principle is wrong that men and women are not equal.....*shariah* has kept both men and women as equal."

The researcher feels that the principal's difference of opinion than the rest of the females at SJH could be because of her position and status at the *madrassa*.

In a FGD with a group of students, there was group consensus that empowerment means self awareness:

> *"Aurat apna acha bura khud samajhtee ho"* meaning "a woman can think for herself; what is good or bad for her."

Apart from self awareness, the concept of empowerement is perceived by the females as the right to make decisions especially that are personal and routine, for instance, women often make decisions about everyday spending and purchases, upbringing of their children, while the men mainly make the financial decisions in a household. A few examples quoted in the field include decisions such as rights to; marriage, education and life dealings, etc.

According to Schneebaum and Mader (2013), "gender" is a cultural, ideological, social, historical construct that can be very helpful in describing the different economic outcomes for men and women. It is imperative to emphasise the importance of the social construction of gender in describing how decision making power and responsibility is distributed within households. Households do not only reflect gender roles and norms but are at the same time the place where they are produced, for instance, the gender specific division of labour or gender specific distribution of resources. Thus, men and women are typically assigned different responsibilities for different household decisions. The concept of gender provides an explanation for this division in decision making power and responsibility because it is the formation of

---

[1] According to the perceptions captured from the field, s*hara i hadood* means limits to empowerment for a woman in Islam such as *pardah,* not mixing and mingling with members of the opposite gender,etc.

gender-socially constructed roles of what biological men and women ought to do and how they ought to behave which assigns people with different social and economic roles, such as working primarily for pay or primarily as a care giver.

According to the principal of the *jamia*:

> *"Hum insaan...humain ikhtiyaar kul nahin.....mard kay liye khud mukhtari kul nahin.....kul ikhtiyaar Allah kay pass hai"* meaning "we... humans....we do not have full power over ourselves.....men are not fully empowered.....full power rests with Allah."

She shared everyone has limits. A woman should be empowered within her house. A woman can work and go outside the house in case of a necessity so that she does not have to beg anyone. She can become a teacher, doctor, nurse, beautician, tailor, home decorator or a home based worker. A woman has the right to a servant. She has a right to education. The word "*Iqra*[2]" in the Quran includes both men and women. A woman can give her opinion and advice; she has a right to marry a person of her choice provided he is of a sound character and morals. Court marriage she said was indecent. A woman has a right to her inheritance and *khula*[3]. Dowry is not allowed in Islam. Regarding violence against women in Pakistani society, she shared;

> *"Aurat nazuk hai iss parr zulum hota hai.....woh ghass katti hai....paani bhartee hai....dukh hota hai aurat ko mara peeta jaata hai."* meaning "a woman is delicate and she is mistreated.....she cuts the grass.....does physical labour.....she fetches the water......it is sad to see women being beaten in our society."

According to the perceptions from the field, empowerment also means freedom; but since in the Pakistani society, patriarchy sets limits to a woman's freedom, it is restricted for the women in the Pakistani culture. For instance, even in the case of upbringing of children, a woman cannot take decisions on her own; as a child is a product of both, and because a man is the protector of the family and financial supporter too, so any decisions regarding children have to be mutual.

---

[2] It means to read.
[3] Dissolution of marriage by a woman.

Talking about the status of women, the principal was of the view that a woman can be empowered without worldly education. It depends on what role or status a man gives his woman in the society; as a mother, sister, wife or daughter:

"Allah nay aurat ko malka banaya hai....baap....bhai....shuhar....baita....nana....chacha.......waghaira.....ko kifalut dee hai" meaning "Allah has made a woman a queen.....she is protected and supported by......her father....brother....husband....son....grandfather.....uncle...etc."

It means here that a woman is always a man's responsibility to care and provide for.

Talking about the role of men, especially a husband's, she shared that a husband should also help his wife with the housework. The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) is considered a great role model and he used to do his own work; he used to even cook, sweep and mend his own clothes.

"Aaj kal mardon ki soch hai tum kuch na karo.....mard ka kaam karna sunnat hai" meaning "nowadays men think they should not do any housework at all.....it is *sunnah* for men to work."

In one of the FGDs with a group of students, there was group consensus that:

"Apni zaat kay mutabiq khud faisala karna khudmukhtari hai" meaning "empowerment means that a woman can decide for herself."

The group further quoted examples of decisions such as rights to; marriage, education and life dealings, etc.

According to the teachers, the concept of empowerment is:

Shaheen, aged 27 years:

"In our religion..... there are rights of people and there are rights of Allah.......a woman can do every work that has been declared valid (jaaiz) for her....nowadays women are competing in every sphere of life......but she needs to keep religion in mind."

This means that a woman is empowered but within the limits of *shariah*[4]. Irum, aged 21 years:

---

[4] *Shariah* is not a monolithic concept. It is interpreted differently by different scholars.

"sharee hadood kay andar ....aurat khud apna kaam kitna karr saktee hai" meaning "within the limits prescribed by s*hariah...* the amount of work a woman can complete by herself."

Maria, aged 18 years:

"aurat ko kitna haq haasil hai" meaning "what is the level of the rights given to a woman."

According to some of the students, at the *madrassa*, the concept of empowerment meant:

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"khudmukhtaree ka matlab hai azaadi" meaning "empowerment means freedom."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

"aurat khudmukhtaar nahin hai......khudmukhtari ka matllab hai barabari" meaning "a woman is not empowered as empowerment means equality."

Further, she shared:

"aurat apnee marzi say kaam kar saktee hai ....jaisay maa kay pass ikhtiyaar hai........bachon kee tarbeeyat.....shart shariat hai" meaning "a woman can work with her own choice....just like a mother is empowered.....upbringing of her children......but the condition is *shariah*."

An example was shared by a student at SJH that she thaught that the class monitors at the *madrassa* are empowered, as they could take certain decisions on their own, for instance, they could punish students of their respective classes for not cleaning the rooms properly on time. So, she felt that they are empowered to an extent. So, empowerment for them means a status, position or authority.

According to the analysis of the data, empowerment is explained always with reference to religion and gender, as the statement mentioned below has been quoted frequently by my respondents on the field:

According to the Quran (*Surah Nisa*, Verse 4):

"mard auratoon parr nigahbaan hai."

Translation:

"Men shall take full care of women with the bounties which God has bestowed more abundantly on the former than on the latter."

This verse relates to the notion of gender roles prescribed by Islam. Men are considered caretakers and providers of women.

A student, Ayesha, aged 21 years:

> *"Mard khudd mukhtar hai"* meaning "a man is empowered."

Further, she shared:

> *"khudmaukhtari ka matlab hai khud say kuch karna, kisi kay neechay na rehna......aurat ghar kee had tak khudmukhtar hai.....zaroorat kay tehat bahar jaa saktee hai.....kaam karr saktee hai"* meaning "empowerment means to help oneself and not to be under anyone's command....a woman is empowered within her house.......she can only go out if it is a necessity....and she can work."

This means a woman can only go outside of her house to work in case of a necessity; it can be considered as a limit to a woman's empowerment.

Binte Amna, age 23 years:

> *"kisi bhee kaam main ikhtiyaar daina khudmukhtaree hai"* meaning "to be given authority in any task is empowerment."

Haya, aged 20 years:

> *"aurat apnee zaat kay baaray main kaisay faisala kar saktee hai"* meaning "how a woman decides for herself."

All the respondents at SJH agreed that a woman can give her advice or opinion in matters concerning themselves like; running the house, right to marriage, upbringing of her children, etc.

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

> *"jab aik aurat ko deen ka ilm hoga tu usski agahi ho jaye gee aur woh muzalim kay khilaaf jawab day sakay gee.....aurat khudd faisala karr saktee hai .....apni raye day saktee hai.......Islam nay haqooq diye hain"* meaning "when a woman has religious knowledge....she will be made aware and she will be able to speak up against injustices....a woman can decide for herself and can give her opinion.....Islam has given her rights."

Relgious knowledge makes a woman self aware; regarding her becoming vocal and giving her opinion, or speaking up against injustices or cruelty.

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"insaan apnay aap ko pehchanna shuru karr day aur apnay paaoon parr khara ho jaye"

meaning "a human starts to get aware with oneself and learns to stand on one's own feet."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"khud kay pass ikhtiyaar hona" meaning "to have authority with oneself."

Rabia, aged 17 years:

"apni zimadari par kaam karay....dosra shareek nahin hoga" meaning "she works independently.....others are not included."

Empowerment means freedom for this student.

Further, she said:

"aurat harr kaam main khudmukhtar nahin hotee......ghar kay nizam main hotee hai.......bahar kay kaam main nahin" meaning "a woman is not empowered in every task......she is within the house......not in affairs outside."

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

"apni zaat kay mutabiq faisala karna" meaning "to decide according to one's self."

Further, she said:

"aurat khudmukhtaar hai....khud faisala karr saktee hai.....iss parr jabr nahin kiya jaa sakta" meaning "a woman is empowered...she can decide for herself...she cannot be repressed."

The analysis of the data reveals that empowerment is always explained with reference to religion and gender. It is not absolute but derived; derived from home, and from relation to men. We now move onto the sources of empowerment.

The analysis of the data also reveals that the sources of empowerment are; a good education, upbringing and religion/religious education that gives a woman her rights as has been shared by the majority of the respondents. The table (6.1) on next page shows that religion/religious education is supreme as a source to a woman's empowerment as perceived by 65% of the females at the *madrassa*. The verbatim of excerpts from respondents' interviews led me to identify the sources of empowerment and their importance.

Table 6.1: Sources of Empowerment and their Respective Percentages

Sources of empowerment	Religion/religious education	Upbringing	By herself
	65%	30%	5%

(Source: Fieldwork)

In a FGD with a group of students, there was group consensus that empowerment comes from religion as before the advent of Islam, women were not empowered, they were degraded and buried alive. There was no inheritance for women. Islam gave women their rights.

According to the teachers, at the *madrassa*, empowerment comes from:

Irum, aged 21 years:

> *"aurat ka haq hamain deeni taleem say pata chalta hai"* meaning "the awareness about the rights of a woman comes from religious education."

Further she shared:

> *"Maan aalima hoo tu deeni taleem ki tarbeeyat day gee"* meaning "if a mother is an *aalima* (female religious scholar) she will impart religious knowledge to her children."

Amna, aged 26 years:

> *"ilm khudmukhtaar nahin karta....tarbeeyat kartee hai"* meaning "education does not empower...upbringing does."

According to the students, at the *madrassa*, empowerment comes through:

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> *"deen aur achee tarbeeyat"* meaning "religion and a good upbringing."

Haya, aged 20 years:

> *"aurat apnay andar khud paida kartee hai"* meaning "a woman gets empowered through herself."

152

What Haya, meant here was that empowerment comes through a woman's religious beliefs. According to Clarke (2013), religious beliefs have a high degree of relevance in day-to-day living. People with religious beliefs interpret their own circumstances and make decisions on how to act and interact within the wider society based on their religious teachings that contain precepts on how to live a righteous life, including responding to those who are materially poor. Therefore, at SJH, religious beliefs or convictions are not only concerned with the private circumstances of an individual and their rightful relationship with *Allah* (S.W.T), but rather it has a social realm that has relevance for the wider society. Religious beliefs affect their decisions, behaviour and perception of the world. Their beliefs become their reality.

According to Olsson and Jönsson (2011), the beliefs that affect our lives are either empowering or limiting:

1. **Empowering Beliefs:** these are related to excellence and how it could be achieved.
2. **Limiting Beliefs:** one's behaviour is not what they want, but they think they cannot change it. The need is to change, replace or discard completely such beliefs.

The belief system which a person inculcates strongly influences one's behaviour. Belief system as part of social structures has its own sociological implications. Belief system is part of subjective culture that is usually imparted in human consciousness through mass media, cultural artifacts and educational institutions (Kelly and Ronan, 1987). They further mention that variations are there in the subjective experiences of these cultural aspects which are due to differences of individual's roles and positions. Beliefs and attitudes are socially learned (Bord and Faulkner, 1975). They state that change in the beliefs about God is less likely to occur than other social and political aspects. Family and community members have also significant influence in learning of various beliefs. These are primary sources of transferring the social and cultural aspects including beliefs.

Other sources of empowerment for the students at SJH include:

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

> *"taaleem aur tarbeeyat"* meaning "education and upbringing."

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

> *"deen say"* meaning "from religion."

Women's empowerment is also mediated by education because of its relation to life chances and end results. Education enhances self-esteem of women, helps them to build up their confidence and gives them a perceptive of how to function in the world. The end result of all this is to empower women. When women acquire skills through literacy, they interact with many people outside their family on their own (Jejeebhoy, 1995). This corroborates with my findings from the field as well and education mostly means religious education on the field. At the *madrassa*, awareness about their roles is strengthened further, when the females learn about their religion, as they tend to become more conscious not only about themselves, but also their position with reference to religion and their role that they have to play in the society. According to them, they also develop not only a sense of self-esteem but also develop confidence as they learn life skills and how to utilise their capabilities and potential. So, they believe that religious knowledge gives them power and hence is empowering to them (see Figure 6.1 below).

Figure 6.1: Shows the Links of Religious Education to Empowerment

Religious education → increased self awareness & confidence → teaches one how to function in this world → empowered woman

(Backed by religious ideology)
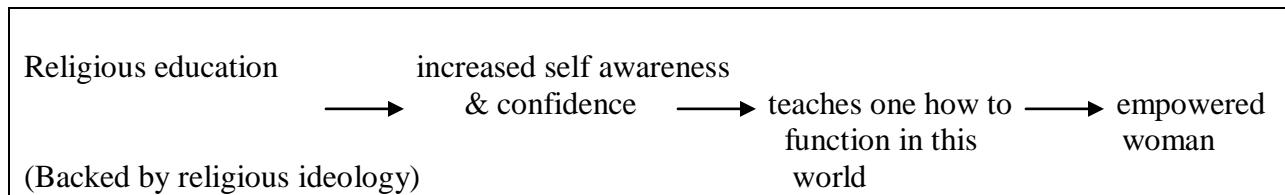
(Source: Fieldwork)

As already mentioned above that empowerment is a gendered concept since empowerment is always explained with reference to gender, gender is central to understanding empowerment, so the following section explores the perceptions about gender from the field.

6.3 Perceptions of Gender

According to the perceptions from the field, it is believed that men and women are created to perform certain roles and that they are created to distinguish between what is considered to be masculine or feminine. According to *Aapi Jaan*, although the Quran views women and men to be equal in human dignity, this equality is not reflected mostly when we look at Pakistani society today. According to the teachers and students at the *madrassa,* a woman is considered subordinate to a man. The verse in the Quran (*Surah Nisa*, verse 4) which refers to men as

"guardians" *(qawamun)* over women has been used to justify gender roles and the privilege of men over women. One of the key reasons for justifying male guardianship over women within the family and in the society is social control upholding female sexual morality. In order to understand perceptions about gender it is necessary to understand who is a woman, hence, the section below explores the concept of *aurat* (woman) as is perceived by the females at SJH.

Concept of "*Aurat*": Who is a Woman?

According to the perceptions from the field, "*Aurat*" is an Arabic word derived from "*Aurah*" meaning; *pardah* (veil), "*sattar*", "*chupa huwa*" (hidden) and "*dhanpna*" (to cover). "*Aurat*" means woman in Urdu. The following *hadees* has been referred by the respondents to make their point about their concept of a woman:

> *"Aurat aqal main bhee naqas hai aur deen main bhee naqas hai......."*

Translation:

It is narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah b. Umar that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) observed:

> *"O womenfolk, you should give charity and ask much forgiveness for I saw you in bulk amongst the dwellers of Hell. A wise lady among them said: Why is it, Messenger of Allah, that our folk is in bulk in Hell? Upon this the Prophet observed: You curse too much and are ungrateful to your spouses. I have seen none lacking in common sense and failing in religion but (at the same time) robbing the wisdom of the wise, besides you. Upon this the woman remarked: What is wrong with our common sense and with religion? He (the Holy Prophet) observed: Your lack of common sense (can be well judged from the fact) that the evidence of two women is equal to one man, that is a proof of the lack of common sense, and you spend some nights (and days) in which you do not offer prayer and in the month of Ramadan (during the days) you do not observe fast, that is a failing in religion."*

> *(Sahih Muslim, Kitab ul imaan, hadees # 79)*

When I probed the respondents why a woman is less in intelligence and less in religion as compared to a man, I was informed that a woman is less in religion because; she cannot remain pure all the time, pray at all times or she cannot fast throughout the month of *Ramzan*, men fast

155

more and pray more than women. Women are less in intelligence because they cannot grasp the wisdom behind everything. Men are considered wiser and more practical according to their perception about religion Islam.

The following verses from the Quran as quoted by the respondents at SJH signify the importance of *pardah* for women:

According to the **Holy Quran** (*Surah Ahzaab*: verse 33):

"Aye aurto! Tum apne gharon me baithi raho aur zamana jaahiliyat ki tarah banaao singhaar kar ke apne ko dikhaati na phiro....."

Translation:

"And abide quietly in your homes, and do not flaunt your charms as they used to flaunt them in the old days of pagan ignorance; and be constant in prayer, and render the purifying dues, and pay heed unto God and His Apostle: for God only wants to remove from you all that might be loathsome, O you members of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you to utmost purity."

According to another verse in the **Holy Quran** (*Surah Ahzaab*: verse 59):

"aye nabi apnee azwaaj ko keh dijiyay kay woh lay lain chaadarain....."

Translation:

"O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters, as well as all [other] believing women, that they should draw over themselves some of their outer garments [when in public]: this will be more conducive to their being recognized [as decent women] and not annoyed. But [withal,] God is indeed much- forgiving, a dispenser of grace!"

According to a *hadees* signifying the importance of *pardah:*

"Aurat parday ki cheez hai laikin jab woh ghar say nikaltee hai tu shaitaan iss kay peechay lag jata hai."

Translation:

Abdullah narrated that the Prophet (P.B.U,H) said:

"The woman is Awrah, so when she goes out, the Shaitan seeks to tempt her."

(*at Trimidhi, Kitaab ul razaah, hadees* # 1173)

According to two students, both named Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

156

"Kirdar aur maashara aurat say hai" meaning "character and the society exist because of women."

Further, they shared:

"aurat heera hai......jitna chupa rahay gaa utnee hifazat main rahay gaa" meaning "a woman is a diamond....the more it is protected the more secure it will remain."

Further, they shared:

"Someone asked the wife of our Holy Prophet, Hazrat Aisha (R.A): "aurat ka matlab kia hai?" meaning *"who is a woman?"* "The response was: *"aurat ka matlab hai chupee huwee cheez"* meaning "a woman means a concealed thing."

A teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years, shared her views regarding the concept of a woman:

"A good woman is an ideal sister....mother.....daughter and wife.......she cares for everyone...she is wise...and she is aware...she should not be too strict in her upbringing nor too lenient........"

The concept of *aurat* leads us to the next section. i.e. *pardah*.

Pardah

According to the Quran (*Surah Ahzaab, ayat* 35):

"Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so - for them God has prepared forgiveness and a great reward."

In Islam, the dress code is based on modesty for both men and women. Hence, women at the *madrassa* are required to cover themselves up and wear the *"hijab"*. The clothes that they wear must not be too tight. When these females go outsde the *madrassa,* they fully cover themselves up wearing an *abaya* and *burqa* (a long gown worn with the headscarf). The intention is to cover all parts of their body except the face and the hands. The *abaya* is also worn in the Arab world and shows where their influence is derived from. The *burqa* is mostly worn in South Asia.

In one of the FGDs with a group of students, there was group consensus that "*deeni madaris*" (religious *madrassas*) are best for women because of *pardah.*

According to the perceptions from the field, *pardah* is a means of contolling morality in the society through controlling women's sexuality. The following verses in the Quran were quoted by the respondents on the field:

To be more proper, as is mentioned in Quran (*Surah Ahzaab, ayat* 59):

"O Prophet! say to your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they let down upon them their over-garments; this will be more proper, that they may be known, and thus they will not be given trouble; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

Further, it is mentioned in the Quran (*Surah Noor, ayat* 31):

"Apnee nazaroon ko jhuka kay rakho....."

Translation:

"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and to be mindful of their chastity, and not to display their charms [in public] beyond what may [decently] be apparent thereof; hence, let them draw their head-coverings over their bosoms. And let them not display [more of] their charms to any but their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers, or their sons, or their husbands' Sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or those whom they rightfully possess, or such male attendants as are beyond all sexual desire, or children that are as yet unaware of women's nakedness; and let them not swing their legs [in walking] so as to draw attention to their hidden charms and [always], O you believers - all of you - turn unto God in repentance, so that you might attain to a happy state!"

According to the perceptions from the field, the status of women in Islam has often been targeted in the media. The *hijab* or the Islamic dress is often cited by many as an example of the subjugation of women under the Islamic law. Yet, over 1400 years ago, Islam recognised the rights of women in a way that grants them utmost protection and respect, a combination that other systems fail to offer. Islam granted them freedom of expression, business and financial rights, political participation, and asked the society to hold them in high esteem and offer them due respect as mothers, sisters, wives and daughters.

How a woman wears her dresses is a matter of choice as long as fulfills the following criteria:

- ❖ It is obligatory to cover the complete body except the face and the hands upto the wrist. If they wish, they can cover even these parts of the body. Some religious scholars insist that the face and the hands are a part of the obligatory extent of the *hijab,* especially if *fitna* (temptation) is feared in times and places where Islamic rules are not prevalent or if security is scarce.
- ❖ The clothes should be loose and should not reveal the figure.
- ❖ The clothes should not be transparent or see-through.
- ❖ The clothes should not be glamorous as to attract the attention of the opposite sex.
- ❖ The clothes should not resemble those of the opposite sex.

This is the way the Prophet (P.B.U.H) explained it to us:

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said to Asma', daughter of Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with them):

> *"O Asma'! Once a girl reaches puberty, nothing of her body may be seen (by non-mahrams) except this and these, (he pointed to his face and hands while saying so)."*
>
> (*Abu Dawood, Kitaab ul libaas, hadees* # 4104)

The principal at SJH, during her interview shared:

"When one goes to the markets to buy some piece of cloth for oneself, one always tends to pick a fresh piece from inside the *thaan* (inside stall) rather than the one displayed on the mannequin. Since, best things are always covered, and so is a woman. *"Jiss cheez par bar bar nazar paray woh kharaab hotee hai"* meaning "whatever is looked upon again and again goes bad."

It was generally shared by some of the students at the *madrassa* that they felt more comfortable and at ease while observing *pardah.* Some of the girls were not used to observing *pardah* before joining the *madrassa.* They felt that the level of respect that they got after joining the *madrassa* had increased than before they joined the *madrassa.* They got treated like one's own daughter. I, as a researcher also felt that i got more respect too because i covered my head on the field. This

is a sign of honour and respect in a conservative society like Pakistan's. So, this made them happy (this point is also linked to happiness as an indicator of development discussed in detail in the next chapter 7). Also, the girls shared that *pardah* is not only physical, it also related to matters of the heart. This means that one should maintain a safe distance from the other gender and the heart should be free of any ill will or ill intentions.

Males are strictly forbidden from entering the *madrassa* and there is no mixing and mingling of both the sexes. In case a male has to enter the *madrassa* for any reason, there is a proper announcement on the loudspeaker so that the women can go inside their rooms or cover themselves up properly. Male teachers conduct their lectures through a loudspeaker and cannot see their female students.

Photography is not allowed inside the *madrassa* due to the concept of *pardah* and as there is a belief that Allah's blessings do not enter a house where there are photographs or pictures of people all around. As according to a *hadees*:

> *"jiss ghar main tasveer ho tu uss ghar main rehmat kay farishtay nahin aatay."*

Translation:

Narrated Abu Talha:

I heard Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H) saying;

> *"Angels (of Mercy) do not enter a house wherein there is a dog or a picture of a living creature (a human being or an animal)."*

> (*Sahih al Bukhari, kitab badul khalq, hadees #* 3225)

The researcher also felt that *pardah* is a compulsion for the women of the *madrassa* only; those who study or work there, any outsider like me is exempted from this rule. I was never forced to wear it. During my fieldwork, I used to cover my head with a *dopatta* or a *chaddar* only as a matter of respect to this community and to gel in with them. The reason the administration gave for the observance of a strict dress code was that since it trains the students to become religious scholars and future role models in the society, so strict enforcement of *pardah* is required. Those girls who do not follow the proper dress code are disallowed to continue their studies at the *madrassa*, as it shows a sign of disobedience to the rules of the *madrassa*.

From the discussion on *pardah,* we move onto the role of men and women in Islam.

6.4 The Role of Men and Women

Since, patriarchy forms the core of the Pakistani gender system, and this gender system is deeply embedded in the social structure, so, the social structure or social norms hinder empowerment of women as it shows unequal status of women and preference to men. In patriarchy, roles are allocated not only in accordance with the biological functions (procreation), but also according to the values prescribed to males and females. According to my findings from the field, dominating and controlling social functions are prescribed to males whereas, the supportive functions are the preview of females. Role allocations, certain norms such as the norms of motherhood and domesticity, values such as chastity, fidelity and practices such as *pardah* lead to stereotyping of female roles. In addition to this, Islam and family institutionalise the social placements according to the norms of the gender system. Both of these institutions socialise its members to gender differential functioning. As a consequence, women are confined to the tasks of the household and rearing of children. Female chastity, seclusion and *pardah* become important for protecting religious and ethnic purity (Engineer, 2001).

According to the findings of this study, the *madrassa* inculcates a certain religious identity constructing gender in a way where it is believed that women are primarily responsible to spread moral values in the society through a decent upbringing and religious knowledge. The perspective at the *madrassa* is that worldly knowledge is acquired for developing a skill, which is needed to earn a livelihood, and is considered more important for men as compared to women.

According to some of the students at SJH, *madrassa* education is considered better because as men and women have been created to perform certain roles that are complementary to each other, while the mainstream educational institutions, create material competition between both; boys and girls, which goes against the system in Islam. These gender specific roles regard men as; bread winners or earning members of the family, men look after outside tasks and the financial burden of the family rests with him. Whereas, a woman's domain is her home and her

primary responsibility is her family. This conception according to them has its roots in religion as it is mentioned in the Quran (Surah *Noor, ayat* 34):

"Men are guardians of women."

According to the principal at SJH, there are also a lot of misconceptions in the Pakistani culture and religion Islam, is often misinterpreted, for instance, it is often the norm that the men are usually fed first in the rural areas. But according to the *shariah,* children and women should be fed first. There are a lot of other misconceptions according to the females at SJH, existing in the Pakistani culture regarding religion, for instance being unkind and unjust with women, violence against women, denying a woman her right to education, right to marry someone of her choice, right to inheritance, etc.

A brief concept of a woman's role is given in the section below.

Concept of a Woman's Role

The concept of a woman's *kirdar* (role) is perceived as where she stands in the society, her position and what her responsibilities are, whether inside the house or outside the boundaries of her house.

The analysis of the data also reveals that the females at SJH perceive the relational aspect of the female gender, as a woman is always talked about with reference to her relation with men or within the home. She has a role and contribution; to herself i.e. at the individual level through her own character building, to her family, through upbringing and various roles she plays in the form of a daughter, mother, wife and sister, and to the larger society as well, as she interacts and plays a social role outside the house.

According to a student, Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years, at SJH:

"Aurat ka bara kirdar hai.....aurat kay baghair maashara namukamal hai" meaning "a woman has a great role to play....a society without women is incomplete."

According to the principal of SJH:

"Allah has created men and women for each other.... Eve was created from the rib of Adam..... That part of the body is not straight....if you straighten it you will break it..... In Islam.... a woman is equal to the man....without a woman... a house

162

is not a home....iIt is half empty......without a man..... the house is half

empty....men and women both are like tyres of a car and fulfill each others

need....the role is equal."

She quoted the following *ahadees*:

"*apni aulaadon kay maamalay main Allah say daro aur barabari karo.*"

Translation:

Narrated Amir:

Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H) said:

"Be afraid of Allah, and be just to your children."

(Sahih al Bukhari, kitab ul hiba, hadees # 2587)

"*.......Jannat maaon kay kadmoon kay talay hai.*"

Translation:

It was narrated from Mu'awiyah bin Jahimah As-Sulami, that Jahimah came to the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and said:

"O Messenger of Allah! I want to go out and fight (in Jihad) and I have come to ask your advice." He said: "Do you have a mother?" He said: "Yes." He said: "Then stay with her, for Paradise is beneath her feet."

(Sunan un Nisai, kitab ul jihad, hadees # 3104)

"*Baap ki raza main Allah ki raza hai.....*"

Translation:

Abu 'Abdur-Rahman As-Sulami narrated from Abu Ad Darda':

"I heard the Messenger of Allah saying: 'The father is the middle gate to Paradise. So if you wish, then neglect that door, or protect it.'"

(at- Trimidhi, kitab ul birr, hadees # 1900)

Further, the principal shared:

"A woman is not lowly in Islam.....a woman is the honour of her husband and the custodian of his wealth....a mother is the first trainer of her child....when you marry....marry an educated woman....who is religious and of good character.....give preference to a religious woman.....your generations will turn out to be religious."

"Zamana jaahiliyat main aurat ki koi ehmiyat nahi thee..... aurat paaon ki juti thee.....maar peeth ki ijazat nahin hai" meaning "prior to the advent of Islam...a woman had no importance....she was considered lowly......heavy beating is not allowed."

Further she shared:

"mashara aurat kay aala kirdar kay baghair taraqee nahin karr sakta......nai nasal inhee aadat ki hamil hotee hai....maayain....behnain....baithiyan....mashara sunwartee hain." meaning "a society cannot progress without the role of a good woman......the new generation will pick up these good habits.... mothers....sisters....daughters.....make a society better."

"Aurat bachon ki tarbeeyut islami aur ikhlaqi tareeqay say karay....izzat aur maal ki hifazut karay.....apni aur apnay shouhar ki jaan o maal ki hifazut karay" meaning "a woman should bring up her children in an Islamic and ethical manner.....should safeguard her honour and wealth....and her husband's life and wealth."

According to the analysis of the above statements, a role has been perceived as the rights and responsibilities of an individual towards others in the society. For example, a woman is a daughter, sister, wife and mother. She plays different roles within the confines of a house or within a society. She needs to be obedient to her parents and husband and look after them well. She is responsible to take care of her children and bring them up well so that they become good human beings. She should not waste her time and should utilise it well.

According to a *hadees* highlighting the importance of obedience to a mother:

"Maaon ki nafarmaani tum parr haraam hai."

Translation:

Narrated Al-Mughira:

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said:

"Allah has forbidden you to be undutiful to your mothers....."

(Sahih al Bukhari, kitab ul adab, hadees # 5975)

According to a student, Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years, on the perception of role:

"kirdaar ka matlab insaan kiss level parr khara hai.....kia zimahdaari hai.....maasharay main......jaisay bachaye maan ki zimahdaari hain......baitee maan baap ki zimahdaari

164

hai.....waghaira" meaning "role means where does one stand.....what are their responsibilities.....in society....for instance children are a mother's responsibility........a girl is a parents responsibility.......etc."

According to the perceptions from the field, a woman can go out of her house to work if there is a necessity. When a woman goes outside her house to seek knowledge, she becomes a student and when she imparts that knowledge to others, she is a teacher. A woman also goes into various professions like she can become a doctor, engineer, nurse, etc. but the role of a woman is confined within the limitations placed on her by *shariah,* for example, *pardah* (veil) is a must and she should not mix and mingle freely with men (*shara i hadood* mentioned earlier in the chapter within the section on the concept of empowerment). When I asked my respondents whether a woman can go out of her house to work; a few students shared:

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

   "*zaroorat kay tehat bahir nikal saktee hai magar chand sharayat hain: mukamal pardah...*
   munsaib paisha (jaisay parhana, doctor) aur mardoon kay saath mail joll na ho" meaning "in
case there is a necessity.... a woman can go out of the house but there are certain conditions to it:
   she should observe complete *pardah*, it should be a suitable profession (like teaching, doctor)
                        and she should not mix and mingle with men."

Here a suitable profession means; a profession for women which is respectable, close to their nature like teaching or nursing, etc. and where *shara i hadood* apply meaning there is no mixing and mingling with people of the opposite gender. A female doctor should treat a female patient, a female teacher should teach female students, etc.

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

         "*aurat ghar kay bahar jiss bhi shubay main jaye aik acha kirdarr ada karay.....agar*
            teacher hai tu aik achee teacher banay......agar aik student hai tu aik achee student
            banay.........agar aik doctor hai tu aik achee doctor banay.......puree diyanatdaree say
         kaam karay.....discipline ka khiyaal rakhay aur sharee hadood main kaam karay....hadd
         say agay na barhay" meaning "whatever profession a woman chooses she should play a
         good role... if she is a teacher she should become a good teacher.... if she is a student she
            should become a good student...if she is a doctor she should become a good doctor......

she should work with full integrity and discipline and should act within the limits set by *shariah* and should not exceed those boundaries."

Further, she said:

"*harr cheez main aurat ko hissa laina chahiye.....intizami amoor ko sumbhalay*" meaning "a woman should participate in everything......even administrative tasks."

She shared the following *hadees* to elaborate her point:

"*aurat jab paanch waqat ki namaaz parhtee hai....rozay rakhtee hai....apnee izzat ki hifazat kartee hai....apnay shouhar ki ata'at kartee hai....woh jannat kay jiss darwazay say chahay dakhil ho saktee hai.*"

Translation:

"The woman who offers her five times salat, fasts in the month of Ramadan, protects her honour and respect, and obeys her husband has the choice of entering jannah from whichever door she wishes to enter from."

(*Targheeb watarheeb*, vol. 3, p.33[5])

According to a teacher Irum, aged 21 years:

"*aurat kirdar sharee hadood main adda karay*" meaning "a woman should fulfill her role within the limitations placed on her by *shariah.*"

The following are the views of a few students about the role of a woman:

Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

"*aurat ka eham kirdar hai....aik aurat kay zareeyay taleem yafta, munazzam aur purr aman maashira tushkeel hota hai*" meaning "the role of a woman is important.....every woman is responsible for creating an educated, organised and a peaceful society."

The analysis of the data also reveals that the students at SJH while discussing the relational aspect of the female gender, always talk about a woman with reference to her relations with males or within their homes. For instance, it was shared that a woman is to be treated well by her husband and is not his servant. Islam has given a woman many rights and respect in society, her status is high, as was shared by Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

"*Islam nay aurat ko malka banaya hai*" meaning "Islam has made a woman a princess."

Rights and status of women at SJH has always been compared to the one in Pre-Islamic times.

---

[5] This *hadees* is not from *Sihai Sitta,* so, it has no *hadees* number.

Further, she shared:

"*aurat gharailoo maamalat tay kar saktee hai*" meaning "a woman can deal with household affairs" ..."*aurat ko apnay paoon par khud kharay hona chahiye*" meaning 'a woman should be able to support herself."

The analysis of the data also reveals that the females at SJH perceive that apart from a women's role and contribution to herself and her family, a woman has a larger role; a social role to play outside the house as well. She builds up on her extended relations and social networks through attending; to the sick and social events such as marriages and deaths, etc. Same is also true for men as well. Men must do their own work themselves and should not overburden their wives with the housework. Men can cook, wash and stitch their own clothes too. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) used to do his work himself. She quoted the following verse from the Holy Quran which says men are caretakers over women:

According to the Holy Quran (*Surah Nisa, Ayat* 34):

"Men shall take full care of women with the bounties which God has bestowed more abundantly on the former than on the latter, and with what they may spend out of their possessions. And the righteous women are the truly devout ones, who guard the intimacy which God has [ordained to be] guarded."

A student, Binte Hawa, aged 20 years shared her views on the individual role of women:

"*aurat ka ikhlaq aur kirdar acha hona chahiye....aik khushaal gharaanay ko aik mutaqi aur parhaizgaar aurat ki zarorat hotee hai.....aik aurat ko namaz rozay ka paband hona chahiye takay aglee nasal ki parwarish kar sakay*" meaning "a woman should have good morals and character......a prosperous family would need a devout and a pious woman......a woman should be regular in her prayers and fasts so that she can bring up her next generation accordingly."

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

"*aurat kay baighair mard kee tarbeeyat mumkin nahin*" meaning "men cannot be brought up properly without the help of women."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"*aurat ko chahiye puraani rawayaat parhay......khaas tour parr momineen kee baatain.....asal kirdar tu islami tareekh say pata chalta hai.....apnee soch ko masbat rakhay.....soch say alfaaz*

nikaltay hain.....alfaaz say amaal.....amaal say kirdar.....aur insaan ki pehchaan" meaning "a woman should read old traditions.....especially about the sayings of true believers.....the actual role is found in Islamic history........should keep her thinking positive.....thoughts lead to words....words lead to actions.....actions lead to role/character....character leads to her identity."

(this is diagramatically explained in figure 6.2 below)

Further, she said*:*

"aurat apna muqaam khud kho chukee hai.....woh muqaam jo islaam nay diya....uss nay Allah ki ataaut nahin kee" meaning "a woman has lost her position in the society......that position which Islam gave her......she has not obeyed Allah."

Figure 6.2: How a Woman's Role is Perceived to be Derived from her Thoughts.

Thoughts ⟶ words ⟶ actions ⟶ character ⟶ a woman's identity
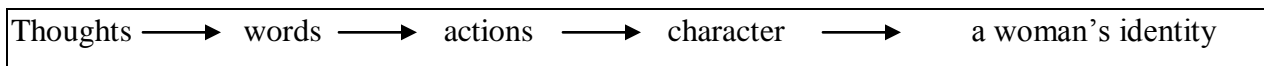
(Source: Fieldwork)

Role of Men

(The Guardian of the Family)

The analysis of the data reveals that the females at SJH perceive men in the Pakistani society have multiple roles to play; he has a role and contribution; to himself i.e. at the individual level through his own character building, to his family through various roles that he plays in the form of a son, brother, husband and father, and to the larger society as well, as he interacts and plays a major role outside the house. If a man is a son, he needs to take care of his parents and serve them. As a husband, he needs to take care of and financially support his wife and children. As a father, he needs to manage the household expenses and take part in the upbringing of his children. As a brother, he needs to take care of and protect his sisters and younger siblings.

According to further analysis of the data, man and woman are the two basic pillars of a family, but men have been endowed with special qualities by the order of their creation. Their power of logic is perceived to be stronger than that of women and they are regarded as the guardians of their families. Allah regards men as the guardians of their families and states in the Holy Quran (*Surah Noor, ayat* 34) that:

 "Men are the maintainers of women, because Allah has made some of them to excel others..."

Therefore, men have a greater and more difficult responsibility in supporting their families. Through his wisdom, a man supports his family and prepares the ground for their happiness and comfort.

The Prophet of Allah (P.B.U.H) stated:

"Man is the guardian of his family and every guardian has responsibilities towards those under his guardianship."

(Sahih al Bukhari, kitaab ul ehkaam, hadees # 7138)

As was shared by the respondents, but a man, who supports his family, should also realise that a woman is also a human being. She has certain rights in life. Marrying a woman is not like hiring a servant, but it is a selection of a partner and a friend who he would be able to live with for the rest of one's life.

According to a teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years at SJH:

"The man should be empowered....he should be aware of his responsibilities...the Prophet (P.B.U.H) used to do all his housework himself.......with his own hands.......no individual can be empowered totally....to an extent ......yes.....he can.........for example...a farmer provides fodder.....he is not self sufficient.....we depend on every area of life....for education we depend on our teachers.....if we are sick we go to the doctor.....if we need surgery we go to a surgeon."

A man is also responsible for taking care of his wife's requests and needs. Man is not the owner of his wife but in fact a woman has certain rights over her husband. Allah states in the Holy Quran (*Surah Baqara, ayat* 228):

"And women have rights similar to the rights of men in a just manner, and the men have a degree (of advantage) over them."

According to a few of the students at SJH, the role of men was perceived as:

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"mard nigahbaan hain hakim nahin" meaning "men are supervisors and not rulers."

Highlighting the status of men, Binte Hawa, aged 20 years shared:

"mard sarparast hain......ghar kay maamalay main ghehri nazar rakhni chahiye.....mard ka darja bara hai" meaning "men are caretakers.....they should be aware of what is going on within the house......they have a higher status."

Further, she said:

> "*mard ghar waloon kee tarbeeyat karay....apnay kaam khud karay.....humaray nabi apnay kaam khud kartay thay.....jharo waighaira*" meaning "the men should train their family members.....should do their own work....our Prophet (P.B.U.H) used to do his own work....like sweeping, etc."

She also shared the example of *Ustaad Jee,* that men should; not think too highly about themselves, should share the household responsibilities, should lower their gaze, should be able to differentiate between *halaal* (permissible) and *haraam* (not permissible).

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> "*mard ko chahiye kay sahaba karaam ka mutaliyyah karain....fikar wasih karain......soch masbut rakhain.....tehkeek karain......Aapi Jaan kehteen hain......achee ya buree soch ka asar aik meel tak jaata hai*" meaning "men should study the lives of the companions of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H).....should broaden their minds......should keep their thinking positive......should research.....*Aapi Jaan* says.......positive or negative thinking influences a mile."

Further, she quoted the example, that if someone does charitable work every month, it will influence others to follow and to do the same.

According to two FGDs with groups of students, there was group consensus that a man has different responsibilities in the form of a son, brother, husband or father. He is the head of the household. He is responsible for providing for the family including maintenance of household expenses and child support. He is not only responsible for dealing with the outside world but also responsible for the good upbringing of his children along with taking care of their mother.

According to two *ahadees* highlighting the role of men as caretakers:

> "*jo tum apnay app ko kilao tu woh sadqa hai, jo tum apnay bachoon ko khilao tu woh bhi sadqa hai, jo tum apnee biwi ko khilao tu woh bhee sadqa hai, jo tum apnay khadam ko khilao tu woh bhee sadqa hai.*"

Translation:

It was narrated from Miqdam bin Madikarib (Ar- Zubaidi) that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

"No man earns anything better than that which he earns with his own hands, and what a man spends on himself, his wife, his child and his servant, then it is charity."

(*Sunan Ibn Majah, Kitaab ut tajaraat, hadees* # 2138)

"Jab mussalmaan mard apnee biwi aur bachoon par Allah ka hokum ada karnay kee niyat say kharch karay tu iss main ussay sadqay ka suwaab milta hai."

Translation:

Abu Mas'ud reported Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H) as saying:

"When a Muslim spends on his family seeking reward for it from Allah, it counts for him as sadaqa."

(*Sahih Muslim, kitab uz zakat, hadees* # 1002)

Role of Men as *Ulemas*

Ulema is the plural of *Alim* meaning scholar in Arabic. The female of *Alim* is *Alima,* defined as those recognised as scholars or authorities of the Islamic religious sciences. Often they are *Imams* of important mosques, judges or teachers in the religious faculties of universities. Most *ulema* specialise in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence, these are known as *fuqaha* or *muftis*) and are considered the arbiters of *shariah* law by mainstream Muslims. *Ulema* may also include specialists in other areas such as *muhaddith* (concerned with the study of *hadees*) and *mufassir* (concerned with *tafsir* of the Quran). The term is commonly used to refer to that section of the Muslim community who are considered to be intellectual. At times, in the Muslim history, the *ulema* have even served as an informal branch of the government, countervailing the power of the ruling caliph or sultan.

The following verse highlight the importance of *ulema,* the Quran says (*Surah Zumr, ayat* 9):

> *"Say (O Muhammad): Can those who know and those who do not know be equal? Verily only the men of understanding take the heed."*

According to my respondents, a person who is educated and not educated is not equal. According to a few *ahadees*, highlighting the importance of the *ulema*:

> *"............Ulema anbiya kay waaris hain.....jo shaks ilm haaasil karay tu uss nay uss wirasat main say azeem hissa liya."*

Translation:

Narrated Kathir ibn Qays:

I heard the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) say:

> *"If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, the inhabitants of the heavens and the Earth and the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars. The learned are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion."*
>
> (*Sunan Abu Dawood, kitab ul ilm, hadees* # 3641)

This is the "deep understanding in religion" that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) praised when he said:

(Narrated Ibn 'Abbas):

> *"Whomever Allah wishes well for He gives deep understanding (fiqh) in religion."*
>
> (*at Trimidhi, kitaab ul ilm, hadees* # 2645)

According to a verse in the Quran (*Surah Fatir, ayat* 28):

> *"Baishak bandoon main say Allah say ziada darnay waalay ulema hain."*

Translation:

> *"Of all His servants, only such as are endowed with [innate] knowledge stand [truly] in awe of God: [for they alone comprehend that,] verily, God is almighty, much-forgiving."*

A student, Binte Hawa, aged 20 years shared her views regarding the role of *ulemas* in the society:

> *"qiyamat kay din ulema say ilm kay baray main sawaal hoga......kitna seekha aur sikhaya"* meaning "on the Day of Judgement *ulema* will be questioned about their religious knowledge.....how much they learnt and taught."

According to an FGD with a group of students there was group consensus that the role of *ulema* has been and is still considered important today to guide the Muslim community with their capabilities and abilities in every walk of life.

According to Ali (2012, p.50), "*madrassas in Pakistan are not simply educational institutions but also social institutions as they are linked to the wider community through the ulema who serve there and play a variety of functions in the society*". So is the case of SJH as well, as it plays a vital role in protecting the socio-religious traditions of the Deobandi Muslim community. One of its roles is to provide guidance to the general public. The *ulema* at this *madrassa* closely interact with the Muslims outside the *madrassa* in their capacity as specialists in Islamic law and theology. The public often seeks the opinions of the *ulema* in matters relating to various issues such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc. they are invited to preside over community functions such as *milad,* solemnise weddings, and lead prayers during funerals, marriages and burials etc. The teachers and students also travel to nearby localities instructing Muslims in virtues and warning them of immorality. An important function of SJH is also to deliver *fatwas* in response to specific requests from the public. For this purpose, it has a separate library for research work called *Darul Iftah (fatwajaat)* which is reserved for *Takhusus al fiqh* students also known as research students. These students or *muftias* prepare and issues *fatwas. Fatwas* are often sought regarding social matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, or the proper methods of performing various rituals. *Fatwas* are not binding though for many Muslims they carry great prestige, as authoritative statements claiming to represent the authentic Islamic position on a particular matter.

Talbani (1996, p.73) states that *"the main objective of madrassas continues to be the production of religious scholars trained to defend religion and protect traditional values."* According to the analysis of the data, the curriculum at SJH is focused heavily towards Islamic theological subjects like the Quran, *Hadees* and *Fiqh*, etc. Although SJH teaches English and Science as subjects till grade eighth, these subjects are hardly ever the focus of study in these institutions as emphasis is more towards attainment of religious education. According to the perceptions from the field, the purpose of religious education is to give meaning to one's life and enriching it with the light of Islamic faith as outlined in the Quran. Another purpose is to strengthen and advance

human societies. The role of the *ulema* has been and is still considered important today to guide the Muslim community with their capabilities and abilities in every walk of life. They have a role in uniting the Muslim *ummah* and gearing their collective capabilities for collective action (Sen, 1999). For instance, Islamic scholars and teachers must lay emphasis on how Muslim nations should advance by combining both the Islamic education systems with scientific interventions. It is not just the responsibility of our leaders or the state or just a few people to bring about development. Every individual is responsible and should contribute towards development (individual and collective capabilities). According to De Haan (2000), an indication of sustainability is social inclusion. To ensure participation and empowerment of local communities, local leadership must be developed as a means of drawing on local resources and initiatives. In the case of SJH, the local leadership consists of the *ulemas* and the *mualimas*.

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) as a Role Model

According to the Holy Quran (*Surah Al-Ahzab, ayat* 21):

> "*Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah.*"

According to the females at SJH, the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) is the best role model for all Muslims. He encouraged Muslims though his enlightening example to behave kindly with women. He personifies the roles of a perfect father and husband. He was so kind and tolerant with his wives that they could not envisage their lives without him, nor did they want to live away from him. At one point, he had nine wives and dealt equally with all of them and without any serious problems. He was a kind and gentle husband, and never behaved harshly or rudely. In short, he was the perfect husband.

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) consulted his wives and discussed matters with them as friends, all his wives were his consultants and confidants. Certainly, he did not need their advice, since he was directed by revelation. However, he wanted to teach his nation that Muslim men were to give women every consideration to demonstrate their importance. This was quite a radical idea in his time, as it is today in many parts of the world. He began teaching his people through his own relationship with his wives. He taught Muslim men an important social lesson: There is nothing

174

wrong with exchanging ideas with women on important matters, or on any matters at all. Counsel and consultation, like every good deed, were practised by Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H) first within his own family and then in the wider community.

According to the perceptions from the field, if one looks at the Pakistani society today, women are considered as secondary beings in the minds of many Muslim men, while in Islam, a woman is part of a whole, a part that renders the other half useful. When these two halves come together, the true unity of a human being appears. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) encouraged Muslims through his enlightening words to behave kindly towards women.

Abu Hurairah narrated that The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said:

"The most complete of the believers in faith, is the one with the best character among them. And the best of you are those who are best to your women."

(*at Trimidhi, kitaab ur razaah, hadees* # 1162)

In history, women received true honor and respect that they deserved, during the period of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). The Quran declares that his wives are the *mothers of the Believers* (*Surah Al-Ahzab, ayat* 6).

The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) was the perfect head of a family; managing many women with ease, being close to their hearts, an instructor of their minds, an educator of their souls, he never neglected the affairs of the nation or compromised his duties.

Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) would praise his wife in front of other people; he said that value of Aisha (R.A) among women was the same value of *thareed* (bread soaked in soup) compared to other foods (*Sahih Muslim, Fazail Sahaba, hadees* #2431). He was soft spoken and he would not criticise his wives nor would he raise his voice or his hands. Kind words penetrate inside one's soul and leave an unforgettable mark that transcends anything else. This is why the wives of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) all said that they would not want to spend their time with anyone else except the Prophet (P.B.U.H).

According to two FGDs with two groups of students at the *madrassa*, there was group consensus that in many narrations, it is explained that the Prophet (P.B.U.H) used to help in the house. He would sew his own clothes, sweep the floor, repair his shoes, service himself (without asking his wives), etc. Nowadays, some men don't even lift a finger in the house to help their wives with anything at all. They should help the wife and show acts of service for instance taking the garbage out, cleaning the dishes, ironing the clothes for their spouse, or helping the wife in the kitchen once in a while.

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) commanded the men to fear Allah regarding women, and to treat them with kindness because they were only made lawful to them through the words of Allah (i.e. the marriage contract). He said:

"And enjoin on one another goodness towards women; verily they are married to you: you have no power over them at all unless they come in for a flagrantly filthy action; but if they are devoted to you, then seek no way against them. And verily, you have rights over your women, and they have rights over you."

(*at Tirmidhi, kitaab ur razaah, hadees* # 1163)

Through leading by example, Prophet Muhammad's (P.B.U.H) wives also denounced worldly attachments and chose Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and the Hereafter. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) lead such an ordinary life that he slept on a thin bedding on the floor, using water sparingly and on many days had very little to eat. At one point in time, the wives of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) did ask for a little more than they had. They were not indecent requests and the Prophet (P.B.U.H) was not angered at them. Instead, he chose solitude to express his sadness and in turn, his wives also felt grave sadness upon them. When Abu Bakr (R.A) and Umar (R.A) (both of whom had daughters married to the Prophet (P.B.U.H) heard of this incident, they were angry at their daughters for causing pain to the Prophet (P.B.U.H). However, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) cautioned to not be mad at his wives as he felt the grief of being unable to meet their requests.

In turn, Allah advised the Prophet (P.B.U.H) (*Surah Al-Ahzab, ayat* 28-29):

"O Prophet! say to your wives: If you desire this world's life and its adornment, then come, I will give you a provision and allow you to depart a goodly departing. And if you desire Allah and His Messenger and the latter abode, then surely Allah has prepared for the doers of good among you a mighty reward."

All the wives chose the Prophet (P.B.U.H), their husband and the Hereafter. This was an open choice and they decided that through the Prophet's (P.B.U.H) servitude that they would be in a far better position to choose the Hereafter rather than live luxuriously in a temporary world.

Marriages today seem like a difficult ordeal. There are so many sorts of disputes that surface between the husband and wife and many of them lead to divorce. Prophet Muhammad's (P.B.U.H) monogamous marriage lasted twenty five years until he buried his elderly wife. During that time he never showed interest in other women. After that, the directives to marry many wives came with wisdom from Allah. And mostly, they were for these women to be the best teachers to the society or to bind relationships with other tribes. All wives were honoured and promised a great reward for their steadfastness in living within limited means.

Furthermore, disputes and jealousy were mitigated gently by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) himself, in order to maintain unity within his household. His wives held a close knit; helped answer questions with respect to religion; followed their husband on political envoys; worked hard to feed the poor and became the mothers to all believers. This could only happen through the strong leadership of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H), who led by example, and served his family humbly, and will be remembered as the best of husbands in Islamic history.

Source of Inspiration

The girls at the *madrassa* are inspired by the ones they seek guidance from or those who are superior in knowledge to them. When I asked the females at SJH who inspires them, some of the responses were:

A teacher, Irum, aged 21 years:

> *"Islami gharana"* meaning "a religious household."

A few of the students shared:

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

> *"Ulema."*

Rabia, aged 17 years:

> *"Aapi Jaan... unka ikhlaq aur ruwaiya mutasir karta hai"* meaning *"Aapi Jaan*...her attitude and behaviour is inspiring."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

> *"Aapi Jaan...unn ko daikh kar Allah aur rasool yaad aatay hain....harr qol-o-fail*
> *main....kirdar main"*.....meaning *"Aapi Jaan*....when I look at her.... she reminds me of
> *Allah* and the Prophet (P.B.U.H)...in her every word and action...in her character."

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

> *"Ustaad Jee...unka ikhlaq...ilm....ruwayya... narm tabeeyat...aur sabr"* meaning
> *"Ustaad Jee*....his attitude...knowledge.....behaviour.....soft-hearted nature and
> patience."

While discussing the role of men in the society, a few of the respondents also spoke about the rights of men, which leads to the next section, rights in Islam.

6.5 Rights in Islam
6.5.1 Rights of Men
(As a Husband and a Father)

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) is reported to have laid great emphasis towards the rights of a husband, as was shared by a student, Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years, at SJH:

> "A lady once came to the Prophet (P.B.U.H) to inquire about the rights of a husband as
> she was getting married. He is reported to have said that if a husband is wounded and his
> wife licks the wounds with her tongue, even then she cannot pay off his rights (*haq ada*
> *naheen kar saktee*)."

Allah has given great rights to the husband and has attached a lot of virtue to him. Pleasing the husband and keeping him happy is a great act of *ibadah* (worship) and displeasing him or keeping him unhappy is a major sin in Islam. According to a *hadees:*

Narrated Abu Hurairah:

Someone asked the Prophet (P.B.U.H):

"Who is the best woman?" The Prophet (P.B.U.H) replied: *"The best woman is one who pleases*
her husband when he looks at her, when he asks her to do something she obeys him, and she
does not do anything that may displease him with regard to his wealth and honour."

(*Sunan an Nasai, kitaab un nikah, hadees # 3231*)

Apart from rights of a husband, the rights of a father or parents are also emphasised in Islam. The *hadees* below refers to the fact that the best source of earning Allah's goodwill is to seek the pleasure of one's parents. Allah's goodwill is the best blessing and disobedience of parents and their displeasure deprives an individual of earning Allah's goodwill.

Narrated Abdullah bin Amr:

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) is reported to have said:

> *"Allah's pleasure and approval are in the pleasure and approval of the parents, and Allah's anger lies in the displeasure of the parents."*
>
> (*at Trimidhi, Kitab ul birr, hadees* # 1899)

6.5.2 Women in Pre-Islamic Arabia

According to the perceptions from the field, before the advent of Islam, women were treated like slaves or property. Their personal consent concerning anything related to their wellbeing was considered unimportant, to such a degree that they were never even treated as a party to a marriage contract. Women had no independence, could own no property and were not allowed to inherit. Their condition was unspeakable.

Additionally, the birth of a daughter was not an occasion for rejoicing but was regarded with humiliation. The practice of killing female children was uncontrolled. With the advent of Islam came the verse from the Quran (*Surah Nahl, ayat* 58-59) condemning those who practiced female infanticide:

> *"And when the news of (the birth of) a female (child) is brought to any of them, his face becomes dark, and he is filled with inward grief! He hides himself from the people because of the evil of that whereof he has been informed. Shall he keep her with dishonor or bury her in the earth? Certainly, evil is their decision."*

And the Quran also mentions (*At-Takwir, ayat* 8-9):

> *"And when the female (infant) buried alive (as the pagan Arabs used to do) shall be questioned. For what sin she was killed?"*

Allah (SWT) says in the Quran (*Surah Nisa, ayat* 4):

"O You who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the Mahr (bridal-money given by the husband to his wife at time of marriage) you have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse. And live with them honorably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good."

Now, we move from the relational capacity of women to their individual capacity. Shortlisted below are few of the rights specific to an individual woman.

6.5.3 Rights of Women

Basic Rights

According to the analysis of the data, the most basic right of a woman in Islam is the knowledge and recognition that she never has to ask or demand or fight for her rights which are guaranteed to her by Allah (SWT) Himself. Islam considers a woman to be equal to a man as a human being and as his partner in this life. Allah (SWT) says in the Quran (*Surah Nisa, ayat* 1):

"O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife (Eve), and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever and All-Watcher over you."

And in the words of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H):

"Assuredly, women are the twin halves of men."

(Sunan Abu Dawood, kitaab utaharaat, hadees # 236*)*

In Islam, a woman is a unique individual in her own right. She has the same responsibilities toward herself, towards Allah (SWT) and towards other human beings as the male and will be punished or rewarded in the Hereafter without discrimination towards her gender.

Islam has laid great emphasis on the rights of women, which no other religion has safeguarded. Once a companion of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) asked him about the rights of women, the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) said:

"feed her as you feed yourself from what Allah the Exalted gives you, clothe her as you clothe yourself with what Allah the Exalted gives you. Do not slap her, do not use foul language with her, do not turn her out of the house."

(*Sunan Ibn Majah, kitaab un nikaah, hadees # 1850*)

According to a student at SJH, Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

"biwi kay haqooq hain kay mard isska khiyaal rakhay.....aur jaib kharch day aur jaayaz muradain puree karay" meaning "it is the right of a wife that her husband takes care of her....and gives her pocket money and fulfills all her appropriate requests."

When I asked the respondents about roles of women, the respondents talked about their relational capacity themselves (daughter, sister, mother, wife). The reason was that a woman is always the responsibility of a man; father, brother, husband or son. Regarding their individual capacity, I inquired myself, some of which are mentioned below:

The Right to go to the Mosque

The analysis of the data shows that the Messenger of Allah ((P.B.U.H) said:

"If someone's wife asks his permission to go to the mosque, he should not deny it to her."

(*Sunan Abu Dawood, kitaab usalah, hadees # 567*)

Women should be covered and in *pardah*, according to the Muslim woman's dress requirements.

At the same time, a woman's prayer in her home is better, from the viewpoint of her household duties and duties as a mother. Also, it is better in the sense that it prevents unnecessary mixing with men. The *hadees* below supports the above stance that prayers are better in the homes for women.

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said:

"But their homes are better for them."

(*Sunan Abu Dawood, kitaab usalah, hadees # 567*)

The Right to Seek Employment and Earn an Income

In Islam, the value and importance of women in the society and the true measure of their success as human beings, is measured with a completely different criteria; their fear of Allah (SWT), obedience to Him, fulfillment of the duties He has entrusted them with, particularly of bearing, rearing and teaching the children.

The responsibility of earning and supporting families lies with men as they are the providers or caretakers in the family. Nevertheless, Islam is a practical religion and responds to human needs and life situations. Many women need, or wish to work for various reasons. For example, they may possess a needed skill, such as a teacher or a doctor.

According to all three FGDs with teachers and students, there was consensus in the group that a woman can go out of her house to work in the case of a dire need and necessity, the woman can go out to support herself and her family but within the limitations imposed on her by *shariah*. For instance, *pardah* is a must. She can also give tuition at home or set up a home based small business; can become a doctor, engineer or a teacher, etc.

According to the analysis of the data, while Islam does not prohibit women from working outside the home, it does stipulate that the following restrictions be followed to safeguard the dignity and honor of women as the conduct of women is considered the backbone of an Islamic society and brings about stability:

1. Outside employment should not come before or seriously interfere with her responsibilities as a wife and mother.
2. Her work should not be a source of friction within the family and the husband's consent is required in order to eliminate later disagreements. If she is not married, she must have her guardian's consent.
3. Her appearance, manner, tone of speech and overall behaviour should follow Islamic guidelines. These include: restraining her glances in relation to any men near the work place, wearing correct Islamic dress, avoiding men, not walking in a provocative manner, and not using make up or perfume in public.

4. Her job should not be one which is mixing and associating with men.

5. Her job should not be a cause of moral corruption in the society or involve any prohibited trade or activity, affect her own religion, morals, dignity and good behaviour or subject her to temptations.

6. Preferably, a woman should try to seek employment in positions which require a woman's special skills or which relate to the needs of women and children, such as teaching, nursing other women, etc.

A few of the students at SJH, shared their views about the rights of a woman to seek employment or earn an income:

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

"*auraton kay kaam parr pabandi naheen*" meaning "a woman is not restricted to work."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"*aurat zaroorat kay mutabiq naukari karr saktee hai*" meaning "a woman can seek employment if it is a necessity."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

"*aurat kay liye ghar hai ya kabar....usski izzat mehfooz rahay gee.....fitna aur mahol ka asar zaroor parta hai.....baghair zaroorat aurat ghar say bahar na niklay*" meaning "for a woman there is either her house or her grave.......her honor will be protected.......temptation and environment have an effect......she should not go out of the house without any inevitability."

Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years:

"*agar aurat ko ghar say bahar jaa kay kaam karna hai tu woh mardon say sakht lehjay main baat karay*" meaning "if a woman has to go outside the house to work so she should speak with men in a harsh tone."

A few of the teachers at SJH, shared their views about the rights of a woman to seek employment or earn an income:

Amna, aged 26 years:

"*aurat ko parday main kaam karnay ki ijazut hai*" meaning "a woman can work in *pardah*."

Shaheen, aged 27 years:

"yes a woman can work.......we have an aunt who works at the *madrassa* canteen....she is part time, comes from outside the *madrassa* and gets paid Rs.10,000 here...she supports her family financially....it is a respectable job......other respectable jobs include tuition/teaching.........internet classes......stitching/sewing., etc.....the first responsibility of a woman is inside the house........to bring up her children....then she can also earn outside the house.....it is the man's responsibility to earn an income......the woman is responsible to bring up her children.......thats when societies progress and develop."

The Right to Vote

There were mixed perceptions at the *madrassa* about exercising the right of women to vote in the elections. 35% of the respondents supported this and agreed that women have a right to exercise their opinion in the political process, 20% were not sure if women could vote, while 45% were of the view that since these votes will not elect a true Islamic leader, hence this right should not be exercised at all (see table 6.2 below):

Table 6.2: Shows the Percentage of Respondents on the Right of Women to Vote

Yes	Do not confirm	No
35%	20%	45%

Source: Fieldwork

Also, the females at the *madrassa* linked the right and responsibility of women to vote with the concept of *aakhirat* (hereafter), as was shared by students below:

Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

"agar tu siyasatdaan Islami nizaam ki tarf hoon tu tab main vote daaloon gee ....kyuon kay harr amal ka sawaal hoga" meaning "if the politicians bring about an Islamic system only then I will vote....because I will be questioned about every action (*aakhirat*)."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"aurat vote karr saktee hai..... imaan kay taqazay kay mutabiq.......agar umeedwaar islami nifaz ka ehtamaam karay gaa" meaning "a woman can vote.... according to the requirements of faith.....if the potential candidate will bring about an Islamic system."

184

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

"vote nahin day saktee magar apnee raye day saktee hai" meaning "she cannot vote but she can give her opinion."

Syeda Fatima, aged 18 years:

"yeh masla hai......mujhay pata nahin.....main tehkeek karoon gee" meaning "this is an issue.....i don't know yet.....i will research."

According to a teacher, Shaheen aged 27:

"I have never voted because it is the same whether you vote or not."

The Right to Drive

Not one respondent at the *madrassa s*aid that a woman cannot drive, but the only condition is that of *pardah*. Some of the females shared that a woman driving herself is much safer than she going in a taxi or a public vehicle.

According to an FGD with a group of teachers, when the respondents were asked if a woman could drive, there was group consensus that driving is not empowerment but a necessity for women. So yes, women can drive.

The teachers at the *madrassa* shared their views about driving:

Irum, aged 21 years:

"It's not a right....it's a necessity."

Amna, aged 26 years:

"aurat garee chala saktee hai....garee mehfooz hai" meaning "a woman can drive a car.... because it is safe."

Shaheen, aged 27 years:

"yes.....a woman can drive...Aapi Jaan drives....a female traffic warden once came to our madrassa......to inform us about driving classes......but it is all about affordability.....we cannot afford it."

The Right to *Tableegh*

All respondents at the *madrassa* agreed that yes, a woman has a right to *tableegh* (spread ofreligious faith). According to the Quran, (*Surah Al Imran*, *ayat* 110):

"Tum aisee qaum ho kay tum ko nikala gaya hai....logon kay liye....takay tum naikee ka
hokum do aur burai say roko."

Translation:

"You are indeed the best community that has ever been brought forth for [the good of]
mankind: you enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and
you believe in God. Now if the followers of earlier revelation had attained to [this kind
of] faith, it would have been for their own good; [but only few] among them are
believers, while most of them are iniquitous."

According to a *hadees:*

"Ilm ki tableegh zarori hai khaas kar jiss ilm ka taaluq deen say ho iss ilm ka
chupana inn kabeera baray gunahoon main say hai jiss par sakht aur dard naak
azaab ki waeed hai...."

Translation:

Narrated Abu Hurayrah:

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said:

"He who is asked something he knows and conceals it will have a bridle of fire put on
him on the Day of Resurrection."

(*Sunan Abu Dawood, kitaab ul ilm, hadees* # 3658)

The Right to give a *Fatwa*

According to the findings from the field, *fatwa* was explained as "*Islam ki roshni main koi cheez jayuz hai ya najayuz hai"* meaning "whether something is legitimate or illegitimate in Islam", for e.g. the polio issue. It was the general perception at SJH that a woman can become an *aalima* but cannot give *fatwa* because her *fatwa* does not stand alone. A woman cannot give *fatwa* (religious ruling) because the level of education and knowledge held by a woman has gone down, since previous times "*gunah aam hogaye hain aur aurat ka muqaam girr gaya hai"* meaning that "sins are common nowadays and the position of women previously held by her in the society has gone

down." As previously in Islamic history, there used to be an Islamic system, sins were less, punishments were harsh, and so a *fatwa* from a woman was readily acceptable.

For any religious ruling, continuous study and research on religion is required. Men can go out of their house easily, whereas, women are dependent on the males for mobility ouside their homes. So, a woman's *fatwa* cannot stand alone. It has to be verified by a male *mufti.* According to a few students at SJH, when asked why a woman cannot give a *fatwa*;

Rabia, aged 17 years:

> "*aurat maasharay main apna muqaam kho chukee hai...aurat ko achay aamaal karnay chahiye*" meaning "a woman has lost her status in the society....a woman should do good deeds."

Further, she quoted an example, how a woman influences other women:

> "*aik machlee puray talaab ko ganda kartee hai .....agar bachee class main khudsar hai tu*" meaning "one fish dirties the entire pond...if a student is stubborn in class." *"aitebaar nahin aurat kay fatway ka kyoun kay taleem ka miyaar girr gaya hai"*meaning a "woman's religious ruling cannot be trusted as the quality of education has gone down."

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

> "*pehlay zamanay main auratain fatwa daiteen theen kyoun kay woh nabi kay qareeb then*" meaning "women used to give *fatwas* in previous times because they were close to the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.)."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

> "*aurat fatwa day saktee hai agar kisi baray muftee ka ilm aur rehnumai haasil ho*" meaning "a woman can give a religious judgment provided if she gets the knowledge and guidance from a learned religious scholar."

Syeda Fatima, aged 18 years:

> "*aurat kay liye fatwa daina mushqil hai.....masayal ko hal kar saktee hai.... jaisay namaaz ....zakat*" meaning "it is difficult for a woman to give *fatwa*......she can solve problems through guidance.....like issues of prayers.....zakat."

Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years:

"aurat ka fatwa qabil-e-qabool nahin....maslay hal kar saktee hai" meaning "a *fatwa*
of a woman is not acceptable.......she can solve problems though."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years, shared that there are certain conditions for being a *muftia*[6]:

"ussko muqamal tour parr quran....hadees aur fiqh ka ilm ho.... ijtehad ke silayat ho"
meaning "she should have complete command over Quran....*Hadees* and *Fiqh*....she
should have the ability to conduct *Ijtehad."*

So, the analysis of the above statements show that majority of the students agreed that a woman
cannot give a *fatwa* since the level of education of a woman has gone down and she has lost the
status that she previously held in the society at the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H).

A teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years, shared her views which were totally different than the
students' point of view:

"yes a woman can give a *fatwa*......i am a *Muftia*.....i can give religious rulings
(*fatwas*).....the qualification to become one is education...it should be PhD....after two
semesters (one year)....of experience in teaching."

The principal of the *madrassa* shared that she is not a *muftia* but an *aalima:*

*"Mufti ka ilm gehra hota hai aur fatwa day sakta hai......alim general doctor ki
tarah hai"* meaning "a *mufti* is like a specialist......researches problems and
issues.....and can give *fatwas* after careful study of old traditions of the Holy
Prophet (P.B.U.H).....*aalim* is just like a general doctor."

The Right to Marriage (Love versus Arranged Marriages)

Marriage in Islam is viewed as an important and sacred union between a man and a woman that
fulfills half of one's religious obligations.

According to the Quran (*Surah Rum, ayat* 21), it discusses marriage as follows:

*"Among His signs is that He created for you spouses from yourselves so that you might find
repose with them. And He has placed between you affection and mercy. In that there are
certainly signs for people who reflect."*

According to the analysis of the data there are basic requirements for a marriage in Islam. First, a
couple must mutually consent to the marriage. This requires both a clear proposal and

---

[6] A female Muslim legal expert who is empowered to give rulings on religious matters.

acceptance. A woman must have a *wali* or a legal guardian present during the process. If a *wali* is not present a woman must be past puberty and competent to make the decision to marry. There are no requirements regarding who can propose marriage. One historical event in the life of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) reflecting this principle is the proposal of Khadija Bint Khuwaylid (R.A), the first wife of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). Khadija (R.A) was the Prophet Muhammad's (P.B.U.H) employer and through working with him she grew to respect his honesty and integrity and proposed marriage to him. Khadija (R.A) was 25 years older than the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and in a better financial position at the time of the proposal. He accepted her proposal and their marriage is known for the love and compassion they had for one another. This proposal illustrates the ability of Muslim men and women to marry who ever they choose and highlights the fact that marriages arranged without the consent or involvement of Muslim women is completely contrary to the Islamic traditions.

According to the principal at SJH, in choosing a marriage partner, a woman's consent to accept or reject any prospective suitor for marriage must be respected. There is no force or compulsion on a woman to marry someone she doesn't like. Infact, it was shared on the field that parents often pressurise children especially women to marry someone of the parents' choice rather than of their own. If the potential partner is not of some *gira para* (low down) caste or not of unsound character, then parents need to realise, reconsider and should let go of their ego and inflexibility to let the woman have her own choice, as this right has been given to women by Islam.

According to a few of the students of SJH, sharing their views abouts rights to a marriage for a woman:

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> *"shaadi ki koi pabandi nahin.....aurat achee soch ur achee tarbeeyat kay mutabiq faisala karay"* meaning "there is no restriction on marriage...a woman should decide with a positive thinking."

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

> *"nikkah main jabr nahin kiya jaa sakta"* meaning "there can be no force to marriage."

Shaheen, a teacher, aged 27 years:

"yes a woman can give her own opinion......in arranged marriages......in our family....elders do ask your opinion......court marriage is permissible in *(sharia)* Islamic law but it is considered to be immodest....shameless......*(behiyaii)*.....in society...... *zabardasti ki shaadi tashaddud hai*...forced marriage is a crime....child marriage is a crime....in such a marriage....the results are disastrous....the age for marriage of girls should at least be 25 years......she becomes mature and wise enough by then *(Shaoor aa jaata hai)*....as far as our religion is concerned... marriageable age is right at puberty......(*baaligh honay kay baad*)."

The Right to a Divorce/*Khula*

According to the perceptions from the field, a woman has no right to divorce her husband in Islam. She cannot say the word divorce three times. She can demand divorce from her husband or she can only seek *khula*[7] (divorce initiated by the wife) for dissolution of her marriage if her husband shows unreasonable behaviour or does not fulfill his responsibilities towards his wife. The divorce is a right of a man whereas a *khula* is right of a woman. She can seek *khula* if; there has been too much wrongdoing with her, there is a threat to her religion; she cannot observe *pardah*, etc. It is also important to keep in mind that although divorce is permitted in Islam, it is not encouraged. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) stated:

> *"Of all the permitted acts divorce is most displeasing to God (Allah)."*

> (*Sunan Abu Dawood, kitaab ut talaaq, hadees* # 2178).

The Quran (*Surah Nisa, ayat* 19) further states:

> *"Live with them (your wives) on a footing of kindness and equity. If you dislike them it may be that you dislike something in which Allah has placed a great deal of good."*

The Right to Protest

Apparently, I did not have this as a question in my interview guide, but I put this section here to convey that these women do go out for silent protests, if the need arises, as I was invited to one during the course of my fieldwork, that I couldn't attend because of a prior commitment. There was a protest in August at Lal Masjid (red mosque) one evening between *asar* to *maghrab* time.

---

[7] is the right of a woman to seek a divorce from her husband in Islam for compensation (usually monetary) paid back to the husband from the wife.

Around 2000 students of SJH attended the protest. The reason behind the protest was that it was perceived that the state was harassing and arresting the staff and students at various *madrassas* across the country for interrogation purposes. It came out in the newspapers that the *ulema* associated with Wafaqul Madaris Al Arabia Pakistan, a conglomerate of seminaries, were of the opinion that an undeclared operation by the government is underway against the *madrassas* in the country. They threatened to march to the federal capital and hold a sit-in there if the government continued to raid the *madrassas*.

Decision Making within the Household

100% of the respondents agreed that women can have a say in running the affairs of the household, including the upbringing of her children. According to few of the students at SJH:

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

> "*aurat apnee raiye main mukamal ikhtiyaar rakhtee hai woh faisala karr saktee hai*"
> meaning "a woman can give her opinion freely and can take decisions herself."

Zunaira, aged 22 years:

> "*aurat kee raye ko ehamiyat dainee chahiye*" meaning "the opinion of a woman should be given due attention."

Future Plans

The analysis of the data shows that when asked about their future plans, 66% of the teachers and 60% of the students wanted to contribute towards the field of education and open up a *madrassa/jamia* in their respective villages and teach there. According to few of the students, their future plans were:

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

> "*Deen aur dunya kee taleem haasil karna.....taleem ki koi hadd naheen*" meaning "to attain further religious and worldly knowledge....there is no limit to education."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

> "*Mulk kay liye tu jaan bhi hazir hai*" meaning "my life is available for the service of my country."

Binte Amna, aged 22 years:

"Main deen ki khidmat karna chahtee hoon qoul aur fail par amal kar kay" meaning "I want to serve religion through practicing what I preach."

Haya, aged 20 years:

"Main huspitaal khoolon gee aur wahan kaam karoon gee" meaning "I will open a hospital and will work there."

Zunaira aged 22 years:

"Chakwal main larkeeyoun kay liye achay schools kam hain...main madrassa khoolon gee aur wahan deen aur dunya kee taleem doon gee" meaning "there is a lack of good schools for girls in Chakwal...I will open a *madrassa* and impart religious and worldly knowledge there."

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

*"Madrassa kholoon gee.....uss main adab adaab aur deeni taleem....hogee....*i will open a *madrassa*.....it will have....literature...etiquette and religious education...English...Maths....General Knowledge....Science......Urdu.....Arabic."

Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years:

"Every person should realise their own responsibility....I would like to serve my country by creating awareness about various issues and rights of people through education."

According to some of the teachers, their future plans were:

Irum, aged 21 years:

"Islami nashriyaat net pay arabi main" meaning "an online Islamic transmission in Arabic."

Shaheen, aged 27 years:

"Firstly...education....both worldly and religious.....secondly....to eradicate poverty.........poverty is increasing.....as the proper Zakat system is not being followed.......the society works on interest."

The Rights to Inheritance

Islam is the first religion to give women rights of inheritance. In the Holy Quran, daughters are given rights of inheritance from their parents, wives have a right on the husband's inheritance; mothers have rights on their children's inheritance, if they happen to die before her. Similarly, in some situations daughters and sisters are heirs of their brothers. No other religion established women's rights like this before Islam. Husbands have no rights on their wives money, or her

earnings; this is strictly forbidden. The respondents quoted the following verse from the Quran (*Surah Nisa, ayat* 34):

> "Men are guardians over women because Allah has made some of them excel others, and because they (men) spend of their wealth…"

6.6 Empowered Women and their Contribution towards the Development of the Country

When I asked the respondents whether an empowered woman can lead to development of the country, the general perception among the respondents at SJH was yes, she can contribute towards development. As a woman has various roles to play within the society, whether individual or relational, for instance, she is a student, teacher, engineer, doctor, nurse, etc, thus, she is empowered and an empowered woman makes a great contribution towards the progress of a society and eventually leads to development. According to the perceptions from the field, a society's progress was linked ultimately to its development.

According to an FGD conducted with a group of teachers, there was group consensus that it is necessary for a woman to be good (good here implies promoting an environment of peace and harmony at home) which will bring peace to any society. For any society to progress, the role that a woman plays is important. According to a student, Zunaira, aged 22 years, on the role of women is society:

> "*aurat say hee maashara hai...agar ghar main sakoon ka ehtamam hoga tu maasharay main bhee sakoon hoga*" meaning "a woman is a part of a society....if there is peace at home...so it will lead to peace in the society."

According to an FGD conducted with a group of students, there was group consensus that empowered women lead to development as women play different roles in a society; as an educationist, doctor, nurse, *aalima,* etc. She puts in a lot of hard work, effort and devotion in whatever she does whether it is inside or outside the house. According to some of the students at the *madrassa*:

Haya, aged 20 years:

> "*Harr kamyaab mard kay peechay aurat ka haath hota hai*" meaning "behind every successful man is a woman."

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

"aik khudmukhtaar aurat ka kirdar eham hai.... usska maasharay main muqaam hai......woh ghar sanbhaltee hai.....bachoon kee tarbeeyat kartee hai....ghar say bahar jaatee hai...parhtee hai ....parhatee hai.....tableegh kartee hai" meaning "an empowered woman has a big role to play....she has a standing in the society...she takes care of the house....brings up the children...goes out of the house...she studies....she teaches....she propagates."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"khudmukhtaar aurat faisala karay gee......mulk kee taraqee main hissa daalay gee......kissi dabao kay baghair" meaning "an empowered woman will take decisions.....will contribute towards development......without any pressure."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

"aik aurat jab likhna parhna seekh lay gee tu uss main shaoor aa jaye gaa" meaning "an educated woman will become conscious."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"khudmukhtaar aurat aik masbut soch rakhay gee.....masbut amaal.....masbut faisalay karay gee.....zindagi badal jaatee hai" meaning "an empowered woman will keep a positive thinking.....positive actions...will make positive decisions...life changes."

In the context of gender and development, according to Jo Rowland's model of self-empowerment (1995), I see that 'power-to' or 'power-within', relate and correspond with the notion of self-empowerment and the process of transformation or change that it causes in the lives of these females at the *madrassa*. Empowerment is mostly seen as a process which reflects power (power here refers to individual changes in confidence, consciousness like assertiveness, a sense of awareness and self-confidence) which is productive. It relates to how individuals can recognise their own self through analysing their experience and gain the confidence required to act to influence and change the outcome they create in their life (Williams et al, 1994, Rowland, 97-98). Empowerment at the *madrassa*, arises out of a female's religious education, upbringing, experiences in life and above all her interaction with the gender relations prevailing around her. In order to use the 'empowerment approach' for the development of women, it becomes important to define empowerment and what constitutes power, so that more effective and useful planning and analysis can take place. Rai et al. (2007) quotes Jo Rowland (1997, p.14), who

states that *"empowerment is more than participation in decision making; it must also include the processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions".* In the case of SJH, the core to the process of empowerment lies an increase in the females' self-confidence, self-esteem, a sense of agency and of "self" in a wider context and a sense of "dignidad" (being worthy of having a right to respect from others (1997, p.129-30).

When these women join the *madrassa* and start getting religious education, the self-perception of these women starts to change, as their self-esteem, confidence, dignity, respect and status within the community is raised, contributing to an increased access to 'power-to' and 'power-within'. These changes can take many forms and the individual can make better decisions and choices. So, religious education tends to encourage the process of empowerment but it remains restricted within the limitations of *shariah*. The role of the head of administration and the teachers is very important as these women are considered as role models for the students and are also seen as agents of change in terms of their own self-awareness. Participants of this study were determined to contribute positively towards the society by sharing their future goals and plans; 66% of the teachers and 60% of the students wanted to contribute towards the field of education and open up a *madrassa/jamia* in their respective villages and teach there. So, it is important to see that these female students would become future role models for their families and communities that they live in.

6.7 Discussion and Analysis

According to the analysis of the data, over 1400 years ago, Islam recognised the rights of women in a way that grants them utmost protection and respect, a combination that other systems fail to offer. Islam granted them freedom of expression, political participation, business and financial rights, and asked the rest of the society to hold them in high esteem and offer them due respect as mothers, sisters, wives and daughters. Islam has set the standard of women's rights at the highest level.

The life of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and his companions is replete with examples of women who were social and religious leaders, advocates of women's rights and education, military leaders, career and business women, as well as daughters, wives, and mothers.

The concept of empowerment as perceived by the females at SJH is linked to developing an awareness of women's rights and responsibilities. It is perceived to come from religious education and a good upbringing. A woman is restricted from going out of the house except in dire need or necessity. So, the concept of empowerment has certain restrictions attached to it. She is not fully empowered to move about freely and has to remain confined in *pardah*. For example, at a hospital, the preference will always be that a male goes to a male doctor and female to a female doctor since there is restriction on both genders to mix and mingle freely. Similarly, co-education is a big no as it is the perception at SJH that issues tend to develop in co-educational institutions as temptation is always there.

The social constructs of gender are fully embedded in the mindset of women at the *madrassa*. A woman is always the responsibility of either a father, brother, husband or son.

There is an interesting point to note that the religious knowledge or awareness of a woman has decreased since the time of the Prophet (P.B.U.H). As it was shared during my fieldwork that his wife Hazrat Aisha (R.A) was the biggest *muftia* of her time and the religious knowledge she possessed is not what women of our era hold. Hence, they justify the clause that a woman is *naqas ul aqal* (less in intelligence) as compared to men and cannot give a *fatwa.*

The Quran and statements of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) affirm the human rights of women, their role as participants in the society and their equality with men before Allah. Like their male counterparts, Muslim women have the right to work, obtain an education and participate in all spheres of life. The only condition is that it should be within the limitations of *shariah*. Men and women together are two important components of any society and must work together in peace and harmony.

With reference to the notion of empowerment and agency, the present thesis is in keeping with the findings of Mahmood (2005), which challenge the feminist theory that assumes that agency must be substantive and informed by a feminist consciousness. Instead, Zia (2009) quotes Mahmood who argues that piety movements prove that agency can be attributed even to passive,

docile non-action and preservation of the status quo. Iqtidar's (2008) work suggests that modernity is a construct that must be rejected and she suggests that liberation and agency should be redefined; in non-feminist as well as religious terms, respectively. Zia (2009), quotes Islamic feminists who consider religion a private, spiritual, cultural and social vehicle of empowerment as is also evident from the results of this study.

Another finding from the field, at SJH, the practice of *pardah* confirms Papanek's (1971, p.520) suggestion, which states that *"despite its forbidding appearance, it can be considered a liberating invention, since it provides a kind of portable seclusion which enables women to move out of segregated living spaces while still observing pardah"*. This study validates this stance, as these women are allowed to move out of their segregated living spaces and are permitted to drive their own cars (those day scholars who own cars) while observing *pardah*. These females are also allowed to participate in silent protests and demonstrations whenever required to promote their movement. Hence, *pardah* is a liberating invention for them as it allows them to move out of their segregated living spaces. Mahmood, (2001, p.225), argues that in order to be *"able to judge in a morally and politically informed way, it is important to take into consideration the desires, motivations, commitments and aspirations of the people to whom these practices are important"*. *Pardah* as is practiced in the *madrassa* confirms this notion that it marks an identity for these women and at the same time it also represents privacy, modesty, and social control upholding sexual morality.

6.8 Links between Education and Empowerment

Having already discussed earlier in this chapter whether empowerment comes with education and exploring the links between religious education and empowerment in the relevant section 6.1 (pp.143-4) of this chapter; I want to summarise it by adding the following two points here:

Firstly, a religiously educated woman is empowered, whether inside or outside her house, as this implies having a raised level of self-awareness, consciousness not only regarding her rights in Islam but also her responsibilities, the roles that she has to play within the domain of her house or as a professional (teacher, doctor, nurse, etc.), and the ability to make sensible decisions based on her knowledge. As long as she remains confined to the restrictions placed on her by *shariah*, (like *pardah*, no mixing and mingling with the opposite sex, etc.), she is considered a "good

Muslim woman" (good here implies having high moral values). So, empowerment here implies restricted freedom for me as a researcher but not for these females. In other words, the standard against which progress is measured (like lesser status with regard to property, polygamy, law on adultery, etc.) is different for everyone especially when women's rights are compared favourably against Western or universal codes. For the females at SJH, it is not so. There is just one standard at SJH to compare the status of a woman in Islam and i.e. to compare it with the status of women before Islam. These females feel empowered through religion Islam and find great support and strength through the Quran and the *Sunnah.*

Secondly, a woman's upbringing also empowers her to become a "good Muslim woman" (good here implies good moral values) while at the same time it also boosts her confidence (self awareness and self-esteem), as she is well aware and conscious that a woman has also a major role to play in the spread of faith through the transfer of knowledge (that she has acquired either from her upbringing or through the *madrassa*), from one generation to the next. As has been shared by a teacher, Irum, aged 21 years at SJH:

"aurat maasharay ka aik acha fard bann saktee hai.......taleem day saktee hai.....tarbeeyat achee karr saktee hai" meaning "a woman can become a good individual in any society..... through educating and .....passing on her knowledge and training to others."

Further, she shared:

"Also....everything is online these days....whether it is a business or teaching..... so..... if a woman has an online business or teaches online courses.....she has a role to play in the development through the internet as well."

Hence, from the discussion above, it is concluded that a religiously educated woman is empowered as she can make her own decisions, run her house, bring up her children, do some professional work and contribute positively towards the progress of any society, as was shared by a few students, at SJH below:

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"aik taleem yafta aurat apnee raiye day saktee hai aur faisala karr saktee hai..........mustaqbil kay baray main behtar soch saktee hai" meaning "an educated woman can give her opinion and take decisions........she can think better about her future."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"aurat ka ilm haasil karna zaroori hai.......maasharay main deen ka farogh hoga aur taraqee aur khushali aye gee.....aurat maasharay kee taraqee main hissa daalay gee" meaning "it is important for the woman to get educated.....for spread of religious faith in the society and to bring about development and prosperity......the woman will contribute to the development of the society."

Binte Haya, aged 20 years:

"taaleem....ghour o fikar....aur tehkeek...sikhaati hai....jo tarqee kee taraf lay kar jaata hai" meaning "education....teaches us...to ponder....and research....which ultimately leads us to development."

All quotes above refer to religious education and not worldly education.

As Rai et al. (2007) quotes Patricia Hill Collins (1991, p.111) pointing *out "change can also occur in the private, personal space of an individual women's consciousness. Equally fundamental, this type of change is also empowering".* At the *madrassa*, religious education creates a process of change through raising awareness which is guided by the principle of self-efficacy which results in students acquiring a distinctive identity and a renewed sense of self-esteem. This is reflected through their enhanced religiosity and their affiliation with one particular school of thought and is expressed in various ways; ideology, speech, behaviour, actions and even their dressing; covered from head to toe.

At the level of individual development, Amartya Sen's (1990, 1995) work on human capabilities stresses empowerment as both a means and an end. It talks about developing individual capacities through gaining education, skills, etc. At SJH, the dissemination of religious knowledge influences the ideology of the girls at the *madrassa*, as it places religious education above all other forms of education. The girls identify with their new belief that religion governs life. This new status of the girls as religious scholars makes them more aware about the roles that they have to play, as they tend to become more conscious not only about themselves, but also about their position with reference to religion and the role that they have to play in the society. The females find themselves more aware, confident and assertive, responsible, as members of the household as well as the community. They find themselves speaking with authority on different

matters of life and religion is always the reference point. They participate in decision making with respect to important household decisions. They also develop not only a sense of greater self-esteem but it also builds up their level of confidence as they learn life skills and how to utilise their capabilities and potential. So, they believe that religious knowledge gives them power and hence is empowering to them.

As Daskon (2008, p.174) quoting Chambers (1998) emphasises, *"people construct and contrive a living using their knowledge, skills and creativity. They may be acquired within the household, passed on from generation to generation as indigenous and traditional technical knowledge, or through apprenticeship or through innovation and experiments".* This is also in line with the women at the *madrassa*; as attainment of education, whether religious or worldly, either acquired at the *madrassa* or passed on from generation to generation, not only constructs the identities of the women at the *madrassa*, but also these women contrive their living by becoming *mualimas* using their knowledge and skills.

6.9 Debate

A debate is generated in the section below based on the perceptions captured on the field as well as the researcher's own point of view. The point of view of the females at SJH is based on their religious orientation towards education, whereas, the researcher feels that generally the Pakistani society is moving in different directions and therefore arise points of contradiction as these perceptions of the females cannot be generalised across the board.

Women as Role Models and Agents of Change

Today, whenever one thinks of empowered women, the image one gets in one's mind is of; positions of power, breaking the glass ceiling, raising children and building a lucrative career, both with equal skill. The key qualities that come to mind are knowledge, confidence and assertiveness perhaps. After all, these are common qualities that all women today either possess or strive towards. It represents what may define as today's empowered woman. However, it is only part of the picture.

As hard as it may be to believe, such women are not solely the result of modern society and even existed way back in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH); in the form of his wives, referred to by the Muslims as the *Mothers of the Believers*. These women came fully clad in the attire the Quran instructed for them and were ready to take on the Arabian Peninsula, in their own subtle but dynamic way.

Islam exhorts all Muslims, male and female, to seek knowledge and pursue an education. At the time of the Prophet's (PBUH) death, one of the most knowledgeable figures on Islam was his wife, Aisha (R.A). As has been the case throughout history, today, Muslim women play important roles as politicians, teachers, scientists, engineers, business women, doctors and more. For example, today, Nobel Peace Prize winners; Tawakel Karman and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who won the 2011 prize for their "non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full participation in peace-building work", and 2003 Prize winner, Shirin Ebadi, who won for "her efforts for democracy and human rights, especially on the struggle for the rights of women and children", serve as just a few examples of notable Muslim women who have exercised their rights given by Islam and yielded positive changes in the society.

Women are Less in Reasoning or Intelligence as Compared to Men
According to the perceptions from the field, Muslims believe that this universe functions according to a fixed, well-designed system, and it is their belief that nothing happens haphazardly or aimlessly. Rather, everything is well-planned and sorted out. According to the Quran (*Surah Aal-Imran, ayat* 191):

<blockquote>"Our Lord! You have not created this in vain."</blockquote>

"This" here refers to Allah's creation in general.

As has been discussed earlier in the chapter that a perception captured on the field is that a woman is "*naqas-ul-aqal*" (less in intelligence as compared to a man), the reasoning given is surely one cannot always grasp the wisdom behind everything. Because women have limited minds and limited spiritual abilities, they are not able to understand the wisdom behind everything in this universe. This inability to understand sometimes proves to be very important

because such things constitute a test for ones faith and submission to Allah and trust in His infinite knowledge.

Given today's context, perhaps one cannot entirely emulate the life and times of the beloved wife Aisha (R.A), of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H), but one can certainly apply her exemplary principles of knowledge, assertiveness, and balance, to the modern lives one leads.

According to the researcher, Islam is no doubt perceived as a complete way of life and following it brings prosperity in this life and is a source of salvation in the hereafter. The problem is the sub-ordination to the male authority which seems to be challenging as far as the notion of empowerment is concerned.

According to the researcher, although the physical characteristics of men and women differ, the researcher rather has a difference of opinion with the perception captured from the field that *"aurat naqas-ul-aqal hai"* meaning women are less in intelligence or capabilities compared to men. A person's rights and position cannot be based upon physical characteristics. Pakistan, has seen women leaders such as Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah, Benazir Bhutto, etc. Women have also have major contributions and have excelled in their fields, for example, Samina Baig the only first Pakistani woman and the first Muslim to climb the seven peaks in the world. Namira Salim, is the first Pakistani to travel into space, giving her the honor of being Pakistan's first astronaut. She is the first Pakistani to have reached the North Pole and the South Pole. She also holds the distinction of being the first Asian and first Pakistani to skydive over Mount Everest. Pakistanis are proud to have a female fighter pilot, Ayesha Farooq, in the Pakistan Airforce, even India doesn't have one. In 1994, Pakistan's first female judges were appointed at the High Court Level, an expansion of the roles that are generally perceived restrictively, that suggests that women can look within their country for success and acknowledgement of their professional capabilities. If this is the case, then what about all these women mentioned here above in society, doing all of the above mentioned things?

Hence, the chapter concludes that the powerful contribution of an empowered woman to the development of any society cannot be ignored and she plays a very important role in this regard.

This leads us to the next chapter on perceptions about development; starting with a micro level analysis which starts from an individual's character building, the concept of development, who is responsible for it, indicators of development. Then we will move onto the macro level analysis which concerns pressing problems faced in Pakistan and how to resolve them.

Chapter 7: Perceptions about Development

The chapter starts with the concept of development, and then moves onto a micro level analysis; which starts from one's character building and the fact that every individual is responsible to bring about development and should play one's role. The next section talks about the basic tenants or pillars of a society and then leads to agents of development. The last section moves onto the macro level analysis concerning pressing problems in Pakistan and how to resolve them.

7.1 Concept of Development

The analysis of the data shows that the concept of development holds different meanings and connotations for the females at the *jamia* for instance; *"agay barhna"* (to move forward), *"faida"* (benefit), *"behtaree"* (improvement), *"maasharay ki tameer"* (building a society), *"Islami nizam"* (Islamic system), *"haqooq ki barabaree"* (equality of rights), *"adal o insaaf"* (provision of justice), *"buhraan na hona"* (no scarcity) and *"kirdar ki taraqee"* (growth of character).

In a FGD with a group of students, there was group consensus that:

> *"Islami nizaam ka hona taraqee hai.......Quran aur Sunnah parr amal taraqee hai."* meaning
> "Having an Islamic system is development...... to work on the teachings of the Quran and
> *Sunnah* is development."

According to the teachers, the concept of development is:

Shaheen, aged 27:

> "As we observe in our society.........our elected representatives or ministers are
> corrupt...the country is not developing......the economy is going down.........we have
> become burdened with debt.......there is no such thing as free or subsidized
> utilities..........society is poor.........so many children died in Tharparker because of
> famine............real development is when the economy is progressing.......every house
> should have food to eat.......clothes to wear..........she quoted *Hazrat* Ibrahim *alaihissalam*
> that when a household is in peace.........then society is in peace."

Irum, aged 21 years:

   "taraqee mazeed aagay barhna hai" meaning "development means to move more forward."

In one of the FGD's with a group of students, there was group consensus that development means to succeed in ranks or position in order to reach your destination.

According to a teacher, Maria, aged 18 years:

   "taraqee ka matlab hai faida" meaning "development is benefit."

According the students, the concept of development is:

Haya, aged 20 years:

   "taraqee matlab behatree" meaning "development is improvement."

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

   "taraqee Islam kee bunyad parr honee chahiye....taraqee ka matlab agaye barhna hai......harr cheez main agaye jaana..... mehnat..... surmaya.....waqat laga kay..... tawun kar kay."

   Meaning "development should be based on Islamic principles.....development means to move ahead.....to move ahead in everything....with hard work.....investment...time....with cooperation."

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

   "tarqee ka matlab hai qaumoon ka arooj" meaning "development means rise of developing nations."

Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years:

   "insaan fikar karay.... tu kia nahin ho sakta.....harr koi apni fikar karay aur ilm parr amal karay" meaning "if one starts to think .....what is not possible ......everyone should think for himself/herself and should act upon his/her knowledge."

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

   "arooj parr aana kissi bhee cheez ka....tamaam sahuliyaat faraham hona" meaning "the rise of anything.... availability of all facilities."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

   "harr cheez ko behtar banana jo app kay liye faida mand ho" meaning to improve upon everything which is beneficial to you."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"apnee zindagi main pursakoon ho karr raho......kirdar aur ikhlaq main kamee naa ho" meaning
"one should live peacefully in one's life......there should not be a fall in one's character or
morals."

Rabia, aged 17 years:

"buhraan na hona.....agay barhna" meaning "when there is no scarcity or shortage.....to move
ahead."

According to the perception of the principal at the *jamia*:

"Development is not building universities and roads. One's character should get better and
develop and no harm should be brought about to others. Nowadays, dishonesty and corruption
are widespread in our society." She further states that *"Islam kehta hai kirdar kay sahih ho
jaanay ko taraqee kehtay hain....kirdar ki taraqee....taraqee hai."* Meaning "Islam says that
improving ones character is development.... growth of character.....is development."

7.2 Material versus Moral Values

a) Character Building

According to perceptions captured from the field, Islam lays a lot of emphasis on character
building. No society can truly exist, leave alone progress and prosper without an existence of
moral values. One can see a lot of injustices in the Pakistani society. Majority of the people in
the Pakistani society are dishonest, corrupt and deceive whenever they get a chance to. When
one talks about development in general, it means material things but one seldom tends to talk
about developing one's character which is of utmost importance. It is not just information but
rather, it is transforming oneself inwardly and outwardly, in order to become devout Muslims
and believers. Islam debates on character building. According to the principal of the *jamia*:

*"jab kisi kay dill ki tasdeeq hotee hai ......u qabool karta hai aur yeh kirdar ki taraqee ki
taraf jaata hai.....harr bacha apnee fitrat kay saath paida hota hai aur mehnat say dhaala
jaa sakta hai."* Meaning "when one's heart affirms..... it is accepted and it leads to
development of one's character...... Every child is born with its own nature and can be
moulded with hardwork."

Character building involves upholding values such as honesty, justice, equality, fair treatment, discipline, etc. As development implies development of moral self, elaborating further the principal added:

> *"Munafiq ki chaar nishaaniyaan hain.......jhoot bolay...... waadah tour day.....amanut main khayanut karay.......jhagra karay tu gaali galouch day."* Meaning "there are four signs of a hypocrite....he/she lies.....breaks a promise......betrays ones trust.....when he/she argues uses abusive language."

Development also implies development of a moral society as is elaborated in the section below.

b) Concept of Society and its Types

During the interviews, the exploration about the concept of development led to the exploration of the concept of a society: what is a society? What are its different types? The concept of a society as explained by a teacher, Amna, aged 26 years:

> *"fard e wahid apni tamam zaroriyaat ko pura nahin karr sakta.....woh giroh jo saath rehta hai aur apni zindagi guzarta hai."* meaning "one individual cannot fulfill all of ones necessities oneself.....a group of individuals that lives together and spends their lives together (constitute a society)."

- **Types of Society**

The two types of a society are; a good society and a bad society as depicted in the table 7.1 on the next page:

Table 7.1: Shows the Characteristics of both a Good and a Bad Society.

Good Society	Bad Society
➢ Every individual understands and fulfills his/her responsibilities	➢ Individuals shirk their responsibilities
➢ Equality of rights	➢ Rights of people are trampled upon
➢ Prevalence of justice	➢ No justice is available
➢ Honest dealings	➢ Dishonest dealings
➢ Individuals treat each other with respect	➢ Disrespectful towards each other
➢ People are compassionate and kind	➢ Self-centred individuals
➢ People cooperate with each other in times of need.	➢ No cooperation with each other.
➢ No corruption	➢ Corruption is widespread

(Source: Fieldwork)

It emerged that ones survival nesessiates that individuals live in a social group, as one individual cannot fulfill all of ones necessities oneself. Also, both men and women need to fulfill his/her own responsibilities and if either or both are irresponsible, it spreads unrest in a society. As according to a teacher, Amna, aged 26 years:

> "*maasharay main mard aur aurat donon parr zimahdari hotee hai......kahin mard aur aurat ghair zimahdaar hoon tu intishaar phailta hai.*" meaning "the responsibility rests both with men and women in a society.....if men and women are irresponsible it will spread unrest in a society."

According to the principal:

> "*Aik acha maashaira aik achee amarat ki tarah hai......jitnee bunyaad mazboot hogee.....utnee amarat mazboot hogee.*" meaning "a good society is like a good building.....the stronger the foundation..... the stronger will be the building."

In one of the FGD's with a group of teachers, there was group consensus that:

> "*Maasharay ki tameer taraqee hai*" meaning that "building a society is development."

The group also shared that attainment of education, provision of justice and quality of education leads a country towards the path of development.

In a FGD with another group of students, there was group consensus that equality of rights; where every individual gets his/her right in the society and when there is justice in the courts is real development and that education is a prerequisite for development. They even quoted the example of the Metro Bus projects saying that projects such as these are not development, because majority of the poor people do not benefit from them.

- **Five Basic Tenants/Pillars of a Society**

  According to the principal, there are five basic tenants or pillars of any society. Out of these five bases or pillars; four are institutions (families, parents, teachers and judiciary), while one (youth) is an age cohort. Their detail is as follows:

  a) Families

  Home and the family is the basic and elementary unit/pillar. Families are the foundation of societies. This category was explained with the clarification of the different types of people living together in a society. A family consists of parents, grandparents, children, maternal aunts and uncles, paternal aunts and uncles (extended family). These families are of three types:

  Firstly, those families, whose elders realise their responsibilities and impart good values to their children, teach them tolerance, read and implement the Quran and the *Sunnah.* These people may not necessarily be highly educated. Education here implies worldly education. Since upbringing forms or develops habits in children from a very young age, and children are keen observers, it is important to lead them by example. A child is impressionable till the age of four years and 85% of a child's mind is formed and accepted those impressions. If the teachers are hard working at seminaries and polish up these impressions and etiquettes in the child's mind, a child is reformed up to 95%.

  Secondly, those families, in which only few members are concerned about imparting good values to their children and the others do not show concern at all. Morals and tolerance is not

given priority. The child learns to cheat and be selfish. The child wants to do as he/she pleases. The principal shared that her experience of the *madrassas* tells her that it is difficult to straighten and reform a spoilt child 100% as foundations from home are strong.

Thirdly, those families, where traditions are not followed, every individual is careless or free from their responsibilities, parents and their children have different thinking and worries. These families do not pay attention to religion. "*Deen aur ilm ki tarf mutawajoh nahin hotay*" meaning "those people who are not attentive towards religion and knowledge." These people are worse off. Moral ethics are violated and there is no emphasis on character building. It is perceived here that knowledge refers to religious knowledge and not worldly knowledge. Children of these families are not inclined towards education. Education cannot reform the child at all.

Friends of children are also important in developing their character. According to the principal, *"buray humnasheen say tanhai behtar hai"* meaning "it is better to be isolated than to have a bad friend." She further added that these days text books prescribed to children in schools do not give proper knowledge of religion, for instance, why prophets were sent on earth? She said it is because of this reason that books are characterless.

b) Parents
According to the principal, if the elders in a family lie, the children will pick up these bad habits from them. 75% of character building of school going age group is at the home and 25% is at the school by devoted teachers.

c) Teachers
A teacher should work hard on a child to build up his/her character. Apart from teaching; a teacher should keep a strict check on what a child speaks, the activities that he/she gets involved in and whether there is any change in behaviour of the child to detect any areas to be reformed.

According to a teacher, Amna, aged 26 years, teachers should see:

> *"Kia bachay main tabdeeli aa rahee hai?....madaras khud mehnut kartay hain bachon parr"* meaning "is the child being reformed?.... *madrassas* themselves work hard on the children."

d) Judiciary

According to a teacher, Amna, aged 26 years, the characteristic of a bad society is that there is no justice:

> *"Adlia insaaf nahin daitee..... tu jurayum barhain gay....kyoun kay umeed toot jaatee hai....faisala karnay waala farq karr raha hai......adal maasharay ka bunyadi satoon hai"* meaning "the judiciary does not provide justice......so crimes will increase.....because there is no hope left.....the one who should be providing justice is creating differences .....justice is the basic foundation of any society."

She further mentioned *Moulana* Qari Mohammad Hafeez Jalandhary, in one of his articles quotes Hazrat Ali's (R.A)[1] famous saying:

> *"maasharay kufr kay saath tu baqi reh saktay hain, laikin zulum kay saath baqi nahi reh saktay"* meaning "societies can survive with disbelief, but cannot survive with with injustices."

e) Youth

According to the principal, if a child sits with a materialistic youth, the child becomes materialistic as the child is impressionable. The society is full of many evils and shortcomings. People these days look for bigger posts and cannot distinguish between *halaal* and *haraam*. All these short comings erode the foundations of the society. According to a teacher, Amna, aged 26 years:

> *"maasharay main khaamiyyan hain....bari naukri chahiye.....halal haraam ki tameez zarori hai...mazaq......rishwut.....jhoot....deemak zada hai"* meaning "there are many shortcomings in a society.... one wants big jobs.....it is important to differentiate between *halal* and *haraam*.......fun.... bribes.....lies.....is termite ridden."

---

[1] For complete reference see (http://www.farooqia.com/ur/lib/1432/08/p32.php)

Here she means that all shortfalls existing in the society erode basic values of people such as honesty, integrity, humility, differentiating between what is right and what is wrong, etc.

If any of the above mentioned five pillars is weak, then the society becomes weak. Distortions in the society begin from the home. The pillars of a society are not just structures on which the concept of development is based but are also some of the agents that bring about development. The next section is about the agents that bring about development.

7.3 Agents of Development

The analysis of the data shows that the agents of development are good education (religious and worldly), educational institutions, unity and cohesion, provision of justice, religion, every individual is responsible (upholding values such as honesty, integrity, commitment, dedication, positivity), good leadership (state provides basic facilities, deliverance of rights) and progressive minds.

In one of the FGD's with a group of teachers, there was group consensus that development comes through good education and justice and that every individual has a role to play. They quoted the period of the caliph, *Hazrat* Umar Farooq (R.A), as the best period of governance as justice was prevalent in the society at that time. It was also shared that it is essential to combine science and trade with religion meaning that a combination of worldly advancements and religion should go side by side in order to bring about development.

In another FGD with a group of students, there was group consensus that education brings about development and if your leader is educated, he will deliver the rights to his people. According to a *hadees*:

> *"Qiyamat ka intazaar karo, amarut ka maamla kisi naehal kay supard karo gay tu qayamat ka intazaar karo."*

Translation:

Narrated by Abu Huraira:

Allah's messenger said, "When honesty is lost, then wait for the Hour." It was asked, "How will honesty be lost, O Allah's messenger?" He said, "When authority is given to those who do not deserve it, then wait for the Hour."

(*Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab Ar-Riqaq, Hadees # 6496*)

A student, Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

> *"taraqee taaleemi adaroon say aatee hai"* meaning "development comes through educational institutes."

According to the following students, development comes from religion:

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

> *"taraqee deen kee bunyaad par aatee hai.....deen kay baighair mumkin nahin....maslan maasharay say kaisay deal karna hai......business kaisay karna hai....humain deen dunya kay intizaam sumbhalna seekhata hai.....Europe aur America nay bhee islam ki bunyad par taraqee kee."* meaning "development is based on religion....it is not possible without religion for example.... how to deal with a society....how to run a business.....religion teaches us how to handle the worldly affairs....Europe and America have progressed because of Islam."

What she meant was that Islam is a complete code of life and has instructions about everything. The Quran inspires man to observe, experience and investigate. The spirit of the Quran is scientific. The West is wrong in separating science from religion. The great Muslim scientists were thousands of years ago were at the forefront of knowledge particularly in the sciences and technology without ever giving up their religion. Infact, Islam in general and the Quran in particular inspired the Muslim Scientists to seek and advance knowledge. Hence, they achieved all this without any conflict with religion.

The Quran contains many *Ayats* (verses), which correctly describe natural phenomenon in various disciplines such as embryology, meteorology, astronomy, geology and oceanography. Many of the processes and functions mentioned in the Quran have been discovered by Science

and Technology in Europe and America only recently, for instance, Big-Bang Theory, sex determination, human embryology, etc.

The Quran is a source of knowledge, which inspires human's intellectual endeavors. There are many books devoted to Quranic inspirations on the understanding or advancement of Science and Technology. In short, Science means knowledge and Islam exhorts its followers to relentlessly pursue knowledge. A similar view was shared by Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

> *"tarqee deen aur dunya kay ilm say aatee hai.....ziadati kami na ho... deeni ehkamaat say aagay na chalay.... deen say takrao na ho......dunya ko itna hee lain jitna laina chahiye........deen par asar na karay......khiyalaat na badlay......maasharay kee taraqee mulk kee taraqee hai."* meaning "development comes through religious and worldly knowledge...... there should be no abuse.... it should remain within religious orders.....should not conflict with religion..... take the world as much as one should..... it should not influence religion.....should not change views.... if a society progresses so does a country develop." Further she said: *"isski zimahdari awaam aur hukumraan donon parr hai...... hukumraan nizam chalatay hain aur awaam achay hukumraan ki ataat kartee hai."* meaning "the responsibility lies with both the leaders and the general masses.....leaders run the state of affairs and the general masses obey good leaders." (at this point I probed her further as to who is a good leader? The answer is shared in the next section).

One facilitator of development is the state as it is responsible for providing basic facilities like electricity, gas, shelter, transport, etc. to its citizens. At the individual level, people are responsible to contribute through playing their role responsibly for example; a doctor must reach his/her office on time and serve with honesty, dedication and commitment. It is not just the responsibility of our leaders or the state or just a few people to bring about development. Every individual is responsible and should contribute towards development.

A student talked about unity and cohesion as was shared by Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

"afraad say mill kar qaum bantee hai aur maashara......jab itefaq aur etehad hoga iss qaum parr Allah kee maddad hogee.....harr fard jab apnee soch aur fikar ko musbat rakhay gaa....... tu ussko zimahdaari ka ehsas hoga." meaning "individuals make up a country and society....when there is unity and cohesion this country will be blessed by Allah......when every individual will keep their thinking positive.....so he will become aware of his responsibility."

A few other responses of students were:

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

"harr fard apna hissa dalta hai" meaning "every individual contributes."

According to a teacher, Irum, aged 21 years, development is perceived to come from:

"harr fard kee zimadaari hai" meaning "it is the responsibility of every individual."

A few students shared their views:

Haya, aged 20 years:

"maasharay kay afraad taraqee laatay hain..... harr fard mard aur aurat apnee zimadaari ko achay tareeqay say ada karain aur waqt ko keemti banaain" meaning "every individual.... man and woman in a society....brings about development by fulfilling their responsibilities and utilizing their time wisely."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

"maasharay ka harr fard taraqee laata hai jo aik achee soch rakhta hai" meaning "every individual in the society brings about development who has positive thoughts." Further, she said*:*

"taraqee yafta soch taraqee laye gee" meaning "a progressive mind will bring about development."

"Harr koi......mehnat karnay wala taraqee laa sakta hai" meaning "everyone......every hard working individual can bring about development" shared Binte Haya, aged 19 years.

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

"tamaam afraad mill kar taraqee laatay hain" meaning "all people together bring on development."

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years, shared:

"leader acha ho tu maasharay main adol o insaaf millay gaaa......aman hoga...tarqee aur khushali aye gee." Meaning "if leadership is good it will provide justice to the society......there will be peace......will bring about prosperity and development."

Hence, one agent of development is good leadership and the next section discusses who is a good leader?

7.4 Who is a Good Leader?

The analysis of the data reveals that a good leader implements religious orders and enforces a just and fair system of governance, as was shared by the views of the following student:

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

"jo deen ko lagoo karay...... deen kay tamaam ehkamaat parr amal karay.......soodi nizam ko khatam karay.... adal o insaaf qayam karay." meaning "the one who implements religion.....follows all religious orders.......abolishes the system based on interest.....enforces a just and fair system."

According to the principal of the *jamia*:

"Acha leader woh hai jiss ki nazar buland hai.....jo fikar mand ho.....awaam ki haalut say baihaal na ho......narm lehjay main baat karay.....hosla buland ho....kirdar buland ho.....sharab noshi na karay.....juwa say bachnay waala ho.....jhoot say bachnay waala ho......dosroon kay dukh dard ko bardasht karnay waala ho.....jo baiwahon aur yateemon ka khiyal rakhay......adal ho....adal mushqil hai." meaning "a good leader is the one who has high vision......who is concerned.....is not ignorant about the plight of citizens.......should be soft spoken......motivation should be high.....character should be clean.....should not be a drinker....should be away from gambling.....should not be dishonest....should be able to empathize....should be taking care of widows and orphans....should be just.....justice is difficult."

The analysis of the data also reveals a non-material spiritual indicator of development for the females at the *jamia*, which includes happiness and peace of mind. This is explained in the section below.

216

7.5 An Indicator of Development - Happiness as an Index

One of the indicators of development is happiness. The idea of Happiness Index, a growing trend around the world, views well-being and happiness as crucial components for communities where the aspirations of individuals are valued, their needs are addressed and community engagement encouraged and facilitated (Rosly and Rashid, 2012).

All women interviewed at SJH were happy with their living status despite the hardships and difficulties they faced living there. They had no worries, all their needs were taken care of and necessities were fulfilled. They are down to earth and simple in appearance and manifestation, they are grateful, appreciative and tend to lead simple lives with very little focus on materialism. They find great strength and support in religion and shared that an understanding of religion provides them with inner peace, happiness and bliss.

According to a student, Ayesha, aged 21 years:

> *"deen ki samajh ho tu haalat ka muqabla karnay kee himmat paida hotee hai....insaan ziada ghum naheen laita kyoun kay dunya ki paraishanee aarzee hai.....waqat aik jaisa naheen rehta."* meaning "an understanding of religion gives the strength to face the situation......a person will not worry much because the worries of this world are temporary.....time does not remain the same always."

Not only do the females at the *jamia* find strength and peace from religion but they also find happiness as was shared by them below:

According to the teachers, happiness is:

Irum, aged 21 years:

> *"dill khush ho.....pursukoon ho.....koi dukh na koi ghum ho"* meaning "happiness is when the heart is happy.....at peace and there is no sorrow or grief."

Maria, aged 18 years:

> *"dill pursukoon ho"* meaning "when the heart is at peace."

According to the students, happiness is:

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> *"khusi dill ki kaifeeyut hotee hai"* meaning "happiness is a condition of the heart."

217

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

> *"insaan kay andar sakoon khushi daita hai"* meaning "inner peace gives you happiness."

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

> *"jab dill mutmaeen hoga"* meaning "when the heart is satisfied."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

> *"khushi app ko andar say khush kar day"* meaning "happiness makes you happy from within."

Rabia, aged 17 years:

> *"pursukoon insaan....*no tension" meaning "a peaceful human being.......no tension."

Binte Hafsa, aged 19 years:

> *"Andar ki kaifeeyat hai.....itmainaan aur sakoon"* meaning "it is an internal condition......satisfaction and peace."

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years:

> *"Dil ki kaifeeyat ka naam hai......Allah raazi honay say dil mutmaeen hota hai......zehani sakoon aur qurbani sabr sikhaati hai"* meaning "it is a condition of the heart......when *Allah* is pleased with you the heart is satisfied..... mental peace and sacrifice teaches patience."

The views of the females regarding the sources of happiness were that happiness comes from; practicing religion, when one is at peace internally, having a connection with *Allah* and from mental wellbeing. A good environment (peace in society), good health, respect, good teachers and good education were other sources of happiness. According to the teachers, happiness came from:

Irum, aged 21 years:

> *"acha mahoul hoga tu sab kuch hoga"* meaning "a good environment will provide everything."

Maria, aged 18 years:

> *"aman aur aik acha mahul khushi daita hai"* meaning "happiness comes from peace and a good environment."

According to the students, happiness came from:

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> *"achee taleem.... maashairay main aman....aur zehani sakoon"* meaning "a good education....peace in society and mental wellbeing."

Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

> *"khushi zehani sakoon say aatee hai"* meaning "happiness comes from mental wellbeing."

Haya, aged 20 years:

> *"Allah say tualaq"* meaning "through having a connection with *Allah*."

Binte Ahmad, aged 21 years:

> *"paisa khushi nahin daita....khusi Allah say taaluq say aatee hai"* meaning "money does not give happiness....it comes from having a connection with *Allah*."

Zunaira, aged 22 years:

> *"aik dosray ka khiyal rakhna.... izzat....achee sehat....aman...aur zehani sakoon khushi daitay hain"* meaning "to care for each other....respect...good health....peace....and mental wellbeing all provide happiness."

Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

> *"agar sakoon hoga maasharay main tu app ko sab kuch mill jaye gaa"* meaning "if there is peace in society you will get everything."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> *"aadaat kay mutabiq kaam ho ....mann ko bhaa jaye.....dill ki khushi hotee hai"* meaning "if work is done according to habits.....it touches the heart......heart gets happy."

Binte Haya, aged 19 years:

> *"Allah say tualaq"* meaning "through having a connection with *Allah*."

She further shared that the rich are not happy and are not at peace since they are away from religion but the poor are happy despite their living conditions. She meant that religion plays a great role in this regard through having a connection with *Allah*. According to a *hadees*:

> *"Jab banda mairee taraf aik haath aata hai tu main do haath qareeb ho jaata hoon, jab who mairee taraf chalta huwa aata hai tu main bhag kay isskay qareeb ho jaata hoon."*

Translation:

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet (P.B.U.h) said:

"Allah says: 'I am just as My slave thinks I am, (i.e. I am able to do for him what he thinks I can do for him) and I am with him if He remembers Me. If he remembers Me in himself, I too, remember him in Myself; and if he remembers Me in a group of people, I remember him in a group that is better than they; and if he comes one span nearer to Me, I go one cubit nearer to him; and if he comes one cubit nearer to Me, I go a distance of two outstretched arms nearer to him; and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running.'"

<div align="right">(Sahih al Bukhari, Kitab u touheed, hadees # 7405)</div>

Syeda Fatima, a student, aged 18 years:

"khushi deen say aur sakoon say aatee hai" meaning "happiness comes from religion and peace."

Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years:

"ustaad ruhani waldain hain unn say khushi miltee hai.........jamia ki khidmat karnay say miltee hai" meaning "we get happiness from our teachers they are just like our spiritual parents.......by serving the *jamia*."

The table 7.2 on the next page shows the happiness indicators along with their respective percentages, collected from the respondents on the field:

Table 7.2: Shows the Happiness Indicators along with their Respective Percentages.

Happiness Indicators	Percentages*
Money	Nil
Clean drinking water	Nil
Clean environment	15
Respect	15
Good health	15
Good education	30
Good food	5
Mental wellbeing	75
Peace	55
Others[2]	
Justice	5
Employment	5
Religion	25
No worries/necessities fulfilled	5

*Total percentages do not add up to 100 because most of the

respondents chose more than one category.

Source: (Fieldwork)

According to the table above, mental wellbeing and peace scored the highest as indicators of happiness scoring 75% and 55% respectively, while good food, justice, employment and no worries/necessities fulfilled scored the lowest, just 5% as indicators of happiness.

When I asked the respondents, whether they were happy at the *madrassa* despite their living conditions, 100% respondents shared that yes, they were happy with their living conditions at the *madrassa*. According to a student, Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

---

[2] Others- this category was kept open-ended for the respondents to suggest apart from the categories mentioned in the table.

"agar bunyaad mazboot ho tu aik behtar mustaqbil banaya jaa sakta hai" meaning "if foundations are strong a better future can be built."

If development is multi-dimensional and holistic, then it is understood to be a combination of both material and non-material elements. Zia (2009), states that the first generation of Islamic modern feminists believed that for the women of lower classes, religion provides "psychological healing" and "solace and solidarity". This stance is also supported by findings from the field. One of the indicators of development is happiness. All women at SJH were happy with their living status despite the hardships and difficulties they faced living there. They had no worries and all their needs were taken care of and necessities were fulfilled as they lead simple lives with very little focus on materialism. They found great strength and support in religion and shared that an understanding of religion provided them with inner peace, mental wellbeing, happiness and bliss. Social values, customs and traditions have now become a concern for the development process as preconditions for human progress (Landes, 2000, Rao and Walton, 2004). When the females at SJH derive peace of mind, happiness and life satisfaction from; practicing religion, attaining religious education and the spiritual aspects of religion, it leads to their wellbeing since these spiritual beliefs are mostly backed by a religious ideology.

Figure 7.1 Shows the Links of Religious Education to Development.

Religious education → internal peace & happiness → wellbeing → progress & development
(Backed by religious ideology)
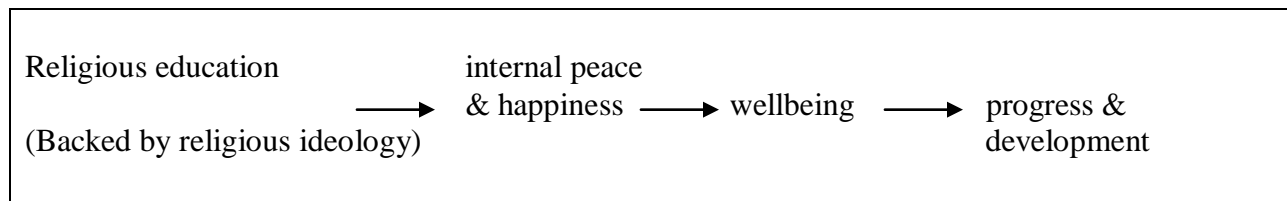
 (Source: Fieldwork)

This leads onto a macro level analysis; hence the next section deals with major issues in Pakistan and their causes.

7.6 Major Issues in Pakistan and their Causes

According to the females at SJH, Pakistan is perceived as an underdeveloped country and has major issues which can be classified as political, socio-economic, resource based, service related,

educational, moral and justice related issues. The major cause of these various issues in Pakistan was attributed to the lack of an Islamic system. According to the Quran:

"agar basteeyoon waalay iman lay aaeen tu hum aasmaan aur zameen say barkatoon kay darwaazay khol dain gay."

Translation:

"Yet if the people of those communities had but attained to faith and been conscious of Us, We would indeed have opened up for them blessings out of heaven and earth."

(*Surah Araf, Ayat* 96)

After the analysis of the data, it was revealed that some of the major issues in Pakistan are:

7.6.1 Political Issues

The political issues include lack of responsibility or ownership on the part of our elected leaders, faulty policies of the government, corruption, non-imposition of *shariah* and no life safety or security.

Lack of Responsibility or Ownership on the Part of Elected Leaders

The general perception was that the government is highly insensitive to the plight of a common man and what one goes through in one's daily life in order to make both ends meet. The elected leaders should fulfill their responsibilities towards the masses. The importance of a leader is highlighted according to the following *ahadees*:

"Tum main say harr aik hakim hai, aur inn say inn kee rayeat kay baray main poocha jaye gaa."

Translation:

Narrated by Abdullah bin Umar:

Allah's Messenger said, *"Surely! Everyone of you is a guardian and is responsible for his charges: The Imam (ruler) of the people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects; a man is the guardian of his family (household) and is responsible for his subjects; a woman is the guardian of her husband's home and of his children and is responsible for*

223

them; and the slave of a man is a guardian of his master's property and is responsible for it. Surely, every one of you is a guardian and responsible for his charges."

<div align="right">

(*Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitaab ul ahkaam, Hadees* #7138).

</div>

Narrated by Ma'qil:

The Prophet Muhammad, (P.B.U.H) said: *"Any man whom Allah has given the authority of ruling some people and he does not look after them in an honest manner, will never feel even the smell of Paradise."*

<div align="right">

(*Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitaab ul ahkaam, Hadees* #7150).

</div>

Faulty Policies of the Government

The general perception among the females was that the policies of the government are faulty and flawed. The punishments are reserved only for the poor segment of the society while the rich get away scotch free. So, there is no justice available without money or status or bribes. This leads to an unfair treatment of people and disparity in the society. According to a *hadees*:

Narrated by Aisha (R.A):

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said, *"O people! The nations before you went astray because if a noble person committed theft, they used to leave him, but if a weak person among them committed theft, they used to inflict the legal punishment on him."*

<div align="right">

(*Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab ul hadood, Hadees* # 6788).

</div>

According to the females at the *jamia*, Pakistan today forgives the rich and the powerful and only punishes the poor and the weak. Injustice breeds all evils in the society.

Corruption

The general perception was that corruption is the norm in the society. Not only is the political leadership corrupt but also the judiciary is corrupt and hence it leads to lack of justice and bribes.

Non-Imposition of *Shariah*

When asked about some basic or pressing problems faced in Pakistan, the responses varied. According to a FGD by a group of students, there was group consensus that an Islamic system will solve all the problems and the conditions of the country will improve as justice will prevail

and education will be promoted along with the spread of faith. They shared Pakistan was created in the name of Islam and the current system of democracy has failed to deliver to the masses even basic rights. According to the teachers at the *jamia*:

Irum, aged 21 years:

> *"Pakistan aik islami mulk hai aur yahan islam nafiz hona chahiye"* meaning "Pakistan is an Islamic country and Islam must be implemented here."

Amna, aged 26 years:

> *"zarorut jamhooriyut nahin khilafut hai"* meaning "the need is not democracy but a caliphate."

According to a student, Binte Amna, aged 23 years:

> *"shariat ka nifaz hoga tu quran aur sunnat kay mutabiq saza hogee"* meaning "if *shariat* is implemented then punishments will be according to the Quran and *Sunnah*." Further, she said: *"harr ghaltee kee saza muqarar hai.....aik misaal qayam hogee......chori kay liye saza sar e aam hogee log ibrat haasil karain gay"* meaning "every mistake has a defined punishment....an example will be set for others.....for theft the punishment will be public and people will learn a lesson."

No Life Safety or Security; Lack of Peace in the Society

According to the perceptions of the females, peace in any society is important for it to progress and prosper fully. This comes when; the state is fair and just and takes decisions accordingly, there shouldn't be a war between the armed forces and citizens of the country (this referred to the military operation of the Lal Masjid and SJH in 2007), everyone should live in peace and harmony and there should be no terrorism or bomb blasts. According to the following student, Haya, aged 20 years, peace is perceived as when:

> *"awaam aur fauj ki laraee naa ho..... khoon kharaba naa ho"* meaning "there should not be a war between the armed forces and the citizens of the country....there should not be unrest and violence."

She was referring to the military operation of the Lal Masjid and SJH in 2007 and questioned as to why nobody spoke up against it, as according to her, many innocent women and children died during that operation. So, the army victory on the *jamia* cannot be termed as development.

225

7.6.2 Educational Issues

These include both the system of education at *madrassas* and the worldly education systems as described below:

Lack of Religious Education

The perception among the females was that either there is less emphasis on religious education or its importance is not highlighted. The general perception was that more *madrassas* should be opened and the government should support *madrassas*. There should be more educational funds like scholarships for the poor. A student, Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years shared:

> "*ameer deen say dour hain*" meaning "the rich are away from religious teachings."

Standard of Education in Mainstream Institutes and the Negative Perception of *Madrassas*

It was generally perceived that the standard of worldly education has gone down. There are many critics against *madrassa* education in Pakistan but still the quality of education in *madrassas* is better off than the quality of education in other mainstream institutions. *Madrassas* have a favourable environment of learning where one has peace of mind and women and elders are respected more too. The need is to stop harassing *ulemas* and putting them in jails. These critics say *madrassas* promote terrorism. So, the religious persons suffer the most and are often targeted.

Lack of Resources towards *Madrassas*

Talking about the lack of resources directed towards the *madrassas*, the response of a teacher was:

Maria, aged 18 years:

> "*yahan wasaayil ki kamee hai*" meaning "resources are limited here."

A student, Binte Amna, aged 23 years, shared:

> "*madrassa tu Allah chala raha hai.....hukumat koi funds nahi daitee..... unnki*
> *zimmahdari hai deen kee taraf......woh bhi support karain*" meaning "the *madrassa* is

being run by *Allah*.....the government does not support financially..........they have an obligation towards religion.........they should support as well."

7.6.3 Resource based Issues

This includes unequal distribution of wealth among the people.

Gap between the Rich and the Poor; Unequal Rights and Poverty

Explaining the gap between the rich and poor in our society, a teacher, Irum, aged 21 years shared:

> *"ameer bhi mehnat karta hai aurr ghareeb bhi mehnat karta hai magar haqooq barabar naheen hain..... ameer achee taleem haasil karta hai aur ghareeb kay pass achee taleem kay liye paisay naheen hotay hain"* meaning "the rich work hard and so do the poor but there is no equality of rights....the rich can educate themselves while the poor cannot afford a good education."

Another problem was lack of rights of the common man. A teacher, Maria, aged 18 years shared:

> *"Jiss ka jo haq hai issay nahin mill raha"* meaning "due rights are not been given to people."

According to various students at the *jamia*:

Ayesha, aged 21 years:

> *"yeh mulk mairee jaagir hai.....islami nizam ka na hona.....ghareeb ka haq ada naheen hota....jaisay sadqa aur zakat"* meaning "this country is my heritage.......lack of an Islamic system.......rights of the poor are not being fulfilled.....like s*adqa* and *zakat*."

What she meant was that every individual thinks that the country is his/her heritage and the lack of an Islamic system bring about inequality of rights among the people.

Rabia, aged 17 years:

> *"rishwat aur sifarish chaltee hai....aur sood haram hai"* meaning "bribery and recommendations are common----and interest is not permissible."

Talking about inequality of rights, she meant whoever can bribe or bring in a good recommendation, gets their work done while others are left out.

Binte Hawa, aged 20 years shared:

> *"islam main haqooq yaqsaan hain"* meaning "in Islam there is equality of rights."

Syeda Fatima, aged 18 years:

> *"islam musawaat ka hokum daita hai......maal fitna hai......maal ki wajah say yeh masla hai"* meaning "Islam teaches brotherhood....money is a test........money is the cause of this problem."

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> *"ehsaas khatam hogaya hai......ghareeb ko koi naheen pochta"* meaning "there is lack of compassion ......no one asks the poor."

Hence the general perception was that the rich and the poor should have equal rights in Pakistan and the only way to bring about equal distribution of rights among the people is through an Islamic system.

7.6.4 Service Related Issues

This includes; the under development of rural areas compared to urban areas in Pakistan, and the lack of health care services and good hospitals.

Rural Areas are Under Developed

It was perceived that the inequality of rights is not only between the rich and the poor but is also between the urban and the rural population of the county. The rural areas are under developed. There are hardly any schools or colleges or a system of transport. It was during the course of this discussion that the role of one political leader, Imran Khan was appreciated as far as the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) was concerned; that at least he is trying very hard at his end to deliver in services such as health, education and police reforms. Only time will tell if he is successful or not in implementation of good governance measures.

Lack of Health Care and Good Hospitals

The general perception was that there is a dearth of good hospitals and health care services in the country.

7.6.5 Moral Issues

These include no tolerance, trust or respect for others and lack of professionalism. The general perception among the females was that Pakistani society has become an intolerant society, disrespecting not only each other's opinion but also that of our parents and elders too. There is lack of trust on each other. Respect of women in the society has gone down too.

The perception regarding professionalism in general was that there is an absence of professionalism in people in the Pakistani society and this is an issue when it comes to delivery of services. Majority of people are not only casual in their approach towards their work but also inefficient and not punctual.

7.6.6 Socio-Economic Issues

This includes lack of employment opportunities, lack of transport systems in rural areas, the interest based banking system, the negative role of the media in spreading indecency, inflation, poverty, lack of basic facilities, lack of unity, independence and freedom of women.

Lack of Employment Opportunities

The general perception among the teachers and the students was that when there is equality of rights in any society and the system of justice prevails, people will get jobs on merit and other services also such as education and health.

Lack of Transport Systems in Rural Areas

The respondents were critical of the government's emphasis on building a transport system only in the Punjab or urban areas of Rawalpindi and Islamabad and shared that nothing is done for the betterment of the rural areas. They are far more under developed than urban cities.

Interest Based Banking System

The general perception regarding the interest based banking system was that it is *haraam* and a social evil.

The Negative Role of the Media in Spreading Indecency

The females were critical of the role of the media, both television and cable, in general as was shared by a teacher, Shaheen, aged 27 years:

> "Look at the advertisements today......women are almost naked .....this is not development ....this is the downfall of the society."

Inflation

The perception among the females was that the issue of inflation in the country and high electricity and gas bills charged to consumers is a pressing issue.

Poverty

A student, Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years shared:

> "*ghurbut ki wajah deen say doori hai....sadqa ameer aur ghareeb main farq ko kam karta hai"* meaning "ignorance about religion is a cause of poverty......*sadqa* reduces the poverty gap between the rich and the poor."

The general perception captured was that the rich are ignorant about religion and use up their wealth themselves. Money should remain in circulation.

Lack of Basic Facilities

According to the females, lack of basic facilities is a major issue in Pakistan. The most cited example was that of load shedding in summers and shortage of gas especially in winters. Other examples quoted were shortages of daily provisions like sugar and flour. It was shared that it is the responsibility of the state to provide basic facilities to its citizens.

During the final stages of conducting my fieldwork at SJH, I was informed by the administration that the clean water drinking supply at the *madrassa* was contaminated and most of the girls and teachers at the *madrassa* had fallen ill. When these females were taken to the hospital, they were informed that the entire clean water supply of the G-6/G-7 community had been contaminated and all the cases brought to the hospital were from these residential areas.

Lack of Unity

The general perception was that there is no unity among the Muslims as was shared by a student Binte Ayesha, aged 20 years:

> *"aik baat aik soch parr mutahid ho jaain"* meaning "all should unite across a single thought and idea."

Daskon (2008, p.6), quotes Bebbington, (1999, p.2034), *"through fostering certain forms of cultural identity maintenance and particular patterns of interactions, cultural practices enable, inspire and indeed empower".* This is in line with the findings from the field that the women at the *madrassa* feel that their religion and their cultural identity indeed enables, inspires and empowers them to become better human beings and members of the society. The author lays emphasis on the capability of cultural practices of forming action and resistance. He talks about social capital here; which is inclusive of culture, religion, customary practices, beliefs, mind, emotions and spiritual elements. Daskon (2008, p.6), quotes Glavovic et al., (2002), that *"thoughts of culture are highly influential".* He further asserts that *"social capital is one of the strongest livelihood assets that people have to combat threats of their survival and well-being."* This is also in line with the analysis of the data as is evident in the history of SJH. These women at the *madrassa* stand firm and united in the face of any threats to their religion or cause. This is how the *madrassa* survived the military operation of 2007 and is still flourishing according to the findings from the field.

Independence and Freedom of Women

The perception on the field was that giving a woman freedom; *"auraton ki baihayai"* (vulgarity of women, vulgarity was being related to independence of women) is also an issue and creates problems in the society. It is perceived to be a concept of the West where women are given freedom to lead their lives independently. According to a teacher, Irum, aged 21 years:

> *"maghrib nay azaadi dee hai......aurat bayparda hogaee hai.....yeh aik islami mulk hai aur aurat ko pardah main hona chahiye"* meaning "West has given independence..... woman has become uncovered.....this is an Islamic country and women need to observe *pardah*."

The concept of independence and freedom of women was related to vulgarity and termed as a concept give by the West. A student, Feriyal Saeed, aged 20 years shared:

> *"auroton ki baihayai ki wajah say zina aam hai"* meaning "vulgarity of women has lead to adultery becoming common."

7.6.7 Religious Issues

The general perception was that an issue prevalent in the society is consumption of alcohol as it is *haraam.* According to a *hadees*:

Narrated by Aisha (R.A):

> Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H) was asked about Al-Bit. He said, *"All drinks that intoxicate are unlawful (to drink.)."*
>
> (*Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab ul ashrabta*, *hadees* # 5585)

7.6.8 Justice Related Issues

The general perception was that there is no provision of justice in the society, the crime rates are high and there are no exemplerary punishments to wrong doers or those involved in unlawful activities. A student Binte Haya, aged 19 years, quoted *Maulana* Tariq Jameel[3] to have said:

> *"Koi maashara zulum parr qayum nahi reh sakta"* meaning "no society can exist on injustice."

7.7 Important Parameters for Development

The analysis of the data shows that 80% of the respondents felt that justice is a top priority for Pakistan to progress and prosper. The table 7.3 on the next page shows some of the facilities that are a priority for Pakistan in order for it to to develop as showed against their respective percentages:

---

[3] Maulana Tariq Jameel is a Pakistani religious Islamic scholar, preacher and public speaker. He is a member of the Tablighi Jamaat and a Deobandi scholar.

Table 7.3: Facilities Necessary for Development in Pakistan and their Respective Percentages.

Facilities	Percentage*
Clean drinking water	50
Justice	80
Health	50
Education	40
Employment	40
Clean environment	40
Transport	25
Others[4]	
Positive thinking	5
Brain drain	5
Lack of basic amenities	15
Religion	25

*Total percentages do not add up to 100 because most of the respondents chose more than one category.

(Source: Fieldwork)

According to the table above, justice scored the highest as an indicator of development for Pakistan scoring 80%, while positive thinking and brain drain scored the lowest, just 5% as indicators of development necessary for Pakistan.

7.8 Solution/s to the Problems Faced by Pakistan

The respondents were unanimous in their perception that the present ruling leaders of the country are insensitive towards the plight of a common man and have become selfish and self-centred

---

[4] Others- this category was kept open-ended for the respondents to suggest points and is apart from the other categories mentioned in the table which were raised by the researcher.

working for only their own benefits and vested interests. They lack compassion, kindness and are insensitive to the public in general and towards the *madrassas* in particular.

Only an Islamic system, based on *shariah*, is the solution to all the problems faced by Pakistan; where discipline and exemplary punishments for crimes across all segments of the society could bring about change in the society and the crisis that the country and society faces today. According to the following students at the *jamia*:

Binte Hafsa, aged 21 years:

> "*islami nifaz say fikarain......soch aur kirdar......masbut hoongee.....koi musalmaan apnay bhai kay liye bura naheen sochay gaa*" meaning "an Islamic system will bring positive thoughts......concern and character....no Muslim will think negatively about his brother."

Syeda Fatima, aged 18 years:

> "*hukumraan kharaab hain.....humaray mulk main.......unko hasaas hona chahiye*" meaning "leaders are terrible....in our country.....they should become sensitive." Further, she shared: "*sab say bara masla hai log mulk main reh kar kirdar ada karain*" meaning "the biggest issue is that people should stay in Pakistan and fulfill their responsibilities."

It was her perception that people get education in Pakistan and then go abroad for employment or better opportunities. These people should stay in Pakistan and contribute their part in the development of the country.

In one of the FGDs conducted with a group of students, there was consensus in the group that all communication regarding any technical education should be in Pakistan's mother tongue, i.e. Urdu. Examples were quoted of America and China and how they have progressed through using their own mother tongue, whereas Pakistanis feel ashamed to speak in their own language and prefer to speak in English rather than in Urdu.

7.9 Discussion

The data has been collected from females of various ethnic backgrounds at the *madrassa*. The findings unravel that a single definition of development cannot be pinned down. For some,

development is character building at the individual level, but for the majority, development is an Islamic way of life.

The perception captured by the females at the *jamia* is that the Islamic concept of development requires going back to the times of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) and is linked to the code of conduct prescribed by Islam. Great emphasis is laid on character building and self-reflection of individuals. The present system of democracy is against Islam while the present banking system is based on interest which is *haraam*. There should be no conflict of the state with religion in order to progress and prosper. The point the researcher wants to make here is that other countries in the West have prospered and developed without religion, for example, by; strengthening institutions, economic stability, promotion of peace and harmony, promotion of indigenous cultures, values, heritage and also through promotion of tourism.

The present need is to develop a link between Islam and to move forward; which starts with building and strengthening an individual's character, and then moving onto other amenities and indicators of development at the macro level, as is evident from the researcher's findings on the field. It was shared by one teacher, Irum, aged 21 years, at SJH:

> "Other religions of the West have progressed but have done so without religion.....they have lost their original teachings......but we have kept them safe and secure.......if we deviate from religion.......we will go away from human values and morality."

The importance of religion in the life of an individual cannot be denied as it not only builds one's character and confidence but also gives one an awareness about one's rights and responsibilities. Also, for those people who practice religion in their daily lives, it brings a sense of immense mental wellbeing and happiness; "*Allah raazi hoga....dill mutmaeen hoga"* meaning "when *Allah* is pleased.....the heart is content." Happiness is not related to materialistic things. It is internal and intrinsic; when one's heart is at peace.

Keeping the importance of religion aside, the importance of other services for development cannot be ignored like health, education, transport, employment opportunities, justice and rule of

law, etc. The gap between the rich and the poor segment of the society exists because of inequality of rights. The entire system is incorrect as it benefits the rich. The circulation of money stops and remains confined within a few hands.

If the Pakistani society is broken down into people, and one looks at their inter-relationships and dealings with the world; it consists of an individual's knowledge and actions. It is the responsibility of every individual to bring about development and not just a few individuals. The state also has a responsibility to; look after its citizens, facilitate them in the provision of basic amenities and to prioritize services for development goals.

This discussion leads us onto the next section, i.e. does an educated woman lead to development?

7.10 Does an Educated Woman Lead to Development?

Education is just one indicator of development. There are other indicators of development which have been mentioned throughout this chapter. Education, especially religious education is an important one because it leads to an individual's raised awareness and consciousness especially that of the females at the *jamia* (empowerment) and ultimately to development (the indigenous model along with linkages discussed in next chapter 8). The question "does an educated woman lead to development?" somehow sums up the research question for this thesis; whether religious education aids or hinders the women at the *jamia*, SJH? The knowledge that comes through education; whether it is religious or worldly, is an asset for these women at the *jamia*. Education leads to a progressive mind; a mind that can think, reflect and build up ones's own character on a micro level before moving onto the macro level; what one can do or how one can contribute to a developed society, as was shared by two students, at SJH:

Zunaira aged, 22 years:
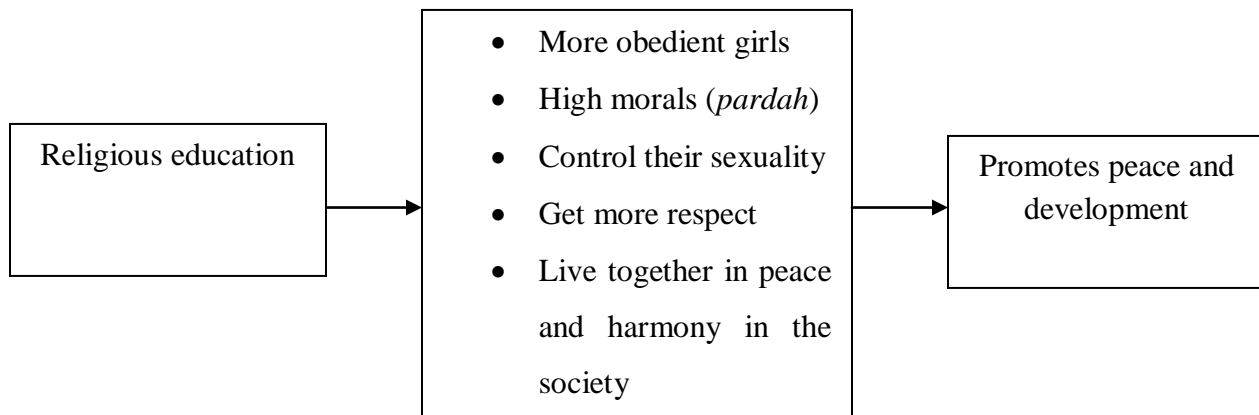
> *"taleem yafta loug taraqee laatay hain"* meaning "educated people bring about development."

Binte Somia, aged 21 years:

> *"aik parhee likhee aurat taraqee main hissa daltee hai"* meaning "an educated woman plays her part in development."

According to the perceptions from the field, when Islam asks humans to educate themselves, it does not differentiate between emphasising religious education over worldly education or vice versa, since education received from both from worldly and religious sources is beneficial as it raises one's level of knowledge and awareness. However, after analysing all the data, the general perception at the *madrassa* was that religious education is far superior to the worldly one. As a result of which, religiously educated girls are placed on a higher pedestal than the worldly educated ones. Religious girls are more obedient and are not as stubborn as compared to the ones receiving worldly education, religious girls have morals and since these girls observe *pardah* and do not mix and mingle freely with the members of the opposite sex (this implies controlling sexuality as was quoted on the field; *fitnay ka dour hai.....aurat jab ghar say nikaltee hai tu shaitaan peechay parr jaata hai* meaning "it is the age of temptation.....when a woman goes out of her house.....the devil gets after her") hence, they get more respect from the society and are a source of creating peace as they are taught to avoid conflicts and live together in peace and harmony. This leads to a peaceful society which ultimately promotes to its progress and development. Hence, it is proved that education; especially religious education is a prerequisite for development as is depicted in the diagram below:

Figure 7.2: How a Religiously Educated Woman Leads to a Developed Society.


```
┌─────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────┐
│                     │      │ • More obedient girls    │      │                      │
│                     │      │ • High morals (pardah)   │      │                      │
│ Religious education │ ───► │ • Control their sexuality│ ───► │ Promotes peace and   │
│                     │      │ • Get more respect       │      │ development          │
│                     │      │ • Live together in peace │      │                      │
│                     │      │   and harmony in the     │      │                      │
│                     │      │   society                │      │                      │
└─────────────────────┘      └──────────────────────────┘      └──────────────────────┘
```

(Source: Fieldwork)

For a better understanding, an indigenous model is explained in the next chapter.

Chapter 8: Model Formulation and Conclusion

Since, no theory or model discussed in the review of literature (Chapter 2) applies to the *madrassa* under study, though some similarities can be found and indicated through the literature (theories or models of development); so, I have devised an indigenous model based on my findings and analysis. This chapter constructs a native model of interaction between religious education, gender and development for SJH. The first section explains the individual components of the perceived model for SJH. Finally, a fusion of all components shows the holistic local model of interaction. The model is based on the perceptions of the females at SJH and as well as the observations of the researcher.

8.1 Individual Components of the Perceived Native Model of Interaction

This section explains the individual components of the perceived model of interaction between religious education, gender and development for SJH.

8.1.1 The Perceived Framework of Life

In the figure below, the five concentric circles show the framework of life. The concept of the concentric circles is that there is one center of origin i.e. *khud insaan*, or *zaat* (the self). There are a series of circles, each succeeding circle having a bigger diameter than the preceding circle. The center of origin is the individual person. The first obligation is to correct one's *ikhlaq* (moral ethics) and to understand one's role and responsibilities to oneself. Then, one's obligations extends to the widening circles of the nuclear and extended families with which one has close relationships, then, the *madrassa* in which these females reside and the local community with whom they interact with, then, the larger Muslim *Ummah* to which one is spiritually connected with, and then, the wider world with which one has points of contact or communication with.

Figure 8.1: The Perceived Framework of Life

wider world

Muslim Ummah

Institutions and the local community

Nuclear and extented family

The Self
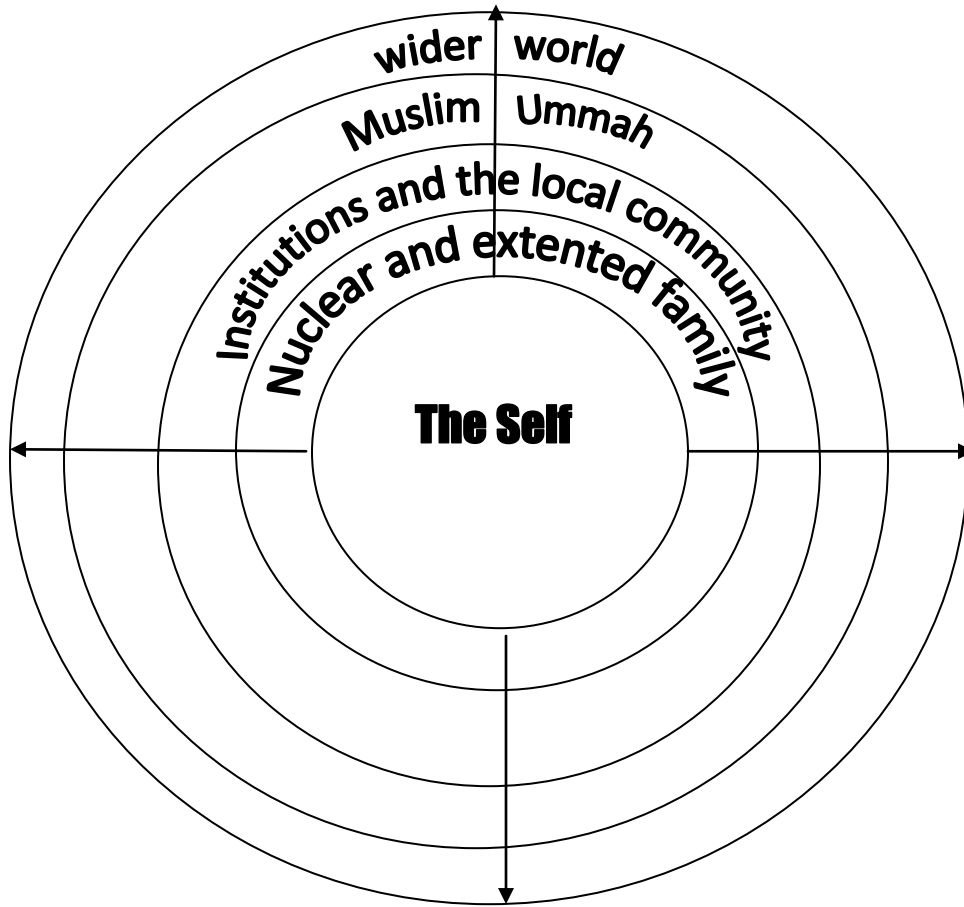
Source: Fieldwork and Data Analysis

Islam is a complete code of life. The framework of life is grounded in the fundamental objective that Islam aims to induce movement in human beings so as to move them closer and closer to *Allah (SWT). Ikhlaq* should have two foci: how to live and how to interact in the society. The former focus leads to self-development and moral development, how to achieve moderation in a soul so to avoid the dangers of excessive or deficient development. The latter focus results in societal well-being, what are the appropriate modes of social interactions and what are the associated obligations and rights of individuals, or groups with whom we come into contact with and who may have different ethnic, cultural, ideological and/or religious backgrounds than our own.

8.1.2 The Components of Education

A careful analysis of the data reveals that education composes of the following:

Figure 8.2: The Components of Education

$$taleem = ilm + amal + tehkik$$

Source: Fieldwork and Data Analysis

Taleem (education) includes; *ilm* (knowledge), *amal* (actions or practices) and *tehkik* (research). Attaining education and not implementing it in one's daily life is of no use and is highly questionable in the *aakhirat* (hereafter). Research here means not coming up with new knowledge but looking for knowledge within their own books.

Further, the knowledge is divided into two categories: *deeni ilm* (religious knowledge) and *dunyavi ilm* (worldly knowledge). The rating of religious knowledge is higher. The acquisition of religious knowledge is *farz* (obligatory) on all Muslims whereas acquiring worldly knowledge is not obligatory but preferred. Worldly knowledge is attained to develop a skill, to help one to understand what is happening around them in this world, how to communicate better and compete within this world.

Figure 8.3: The Elements of Worldly Knowledge

- Life skills (vocational training)
- Communication
- Competition

Source: Fieldwork and Data Analysis

8.1.3 The Elements of Religious Education

Religious knowledge comprises of; the Quran (the holy book), *Tafsir* (commentary on the holy book), *Hadees* (Sayings of the Holy Prophet), *Sunnah* (traditions of the Holy Prophet), *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and *Shariah* (Islamic legal system).

A deep understanding of religion encompasses all three dimensions of religion; beliefs (*imaan*), outward actions or practices (*amal*) and most importantly, spiritual excellence (*ruhani fazeelat*). An important point here is that spirituality takes preference over materialism and material gains. The *madrassa* arrangements and practices are such which also conform to the same spirit. For instance, the emphasis is on floor seating arrangements rather than on expensive furniture display.

Figure 8.4: The Elements of Religious Knowledge or Teachings

- Beliefs, attitudes and values
- *Ikhlaqiyat* (ethics)
- *Madrassa* arrangements and practices
- Spirituality versus materialism
- Research
- Inter- relationships

Source: Fieldwork and Data Analysis

The emphasis at the *madrassa* is more towards religious knowledge rather than the worldly one. Religious knowledge ultimately leads to the recognition of *Allah*. The concept of Islamic education is linked with the concept of *aakhirat* (hereafter) and what *Allah* wants from humans in this life; to differentiate between *halaal* (permissible) and *haraam* (not permissible), how to fulfill one's obligations towards others in the society, and to know the etiquettes and obligations, and to build and strengthen one's character.

If we breakdown the Pakistani society into people, and look at their inter-relationships and dealings with the world; it consists of an individual's knowledge and actions or practices. It is not just information but rather, it is the implementation and transforming oneself inwardly and outwardly, in order to become true Muslims and believers.

The Connection with the Framework of Life; the Role of the *Ulema*

There is one point of connection between religious education and the framework of life to make here (see figure 8.7); i.e. the role of the *ulema* which originates from the concentric circle of the institution of the *madrassa* has been and is still considered important today to guide the Muslim community with their capabilities and abilities in every walk of life.

8.1.4 The Components of Gender

The *madrassa* inculcates a certain religious identity constructing gender in a way where it is believed that women are primarily responsible to spread moral values in the society through a decent upbringing and religious knowledge. These gender specific roles regard men as; bread winners or earning members of the family, men look after outside tasks and the financial burden of the family rests with him. Whereas, a woman's domain is her home and her primary responsibility is her family.

Gender through the Lens of Empowerment

The analysis of the data reveals that the perception at the *madrassa* regarding the concept of empowerment is linked to developing an awareness of a woman's rights and responsibilities. Religious education and a good upbringing makes the women become aware of themselves, their rights, their position with reference to religion and the roles that they have to play in the society. According to them, they develop not only a sense of self-esteem but also develop confidence as they learn life skills and how to utilise their capabilities and potential. So, they believe that religious knowledge gives them power and hence is empowering to them.

I have operationalised Rowland's and Williams et al's concept of *power within* for this research; this power refers to individual changes in confidence and consciousness like assertiveness, self-

awareness and self-confidence. It relates to how individuals can recognise their own self through analysing their experience and gain the confidence required to act to influence and change the outcome they create in their life (Rowland, 97-98; Williams et al, 1994).

Figure 8.5: The Elements of Empowerment

- Awareness (about themselves, their rights, roles and responsibilities, etc.)
- Self-esteem and confidence
- Decision-making
- Income generation activities
- Future direction and goals

Source: Fieldwork and Data Analysis

The women have a right to make decisions about their life such as attaining education, marriage, *tableegh* (spread of faith), the right to earn an income, to participate in all spheres of life, etc. The responsibility of earning and supporting families lies basically with the men as they are the providers or caretakers in the family. Nevertheless, Islam is a practical religion and responds to human needs and life situations. Many women need, or wish to work for various reasons. For example, they may possess a needed skill, such as they may be good teachers or doctors or they may need to work in order to support their families. But since they have to follow the limitations imposed on them by *Shariah,* such as, mixing and mingling with men is not encouraged in Islam; and a woman has to observe *pardah*, there exists options of her giving home tuition or setting up home based small businesses like home decoration, tailoring, etc. for income generation purposes.

Since the females at the *madrassa* are inspired by the ones they seek guidance from or those who are superior in knowledge to them at SJH and consider them as their role models, it comes to no surprise that their future goals are aimed around; attaining education, opening up a *madrassa* and

teaching. They perceive it to be a great service to their country by creating awareness about various issues and rights of people through imparting education; both religious and worldly.

The Connection with the Framework of Life

There is one point of connection between empowerment and the framework of life to make here (see figure 8.7). As has been discussed above, that the perception at the *madrassa* regarding the concept of empowerment is linked to developing an awareness of a woman's rights and responsibilities, and a good upbringing makes the woman become aware and hence empowers her. So, upbringing originates from the concentric circle of the nuclear and the extended family.

8.1.5 Development

For any society to prosper and progress, the roles that a woman plays are very important. According to the perceptions captured at SJH, an empowered woman can lead to the development of the country, as she contributes positively towards the society in the form of the different roles that she plays both inside and outside the house. As societies prosper and progress, so do the countries develop. It is important to emphasise on her moral development or character building, as it is necessary for a woman to be good (good here implies promoting an environment of peace and harmony at home) which will bring peace to any society.

Islam, according to my interlocutors, lays a lot of emphasis on character building of an individual. No society can truly exist, leave alone progress and prosper without an existence of moral values. Many injustices exist in the Pakistani society. Majority of the people around us are dishonest, corrupt and deceive whenever they get a chance to. When one talks about development in general, it is generally meant material things, but we seldom tend to talk about developing one's character which is of utmost importance. Character building involves good moral ethics and upholding values such as honesty, justice, equality, fair treatment, discipline, no harm should be brought upon others, etc. These are also the qualities that are required for a good leadership.

Apart from the growth of one's character, there needs to be equality of rights; where every individual gets their due right in the society and there is justice provided by the courts. This is perceived to be the real development. Education is also a prerequisite for development and if the leader of a country is educated, rights to the people will be delivered through good governance. Positive thoughts and progressive minds lead towards development. It is the responsibility of the state to; look after its citizens, facilitate in the provision of basic amenities and to prioritise its services for development goals.

Figure 8.6: The Elements of Development

- Moral Development (character building)
- Peace
- Equality of Rights and Justice
- Education
- Religion
- Contribution by every individual
- Happiness

Source: Fieldwork and Data Analysis

Development is also perceived to be based on religion, as it is not possible to progress without the rules that govern within our religion, for example, how to deal with individuals within a society, how to run a business or affairs of the state, as religion teaches us how to handle all the worldly affairs. Religion also teaches one patience, tolerance, selflessness, a spirit of sacrifice and to live together in peace and harmony. So, development comes through both; religious and worldly knowledge and there should be no abuse of religion, development should remain within the religious orders and should not conflict with religion.

It is not just the responsibility of our leaders or the state or just a few people to bring about development. Every individual is responsible and should contribute towards development. The state facilitates development as it is responsible for providing basic facilities like electricity, shelter, transport, etc. to its citizens. At the individual level, people are responsible to contribute

through playing their role responsibly for example; a doctor must reach his/her office on time and serve with honesty, dedication and commitment.

One of the indicators of development is happiness. The perception at the *madrassa* was that happiness comes from practicing religion, internal peace, respect and mental wellbeing. All females at SJH were happy with their living status despite the hardships and difficulties they faced living there. They had no worries and all their needs were taken care of and necessities were fulfilled as they were down to earth and lead simple lives with very little focus on materialism. They found great strength and support in religion as an understanding of religion provided them with inner peace, happiness and bliss. Happiness is not related to materialistic things. It is internal and intrinsic; when ones heart is at peace.

To sum up, an educated woman at the *madrassa* is empowered, whether inside or outside the house, especially through attaining religious knowledge. She; becomes aware of her rights and responsibilities, can make her own decisions to run her house or bring up the children and hence has a huge role to play in the progress of any society through fulfilling her duties and responsibilities.

8.2 Indigenous Model of Interaction between Religious Education, Gender and Development at SJH.

The concept of education, empowerment and development is derived from *madrassa* education that these females are acquiring. The model (Figure 8.7) on the next page is formed by combining all the above mentioned components together, giving a holistic representation of the interaction between religious education, gender and development at SJH.

Figure 8.7: A Consolidated Representation of the Interaction Between Religious Education, Gender and Development at SJH.

Religious Knowledge

- Beliefs, attitudes and values
- *Ikhlaqiyat* (ethics)
- *Madrassa* arrangements and practices
- Spirituality versus materialism
- Research
- Interrelationships

Worldly Knowledge

- Life skills (vocational training)
- Communication
- Competition

Role of the Ulema

wider world

Muslim Ummah

Institutions and the local community

Nuclear and extented family

The Self

Power

Capabilities and Potential

Sensible, Raised Consiousness and Research

Good Upbringing

Empowerment

- Awareness (about themselves, their rights, roles and responsibilities, etc.)
- Self-esteem and confidence
- Decision-making
- Income generation activities
- Future direction and goals

Fulfilling Individual Roles and Responsibilities

Development

- Moral Development (character building)
- Peace
- Equality of Rights and Justice
- Education
- Religion
- Contribution by every individual
- Happiness

8.3. The Missing Elements

(Suggestions for Community Development)

The analysis of the data reveals that in order to progress and develop, some actors are found to be missing from the model, whether they are in the form of lack of basic amenities or the missing role of the elected leadership of the country. According to the perceptions captured at the *madrassa*, the shortage or lack of the following is hindering development; whether at the level of the institution or at the level of the country:

- ❖ Space in terms of accommodation and washrooms at the *madrassa* as there are only 20 washrooms for over 1500 students,
- ❖ Lack of resources and funds available towards *madrassa* education,
- ❖ There is no ground for playing sports like football and no swings for the younger girls,
- ❖ A full-fledge computer lab is missing as they cannot afford it,
- ❖ Lack of ownership on the part of Pakistan's elected leaders as the role of the state in facilitating religious education is found to be missing,
- ❖ Lack of basic facilities provided by the state, such as clean water supply,
- ❖ Non-imposition of *shariah* in the country,
- ❖ Inequality of rights between the rich and the poor,
- ❖ Lack of justice in the society,
- ❖ Technical education is not in one's mother tongue. Hence, all technical education in the country should be in one's mother tongue. (This specifically relates to the use of computers).

The common perception at the *madrassa* was that the present ruling leaders of the country are insensitive towards the plight of a common man and have become selfish and self-centred working for only their own benefits and vested interests. They lack compassion and kindness and are insensitive to the public in general and towards *madrassas* in particular. Only an Islamic system, based on *shariah*, is the solution; where discipline and exemplary punishments for

crimes across all segments of the society can bring about change in the society and address all the problems or crisis that the country and society faces today. Hence, the indigenous model is rooted in the fact that Islam cherishes for the human society; a just and equitable society. The present need is to develop a link between Islam and move forward; which starts with building and strengthening an individual's character, and then moving on to other amenities and indicators of development, as is evident from the researcher's findings on the field.

8.4 Conclusion

It is not possible to draft a clear cut theory for development to take place at the *madrassa* under study. Though, some similarities can be found and indicated through the literature (theories or models of development). The need is to make development effective and sustainable.

The *madrassa* and its activities can be termed as Islamic activism. According to Clark, (2004, p.14) Islamic activism regards Islam *"as a complete system, a body of ideas, values, beliefs and practices encompassing all spheres of life".* At SJH, the girls identify themselves as Islamic activists, who are defined as *"a Muslim who attempts to re-Islamise society by encouraging individuals to practice Islam in daily life and to bridge the perceived gap between religious discourse and practical realities".* The primary aim of SJH is not only to disseminate knowledge about the *shariah*, but also to encourage its integration in all spheres of life for a better moral and spiritual existence.

According to Sen (1999a; 1999b), it is important that states deliver basic needs along with public services to satisfy the needs of the population and also to offer endowments of opportunities so that the people can have a wide options to chose from. The provision of social safety nets and welfare schemes provides the people with a sense of economic and social freedom. For the females at the *madrassa*, the social capital, community activities are important for their and their communities' wellbeing (Blackburn, Chambers & Gaventa, 2003). For long term change and development, the role of region, religious education, social and cultural norms cannot be discounted (Ali, 2003). Engaging stakeholders in the process of development brings about well-being and welfare of the people.

The Basic Needs Theory propagated in the 1970s, can be related with this community as it calls for fulfilling the needs of water, food, shelter, basic amenities, etc. The findings of this thesis are also in line with Sen's Capability Approach which can be related to the indigenous model of interaction (discussed in detail in Chapter 8), which argues that democratic states should bestow the citizens with a set of options to choose from in order to polish their abilities and enhance their quality of life (Sen, 1999a). Additionally, Sen proposed that freedom centric development meaning the availability of choices to decide for these females according to their capability and potential can contribute towards the role of free human activities as a force for change. He refers to expanding choices for human beings and of their control over commodities of life. He argued that if states enhance the capabilities of underprivileged people by providing them with necessities and by removing socio-economic inequities, the people would be able to not only contribute but would be more willing to participate in the sphere of development (Sen 1999b; Khan, 2004).

The indigenous model of interaction is linked to the bottom up approach, people centered development and participatory development; the main argument of which is to involve all the stakeholders in the process of development (Burkey, 1993; Roodt 2001). This study tells us that these females are well aware of the dynamics of their locale and what resources are required or are already available there. They understand what is imperative for their well being as well as community development. From the perspectives shared in this thesis, development is perceived both at a micro and macro level; micro level means character building and self-reflection while macro level means availability of basic facilities, social harmony and peace of mind. The people of the sampled *madrassa* are not in opposition to development but they desire that it must be in line with their traditional and religious values and norms. They regard education, especially religious education and the provision of justice to all as critical factors for development.

This research addresses the questions: what is the perception about education, empowerment and development of the female students, teachers and administration at the *madrassa*, and what is the

role of religion in their perception of education, empowerment and development of the female students, teachers and administration at the *madrassa*? Does religion aid or hinder them?

This study shows that the presence, nature, and activities of religious people at SJH should be better understood, so that they can be taken into account in the development activities. The research is important as it not only identifies and clarifies the key concepts and the factors that need to be considered, it explores the ideas and perceptions of the females about the relevance of religious education to empowerment and ultimately to development and social change. It also identifies the broad levels of analysis needed to better understand a particular context especially *madrassas*. A further area of research is suggested, which could lead to an improved understanding of the working of *madrassas* on a national level and the meaning of religion in the lives of individuals; especially the religious community and the nature, aims, and activities of religious organisations.

8.5 Way Forward

This research calls for further research. This research comes from a small base. More empirical evidence is required to support or negate the proposition that religion or religious education aids or hinders the empowerment of women in Islam. And that religion is a constitutive force for positive development outcomes. There is insufficient evidence in this study to fully understand; how religion and development intersect, and the theologies of development in our religious traditions. Further research should explore the link between religion or belief systems and human well being. Beliefs are pervasive, persuasive and persistent. The values and attitudes associated with such beliefs can affect policy settings as well as social behaviours (with both positive and negative consequences possible).

One way of looking deeper into this research would be a textual analysis of the contents of the *Dars-i-Nizami* course being taught to the females at SJH. This can let one know a lot about the ways minds have been configured or conditioned in relation to the broader constructs of education and empowerment.

More work and studies are required and such studies can be repeated and replicated[1] across other *madrassas* as work is occurring in isolated pockets and without connection to a larger international community of scholars.

---

[1] since this research cannot be taken as a representative research, hence more sample/data needs to be collected using the same research framework.

Appendix

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide

Education

1. What is the purpose of education?

2. Is it important to educate boys or girls? Or both?

3. What does Islam say regarding education of girls? Should girls be educated at all?

4. Which type of education is more important; religious or worldly?

Empowerment

5. (a) What do you perceive of the term "empowerment?" (Probe: Where does it come from? Can a female be empowered? Can she take decisions on her own? Can she give her opinion on matters such as her marriage, domestic affairs, etc?)

   (b) Is empowerment possible without education?

6. (a) Who is a woman?

   (b) What is the role of a woman (whether in the home, at the *madrassa*, or in the society)?

   (c) What are her rights?

7. (a) What is the role of a man?

   (b) What are his rights?

Development

8. What is development? (Probe: Where does it come from? Who brings it?)

9. Can an empowered woman contribute towards development?

10. What are some of the pressing problems faced by Pakistan which need to be resolved?

11. Anything you would like to question or comment?

Thank you!

In-depth Interviews with the Management/Administration of the *Madrassa*

Date_____   Respondent's Name_____

Position title_____   Number of years of service_____

Level of education_____

Phone_____   Email_____

Website_____

The following questions are just a guideline. These would be followed by some probing questions as and when required. On the field, the sequence of questions may change.

General Information on the *Madrassa*:

1. What is the history of the *madrassa*? Who started it? When? Why?
2. Who is the current head of the *madrassa*? (Educational qualifications, publications, representation on government committees).
3. How is the *madrassa* supported? (probe source of funds: government, philanthropy, others) What is your annual expenditure, sources of income?
4. What is your student/teacher number?
5. The women in this *madrassa* mostly belong to which caste?
6. What is the main spoken language here? What other languages are spoken here?
7. What are the *madrassa's* principles/objectives?
8. Who brings these girls to the *madrassa*?
9. How many students do you enroll in one class?
10. What is the total number of students at this *madrassa* at present?
11. What is the admission criteria for these girls?

12. What is the selection criteria for the teachers?

13. What is the duration of the stay of these students?

14. What are the various categories of students/teachers who come and stay here?

15. What is your role and responsibility here?

Education:

16. What are your views on girl's education? (Probe: is boy's education more important than girls?

17. What religious subjects are taught here?

18. What non-religious subjects are taught here?

19. What practical skills are taught here? E.g. computer skills, etc.

20. Can girls switch between *madrassas* during their education?

21. What is the drop-out rate?

22. Why do girls drop out? (probe: reasons)

23. How do you find the quality of education at the *madrassa*? (probe: better off or worse off)

24. How has the quality of education at the *madrassa* changed over the past five years? ten years?

25. What facilities are available here for students/ teachers?

26. Are there any extra-curricular activities?

27. Are their trainings for teachers? (Probe: what sort, frequency?)

28. Is there any difference in the curriculum of girls and boys?

29. Are there any missionary trips for women?

Others:

30. Do you have a placement policy in place? (Probe: criteria for employment)

31. Do you also employ students once they graduate?

32. Do you have a registration form for students at the *madrassa*?

33. What are some of the general problems faced here? (Probe: school management/facilities)

34. How do you solve these problems?

35. In your view, what are the best and worst aspects of this *madrassa*?

Disagreement/ disputes:

36. What are the major causes of disputes or conflicts in the *madrassa* among teachers/students?

37. What are the types of conflicts?

38. What is the punishment for violating discipline at the *madrassa*?

39. How do you resolve these conflicts here?

Religion:

40. What is the main purpose of religion?

41. In order to become a good human being and a good Muslim, is getting education from a *madrassa* more beneficial, less beneficial or is there no difference as compared to studying from regular schools?

Views on Development:

42. What do you think development is all about?

43. Where does development come from?

44. Who brings development?

45. Some people are rich and other poor. What would you say is the reason for the wealth of the rich; and the poverty of the poor?

46. In your view, what is the best way to reduce the gap between rich and poor in Pakistan?

47. Name five most pressing problems faced in Pakistan?

48. If you have a chance to do something for the betterment of this area what will you do?

49. Do you think there is a need to put in more money for religious education/activities?

50. What do you imagine as an ideal future for yourself?

51. What is happiness?

52. Are you satisfied with your life?

Views on Empowerment:

53. What do you think empowerment is all about?

54. Where does empowerment come from?

55. Is empowerment possible without education?

56. Who is a woman, what is her role and responsibilities in current times (probe: their role at home, *madrassa* and the society)

57. Should husband and wife both work?

58. Do you think females should be allowed to work outside their homes?

59. Do you feel confident as a person?

60. Do you think females should be allowed to have a say in important household decisions?

61. Are you asked for suggestions in important decisions?

62. Are you allowed to make choices in your daily life?

63. Do you think females should be allowed to marry of their own choice?

64. Can a woman become a religious leader? Ulema?

Future Directions:

65. What is the future direction or goals of the *madrassa*?

66. What is your future direction or goals?

67. Anything else you would like to share?

INTERVIEW GUIDE

In-depth Interviews with the Students/Teachers of the *Madrassa*

Basic information:

- Name of respondent: _____
- Age_____   Education Level _____
- Languages spoken_____
- Caste _____
- Marital Status _____
- Family type (Joint/Single) _____
- Total Number of Household Members _____
- Men _____Women _____
- Siblings/Children _____
- Girls
- Boys
- Are any of your siblings/ children studying at the *madrassa*?
- Qualification of mother? _____
- Profession of mother? _____
- Qualification of father? _____
- Profession of father? _____
- Did you come here by your own choice or did someone refer you here? _____
- Who referred you?
- Does your family support you? _____
- Interests/ Hobbies _____
- What is your role and responsibility at the *madrassa*?

Education:

1. What religious subjects are taught here?
2. What non-religious subjects are taught here?
3. What subject interests you?

4. Why?

5. What are your views on girl's education? (probe: is it important?)

6. Do you think females should get educated? (probe: there is a saying that get knowledge from cradle to grave)

7. Yes _____ No_____

8. Why?

9. How much?

10. What is education for you?

11. Do you think education is Jihad?

12. Is boy's education more important than girls?

13. Any practical skills taught here? Who provides it here?

14. What are the reasons for girls dropping out? (Probe: Why do girls drop out?)

15. How do you find the quality of education at the *madrassa*? (probe: better off or worse off)

16. How has the quality of education at the *madrassa* changed over the past five years? Ten years?

17. Are there any extra-curricular activities?

18. Are their trainings for teachers? (probe: what sort, frequency?)

19. Are there any missionary trips for women?

20. In your view, what are the best and worst aspects of this *madrassa*?

Others:

21. Do you know any computer skills?

22. Would you like to learn any new skills?

23. Yes _____ no_____

24. If yes, what? _____

25. Do you watch TV?

26. Yes _____ no_____

27. If yes, what do you like to watch on TV?

28. Do you read newspapers?

29. Yes _____ no_____

30. Urdu/ English

31. If no, why not? _____

32. Are you fond of reading literature?

33. Do you like to play any sport?

34. Who inspires you?

    a) Parents

    b) Teacher/s

    c) Religious scholars

    d) Any other_____

Disagreement/ disputes:

35. What are the major causes of disputes or conflicts in the *madrassa* among teachers/students?

36. What are the types of conflicts?

37. What is the punishment for violating discipline at the *madrassa*?

38. How do you resolve these conflicts here?

Religion:

39. What is the main purpose of religion?

40. In order to become a good human being and a good Muslim, is getting education from a *madrassa* more beneficial, less beneficial or is there no difference as compared to studying from regular schools?

Views on Development:

41. What do you think development is all about?

42. Where does development come from?

43. Who brings development?

44. Some people are rich and other poor. What would you say is the reason for the wealth of the rich; and the poverty of the poor?

45. In your view, what is the best way to reduce the gap between rich and poor in Pakistan?

46. Name five most pressing problems faced in Pakistan?

47. If you have a chance to do something for the betterment of this area what will you do?

48. Do you think there is a need to put in more money for religious education/activities?

49. What do you imagine as an ideal future for yourself?

Views on Empowerment:

50. What do you think empowerment is all about?

51. Where does empowerment come from?

52. Is empowerment possible without education?

53. Who is a woman, what is her role? (probe: their role at home, *madrassa* and the society)

54. Should husband and wife both work?

55. Do you think females should be allowed to work outside their homes?

56. Would you like to work?

57. Are you allowed to vote?

58. Do you feel confident as a person?

59. Do you think females should be allowed to have a say in important household decisions?

60. Are you asked for suggestions in important decisions?

61. Are you allowed to make choices in your daily life?

62. Do you think females should be allowed to marry of their own choice? (probe: views on marriage)

63. Can a woman become a religious leader? Ulema?

Decision making:

64. If you were given a choice to do something for your country, what would it be?

_____

_____

_____

_____

65. What facilities are available at this *madrassa* for students/teachers?

_____

_____

_____

_____

66. What are some of the problems you face living here?

_____

_____

_____

_____

67. How do you solve these problems?

_____

_____

_____

_____

68. Many things are important in life. Please rate how important the following things are for you?
   a) Practicing religion
   b) Finding employment
   c) Getting education
   d) Happiness
   e) Good health
   f) Pleasant life at home
   g) Freedom of choice
   h) Peace
   i) Respect
   j) Mental wellbeing

69. Rank the following facilities in order of your priority?
   a) Clean drinking water
   b) education for boys/girls
   c) clean environment
   d) Transport facility
   e) Health facilities
   f) Justice
   g) Employment
   h) Any other_____

70. What is happiness? Is it any one of the following?

   a) Money

   b) Clean drinking water

   c) Clean environment

   d) Respect

   e) Good health

   f) Good education

   g) Good food

   h) Mental wellbeing

   i) Peace

   j) Any other

   _____

71. In spite of everything, are you happy with your living status? If yes, why are you happy? Where does it come from?

_____

_____

_____

_____

72. Where do you want to go from here? Future plans? What do you want to become?

_____

_____

_____

_____

73. Anything else you would like to share?

_____

_____

_____

_____

My own observations/comments:

_____

_____

Glossary

Aapi Jaan	A term of respect used for Umme Hassaan, wife of Maulana Abdul Aziz.
Ahadees	Sayings of the Prophet (P.B.U.H)
Akhlaqiat	Moral behaviour.
Alim	Learned man, male religious scholar (Plural is *ulema*).
Aqal	Intellect
Asar	Afternoon prayer
Attiyat	Donations
Aurat	Woman
Baji	Older sister or older woman in the *madrassa.*
Bazam-e-Adab	A ceremony before graduation of female students where *naats*, *taraanas* and speeches /competitions are held.
Burqa	Long dress with facial covering used by Muslim women.
Chaddar	An ankle-length shawl that covers a person's body completely, except the hands, face and eyes that are left exposed.
Dars	Lesson
Dars i Nizami	Islamic curriculum developed by Mullah Nizam-ud-Din of Farangi Mahall in the early eighteenth century and taught in Pakistani *madrassas* to date.
Deeni	Religious
Deeni ilm	Religious knowledge
Dua	Asking Allah for help, prayer.
Dunya	Worldly
Dunyavi ilm	Worldly knowledge
Dupatta	A large scarf draped over the shoulder and it usually covers the head and chest.
Fajr	Pre- dawn prayer
Farz	Obligatory or mandatory. A religious duty if omitted is punishable and doing it is rewarded in the hereafter.

Fatwa	Religious ruling in Islam, notification or authoritative legal opinion issued by a *Mufti*.
Fiqh	Science of Islamic jurisprudence.
Fitna	Sexual immorality, moral degradation in the society.
Gunnah	Sin
Hadees	Reports of statements or sayings, actions and thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H).
Hafiz	A male who has memorised the Quran.
Hafiza	A female who has memorised the Quran.
Hakim	Ruler
Halal	Permissible, allowed
Haram	Not permissible, forbidden by religion
Haya	Shame
Hifz	To protect, preserve or guard, the process of memorising the Quran.
Hijab	Headscarf used by Muslim women
Ibadaat	Plural of *Ibadat* meaning prayers
Ibadah	Prayer
Ibtidaya	Primary or elementary
Ijtihad	The creative interpretation and application of Islamic fiqh (jurisprudence) in the face of new situations.
Imam	Leader or head of the community; prayer leader at the mosque
Iqra	Read
Isha	Night prayer
Islamiyat	Islamic studies course taught in all schools in Pakistan
Izzat	Honour
Jaiz	Legal
Jamaat	Community, means a grade or class at the *madrassa*
Jamia	University
Jihad	Struggle, including armed struggle against non-believers, holy war
Kameez	A shirt worn commonly in Pakistan, normally till the knees.
Khairat	Religious alms or charity.

Khateeb	A person who delivers the sermon
Lal Masjid	The red mosque
Libas	Dress or clothing
Madrassa	School that imparts secondary and post secondary religious education using a specialised curriculum, *Dars-i-Nizami.*
Maghreb	Evening prayer
Maktab	Religious primary school that generally teaches young children to read the Quran and sometimes to recite it.
Masjid	Mosque
Maslak	Way or practice, usually in reference to a particular interpretative tradition.
Maulvi	Generic term for Islamic scholar, prayer leader or preacher.
Mazhab	Religion
Mazhabi	Religious
Mualima	A female student/teacher
Mualamaat	Female students
Mufti	Male teacher of Islamic law capable of giving *fatwa*
Muftia	Plural is *Muftiat*, female teacher of Islamic law capable of giving *fatwa*
Muqallid	Followers
Mushtashfa	Dispensary
Mutawasita	Middle
Nafs	Negative self, ego
Najaiz	Illegal
Namaz	Daily five time prayers
Napaak	Polluted
Naqis ud deen	Deficient in religion
Naqis ul aqal	Deficient in intellect
Nazra	Learning to recite the Quran
Niqab	Facial covering
Nisab	Curriculum
Oola	The first, the intermediate stage

Paak	Unpolluted
Pardah	To cover, veiling, also refers to gender based segregation
Pir	Sufi/saint/spiritual guide
Qirat	Vocalisation of the Quranic text
Quran	A religious book of the Muslims.
Radd	Refutation of the doctrines of rival school of Islamic thoughts or sects or religions.
Ramzan	The month of fasting
Rihaishi	Residential
Roza	Fast
Ruh	Spirit
Sadqa	Religious alms, charity given for the well-being of the giver
Sahaba	Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H)
Sahi Sitta	The six famous books of *hadees*
Sahih	Right
Sakoon	Inner peace
Sanad	Certificate
Sattar	Hidden, in the light of *Shariah* with reference to *pardah* and dress it means those parts of the body which must be covered.
Sawab	Religious merit
Saza	Punishment
Shalwar	Loose pants worn commonly in Pakistan.
Sharam	Shame
Shariah	The law of Islam based on Quran and *Hadees*
Shaytan	Satan
Sunnah	Islamic Law, Practice of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H), the prophetic tradition
Tableegh	To convey, especially *shariah* based guidance.
Tableeghi jamaat	A group of preachers.
Tafseer	A four years course at the *madrassa* which includes explanation and interpretation of the Quran

Tahqeeq	Research
Tajweed	To improve or to make better, at the *madrassa*; it is a course to improve one's accent, proficiency or pronunciation of the Quran in Arabic.
Takhassus	Specialisation, highest degree at the *madrassa*.
Talaffuz	Pronunciation
Taqlid	Imitation, refers to the unquestioning acceptance of established schools and authorities.
Taraweeh	Special night prayer in *Ramzan*
Ulema	See *Alim,* religious scholar
Ummah	The global Muslim community
Ustaad	Teacher
Ustaad Jee	Maulana Abdul Aziz as known by his students respectfully at the *madrassa* SJH
Wafaq	School of thought (*maslak*), central *madrassa* board.
Wuzu	Ablution
Zakat	Almsgiving. Muslims donate a percentage of their annual income or earnings as alms or charity.
Zuhur	Mid-day prayer

Bibliography

- Addison, R. B. (1989). Grounded Interpretive Research: An Investigation of Physician Socialization. In M. C. Packer & R. B. Addison (Eds.), *Entering the Circle: Hermeneutic Investigation in Psychology* (pp. 39–57). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Adefila, J.O. (2008). Understanding Economic Growth and Development in Nigeria: The Relevance of Core-periphery Spatial Inequality Theory. *Sahel Analyst*, *Journal of the Faculty of Social and Management Sciences.* University of Maiduguri. Nigeria, *10*(1), 86-95.

- Adelment, I. (1995). *Economic Growth and Social Equity in Developing Countries*. Standford. University press.

- Afray, Janet (1997). The War against Feminism in the Name of the Almighty: Making Sense of Gender and Muslim Fundamentalism, *New Left Review*, No.*224*, 89-110.

- Ahmed, S., (2005). Testimony of Samina Ahmed to US Senate Foreign Relations Committee: *Combating Terrorism through Education – The Near East and South Asian Experience.* Washington D.C., 19 April 2005.

- Ahmed, Sadia (1999). Islam and Development: Opportunities and Constraints for Somali Women, *Gender and Development, 7*(1), 69-71.

- Ahrens, J. (2000). Towards a Post-Washington Consensus:-The Importance of Governance Structures in Less Developed Countries and Economics in Transition. *Journal for Institutional Innovation, Development and Transition*, *4*, 78-96.

- Akhir, Noor Sheikh, and Muhammad Aziz. (2006). Islamic Education and Self Fortification. In Akhtar ul Wasay (Eds.), *Islam and the Modern Age*, Delhi: Jamia Millia Press, pp.79-99.

- Ali, Asghar. (2003). *On Developing Theology of Peace in Islam*, Sterling Publishers.

- Ali, S. (2012). *Madrassah Reform and State Power in Pakistan*. (M.Phil Thesis, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan).

- Ali, Saleem. (2009). *Islam and Education: Conflict and Conformity in Pakistani Madrassas*, Karachi, Oxford University Press.

- Ali, Saleem. (2009, May 23). Redeeming Pakistan's Madrassas. *Daily Times.* P.3. http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\05\23\story_23-5-2009_pg3_3

- Ali, Sameem (2008). *Belonging*. London: John Murray.

- Amin, S., and Pearce, B. (1976). *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism.* New York: Monthly Review Press.

- Amin, S., and Pearce, B. (1974). *Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

- Amin, S., and Wolfers, M. (1990). *Delinking: Towards a Polycentric World*. London: Zed Books.

- Andrabi, T., J. Das., A.I. Khawaja., T. Vishwanath., and T. Zajonc., and the LEAPS Team. (2008). *Pakistan: Learning and Educational Achievements in Punjab Schools (LEAPS) – Insights to Inform the Educational Policy Debate*. Islamabad: World Bank.

- Andrabi, T., J. Das., A.I. Khawaja., Asim Ijaz., and T. Zajonc., (2005). *Religious School Enrollment in Pakistan: A Look at the Data* (World Bank: Working Paper Series 3521, 1–2.

- Apter, D.E., (1987). *Rethinking Development: Modernisation, Dependency and Postmodern Politics*. London: Sage Publications.

- Aquino, Maria Pilar (1993). *Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America*, translated by D. Livingstone, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

- Bank, W. (2001). *Engendering Development - Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice*, World Bank and Oxford University Press, Washington, DC and New York.

- Bano, Masooda (2013). Islamic Education: Historical Evolution and Attempts at Reform. In Matthew Clarke (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion* (pp.238-251). Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.U.S.A.

- Bano, Masooda, H Kalmbach (Eds.), (2012). *Women, Leadership and Mosques: Changes in Contemporary Islamic Authority*, Leiden: Brill.

- Bano, Masooda (2012). *The Rational Believer: Choices and Decisions in the Madrasas of Pakistan*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. (South Asia edition published by Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 2013).

- Bano, Masooda (2007). Beyond Politics: The Reality of a Deobandi Madrasa in Pakistan, *Journal of Islamic Studies*, *18*(1): 43-68.

- Bano, Masooda (2007). *Contesting Ideologies and Struggle for Authority: State–Madrasa Relations in Pakistan,* DFID Religions and Development Research Consortium (Working

Paper 14). Birmingham, United Kingdom: International Development Department, University of Birmingham.

- Bartelink, Brenda and Marjo Buitelaar, (2006). The Challenges of Incorporating Muslim Women's Views into Development Policy: Analysis of a Dutch Action Research Project in Yemen, *Gender and Development, 14*(3), 351-61.

- Batliwala, S. (1994). *'The Meaning of Women's Empowerment: New Concepts from Action' Population Policies Reconsidered: Health, Empowerment, and Rights*, Harvard School of Public Health, Boston. 127-138.

- Baumann, Max Peter (1989). Listening as an Emic/Etic Process in the Context of Observation and Inquiry. *The World of Music 35*(1):34-62.

- Bebbington, A. (1999). Capitals and Capabilities: A Framework for Analysing Peasant Viability, Rural Livelihoods and Poverty. *World Development, Vol. 27***,** pp. 2021 - 2044.

- Bell, P. M. P. (2007). *Pakistan's Madrassas: Weapons of Mass Instruction?,* Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School.

- Berg, BL. (2001). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. Pearson Education Company.

- Blackburn, James; Chambers, Robert; and Gaventa, John. (2000). Mainstreaming Participation in Development, OED Working Paper Series No.10 (World Bank).

- Blackburn, J. et al. (2002). Mainstreaming Participation in Development. In N. Hanna and R. Picciotto (Eds.), *Making Development Work: Development Learning in a World of Poverty and Wealth.* World Bank Series on Evaluation and Development, vol. 4. London: Transaction.

- Blumberg, R.L. (2005, August). *Women's Economic Empowerment as the "Magic Potion" of Development?*. Paper presented at the 100th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Philadelphia.

- Bord, R. J. and Faulkner, J. E. (1975). Religiosity and Secular Attitudes: The Case of Catholic Pentecostals. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *14* (3): 257-270.

- Boserup, Ester (1970). *Women's Role in Economic Development*, London: Allen and Unwin.

- Bradley, Tamsin. (2011). *Religion and Gender in the Developing World: Faith-based Organizations and Feminism in India*, Library of Development Studies: I. B. Tauris.

- Bradley, Tamsin (2011) The politicisation of Mothering in Hindu Missions, Politics, Religion and Ideology, *12*(2), p. 161-77

- Bradley, Tamsin. (2010). *Religion and Gender in the Developing World. Faith-based Organizations and Feminism in India*. First Edition. London: IB Tauris.

- Bradley, Tamsin. (2006). *Challenging the NGOs: Religion, Western Discourses and Indian Women*. London: IB Tauris.

- Brousseau, E., and Glachant, J.M. (2008). *New Institiutional Economics: A Guidebook.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Bryant, C., & White, L. G. (1982). *Managing Development in the Third World*. CO: Westview Press Boulder.

- Burkey, S. (1993). *People First: A Guide to Self-reliant Participatory Rural Development*. London: Zed Books Ltd.

- Caldwell, J., & Caldwell, P. (1986). *Limiting Population Growth, and the Ford Foundation Contribution*. London: Frances Pinter.

- Chambers, R. (2004). *Ideas for Development: Reflecting Forwards.* IDS Working paper 238. Brighton: IDS.

- Chambers, R. (1997). *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last*. London: Intermediate Technology.

- Chambers, R. (1994). The Origins and Practice of Participatory Rural Appraisal. *World Development, 22*(7), 953-969.

- Chambers, R. (1992). *Rural Appraisal: Rapid, Relaxed and Participatory*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies (U.K).

- Chowdhury, (1991). *Women in Politics: Impact on Women's Participation*, pg 126-144.

- CIDA. (1999). CIDA's Policy on Gender Equity.

- Clark, Janine A. (2004). *Islam, Charity, and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.

- Clarke, M. (2013). Understanding the Nexus between Religion and Development. In Matthew Clarke (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion* (pp.1-13). Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.U.S.A.

- Clarke, M. (2011). Development and Religion, Theory and Practice, Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA:Edward Elgar.

- Clegg, S. R. and Hardy, C. (1996). Representations, In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy and W. R. Nord (Eds.), *Handbook of Organization Studies*, pp. 676–708. London: Sage.

- Collins, P. (1991). *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment.* London/New York: Routledge.

- Corbin, J. M., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*, *13*(1): 3-21.

- Creswell, J.W. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. London: SAGE Publications.

- Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, Third Edition. Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. London: SAGE Publications.

- Daskon, Chandima D. (2008). *Gross National Happiness: A New Paradigm.* Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Gross National Happiness. The Centre of Bhutan Studies, Thimphu.

- David, Tittensor, (with Gerhard Hoffstaedter). (2013). Religion and Development: Prospects and Pitfalls of Faith-Based Organizations, In *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion*, pp.402-412. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, England.

- De Haan, L. J. (2000). Globalization, Localization and Sustainable Livelihood. *Sociologia Ruralis*, *40*: 339–365. doi:10.1111/1467-9523.00152

- Deneulin, S. and Bano, M. (2009). *Religion in Development: Rewriting the Secular Script*, London: Zed Books.

- Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Dube, Musa W. and Musimbi Kanyoro (Eds.) (2004). *Grant Me Justice! HIV/AIDS and Gender Readings of the Bible.* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

- Durkheim, E. (1997). *The Division of Labor in Society*: Simon and Schuster.

- Durkheim, E. ([1915] 1976). *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life.* Translated by J. Swain, London: George Allen & Unwin.

- Dyson, T., & Mick, M. (1983). On Kinship Structure, Female Autonomy and Demographic Behaviour in India. *Population and Development Review*, *9*(1): 35-60.

- Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol.1, p. 451. Macmillian Publishers.

- Engineer, Asghar A. (2001). *Islam, Women and Gender Justice*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi.

- Escobar, A. (2000). Beyond the Search for a Paradigm? Post-Development and Beyond. *Development (Cambridge), 43*(4)**,** pp. 11 -14.

- Escobar, A. (1997). The Making and Unmaking of the Third World, World Through Development. In BAWTREE, R. M. A. V. (Eds.), *The Post Development Reader.* Bangladesh, The University Press.

- Escobar, A. (1997). Anthropology and Development. *International Social Science Journal*, *49*(154), 497-515.

- Escobar, A. (1995). *Encountering Development. The making and Unmaking of the Third World,* Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press.

- Fair, C. Christine (2008). *The Madrassah Challenge, Militancy and Religious Education in Pakistan*, United States Institute of Peace Press.

- Fernando, P., & Porter, G. (2002). *Bridging the Gap Between Gender and Transport, Balancing the Load: Women, Gender and Transport*. London: ZED Books.

- Fernandez, S. (2009). The Crusade over the Bodies of Women, *Patterns of Prejudice*, *43*(3-4), 269-86.

- Foley, Rebecca (2004). Muslim Women's Challenges to Islamic Law: The Case of Malaysia, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, *6*(1), 53-84.

- Foucault, Michel. (1971). Orders of Discourse. *Social Science Information, 10*(2):7-30.

- Friedmann, J. (1992). *Empowerment: The Politics of Alternative Development*. Cambridge: Blackwell Press.

- Galtung, J., O'Brien, P., Preiswerk, R., & Institut universitaire d'études du développement. (1980). *Self-reliance: A strategy for Development*. London: Published for the Institute for Development Studies, Geneva by Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications.

- Glaser, B.G., (1978). *Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the Methodology of Grounded Theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery Of Grounded Theory: Strategies For Qualitative Research.* Publisher: Aldine Transaction.

- Glavovic, B., Scheyvens, R. & Overton, J. (2002). *Waves of Adversity, Layers of Resilience: Exploring the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach*. Paper given at the Development Studies of New Zealand Conference.
  http://devnet.massey,ac.nz/papers/glasovic,%20overton%20scheyvens,pdf.

- Goody, Jack. (2003). Religion and Development: Some Comparative Considerations, *Development 46*(4):64-6., Society for International Development. From http://www.sagepublications.com.
  Doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1011637003046004010.

- Goulet, D. (1980). Development Experts: The One-eyed Giants, *World Development*, *Vol.8*, July–August, pp. 481-489.

- Harvey, D. (2005). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford, U.K: Oxford University Press.

- Harvey, D. (2000). *Spaces of Hope*. University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, California.

- Harvey, G. (Eds.) (2000), Indigenous Religions- A Companion, London: Cassell.

- Hashemi, S., Schuler, M., & Riley, A. (1996). Rural Credit and Women's Empower in Bangladesh. *World Development, 24*(4): 635-653.

- Hayami, Y. (2003). From the Washington Consensus to the Post-Washington Consensus:- Retrospect and Prospect. *Asian Development Review*, *20*(2), 40-65.

- Hedman, Birgitta, Francesca Perucci and Pehr Sundstrom (1996). Gender Issues. In *Engendering Statistics: A Tool for Change* (pp.13-15), Stockholm and Orebro: Statistics Sweden.

- Heise Lori L, Raikes Alanagh, Watts Charlotte H, Zwi Anthony B. (1994). Violence Against Women: A Neglected Public Health Issue in Less Developed Countries. *Social Science & Medicine*, *39*(9), pp.1165–1179.

- Helie, Anissa (2004). Holy Hatred, *Reproductive Health Matters*, *12*(23), pp.120-24.

- Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Nagy and Leavy, Patricia (2006). *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

- Hunter, D. and Whitten, P. (1976). *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. Harper and Row. New York.

- International Crisis Group (ICG). 2002. *Pakistan: Madrasas, Extremism, and the Military*. ICG Asia Report 36, 'Executive Summary', pp. 1–3. Islamabad/Brussels.

- Iqtidar, Humeira. (2008). *The Changing Role of 'Muslim Fundamentalists'*, Doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge, UK.

- Jackson, Cecile, and Pearson, Ruth. (1998). *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender Analysis and Policy*, Routledge, London.

- Jamal, Amina (2005). Feminist Selves and Feminism's Others: Feminist Representations of Jamaat-e-Islami Women in Pakistan, *Feminist Review*, *81*(1), 52-73.

- Jeffry Jacob, Osang. (2010). *Religious Values, Beliefs and Economic Development*, Department of Business and Economics, Bethel University.

- Jejeebhoy, S. J. (1995). *Women's Education, Autonomy and Reproductive Behaviour: Experiences from Developing Countries'*, International Studies in Demography, IUSSP, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

- Kabeer, N. (2001). *"Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment"*. In Discussing Women's Empowerment-Theory and Practice. Sida Studies No. 3. Novum Grafiska AB: Stockholm.

- Kabeer, N. (1999). *The Conditions and Consequences of Choice: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment*. UNRISD Discussion Paper No. 108. Switzerland: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

- Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. *Development and Change*, *30*(3), 435-464.

- Kabeer, N. (1994). *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*. New Delhi.

- Kalmbach, Hilary (2012). *Islamic Authority and Study of Female Religious Leaders*, pg. 1-27.

- Kalu, O.U. (2003). Safiyya and Adamah: Punishing Adultery with Sharia Stones in Twenty-first –century, *Nigeria African Affairs*, *102*(408), 389-408.

- Kelly, R. M. & Ronan, B. (1987). Subjective Culture and Patriotism: Gender, Ethnic and Class Differences among High School Students. *Political Psychology*, *8*(4): 525-546.

- Khalid, Zaheer. (2011). Magic and Superstition an Islamic Perspective. *The Express Tribune Magazine,* September 25- October 1, 34-36.

- Khan, H. A. (2004). *Development as Freedom*. CIRJE Discussion Paper No.F-257, Graduate School of Economics, University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan.

- Khan, A. H., & Khan, A. H. (1996). *Orangi Pilot Project: Reminiscences and Reflections*: Oxford University Press, Karachi.

- Khokhar, M., (2007). *Reforming Militant Madrassas in Pakistan*. Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, 30, 353-365. doi:10.1080/10576100600932751.

- Korten, D. C., and G. Carner, (1984). Reorienting Bureaucracies to Serve People: Two Experiences from the Philippines. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies, Vol. 5*, No. 1, pp. 7-24.

- Landes, D., (2000). Culture Makes Almost All the Difference. In Lawrence H. and Samuel P. Huntington (Eds.), *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*. Basic Books, New York.

- Lett, J. (1990). Emics and Etics: Notes on the Epistemology of Anthropology. In T.N. Headland, K.L. Pike, & M. Harris (Eds.), *Emics and Etics: The Insider/Outsider Debate.* Frontiers of Anthropology, vol. 7. Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publications.

- Levinson, D. (1989). *Violence in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

- Lewin, K. (2000, April). *Mapping Science Education Policy in Developing Countries.* Paper prepeared for the workshop, the Seconday Science Education for Development, oganized by the Education Group. World Bank, Human Development Network. Retrieved from (http://www1.worldbank.org/education/scied/Training/training.htm).

- Li X., Gan C., and Hu B., (2011). The Impact of Microcredit on Women's Empowerment: Evidence from China. *Journal of Chinese Economic and Business Studies, Vol. 9*, Issue. 3, pages 239-261.

- Lopez-Claros, A., and Zahidi, S. (2005). *Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap*. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

- Mahmood, S. (2005). *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Mahmood, S. (2001). Feminist Theory, Embodiment and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival. In *Cultural Anthropology 16*(2) pp. 202-236.

- Malhotra, A., & Mather, M. (1997). Do Schooling and Work Empower Women in Developing Countries? Gender and Domestic Decisions in Sri Lanka. *Sociological Forum*, *12*(4): 600-630.

- Malhotra Anju, & Schuler Sidney Ruth. (2005). Women's Empowerment as a Variable in International Development. In Narayan Deepa., (Eds.), *Measuring Empowerment: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

- Malik, Jamal. (1996). *Colonialization of Islam: Dissolution of Traditional Institutions in Pakistan.* New Delhi: Manohar Publishers.

- Marquette, H. (2010). *Whither Morality? Finding God in the Fight against Corruption*, Working Paper No.41 from the Religions and Development Research Programme at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

- Marsden, Magnus (2010). *Islam and Society in Pakistan, Anthropological Perspectives.* Oxford University Press.

- Maslow. A.H. (1968). *Towards a Psychology of Being*, (second edition), Princeton.

- Metanexus Institute. (2006). Metanexus Spiritual Capital Research Program. Retrieved December 1, 2006, from http://www.metanexus.net/spiritual_capital/.

- Metcalf, Barbara D., trans., (1990). *Perfecting Women, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi's Bahishti Zewar*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Metcalf, Barbara D., (1982). *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Molyneux, Maxine (1985). Mobilization Without Emancipation? Women's Interests, States and Revolution in Nicaragua, *Feminist Studies*, *2*(2), 227-54.

- Morse, J. (2001). Situating Grounded Theory within Qualitative Inquiry. In R. Schreiber & P. N. Stern (Eds.), *Using Grounded Theory in Nursing* (pp. 1-16). New York: Springer.

- Moser, C., (1993). *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*, London: Routledge.

- Moser, C., (1989). Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs. *World Development*, *17*(11), 1799-1825.

- Nanji, A. A. (Ed.). (1996). *The Muslim Almanac*. New York, NY: Gale Research.

- Narayan, D., R. Patel, K. Schafft, A. Rademacher and S. Koch- Schulte. (2000). *Voices of the Poor: Can Anyone Hear Us?* Washington, D.C: World Bank and Oxford University Press.

- Naz, Aliya. (1997). *Health Related Beliefs in a Paharee Village Kia*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Department of Anthropology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

- Nettl, Bruno. (1983). *The Study of Ethnomusicology. Twenty-Nine Issues and Goncep/s.* Urbana, Chicago, Landon: University of Illinois Press.

- Nisar, Muhammad A., (2010). Education, Religion and the Creation of Subject: Different Educational Systems of Pakistan. *Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies, 2*(1): 46-61.

- Nizami, Farhan A. (1983). *Madrasahs, Scholars, Saints: Muslim Response to the British Presence in Delhi and Upper Doab 1803–1857*. (Unpublished D.Phil. dissertation: Oxford University).

- North, Douglass. (1991). Institutions, *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 5(1):97–112.

- North, Douglass. (1990). *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, Cambridge University Press.

- Nussbaum, M. C. (2001). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach* (Vol. 3): Cambridge University Press.

- Nussbaum, M. C. (1987, December). *Nature, Function, and Capability: Aristotle on Political Distribution*: World Institute for Development Economics Research of the United Nations (WIDER Working papers (1986-2000) 1987/031), University of Helsinki, Finland.

- Nye Jr, Joseph S., (1988). Neorealism and Neoliberalism. *World Politics. A Quarterly Journal of International Relations*, Vol. *40*(2), pp. 235-251.

- Olsson, E. J., & Jönsson, M. L. (2011). Kinds of Learning and the Likelihood of Future True Beliefs: Reply to Jäger on Reliabilism and the Value Problem. *Theoria*, *77*(3), 214-222.

- Papanek, Hanna. (1971). Purdah in Pakistan: Seclusion and Modern Occupations for Women . In: *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *33*(3), pp.517-530.

- Parsons, T., and Jones, I. (1960). *Structure and Process in Modern Societies* (Vol.3). New York: Free Press.

- Pearson, Ruth. (2000). Rethinking Gender Matters in Development. In Tim Allen and Alan Thomas (Eds.), *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century* (pp.383-402). Oxford: The Open University in Association with Oxford University Press.

- Pelto, Pertti J. and Pelto, Gretel H. (1978). *Anthropological Research, the Structure of Inquiry*, Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Pena, Milagros (2007). *Latina Activists Across Borders: Women's Grassroots Organizing in Mexico and Texas*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- Pena, Milagros (1995). Christian Women in Latin America: Other Voices, Other Visions, *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion, 11*(1), 81-94.

- Phiri, Isabel Apawo and Sarojini Nadar (2006). *African Women, Religion and Health: Essays in Honor of Mercy Amba Ewudziwa Oduyoye* (*Women from the Margins*), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

- Pomerantz, James R. (2003). Perception: Overview. *Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science*, vol. 3, p. 527-537.

- Preiswerk, R. (1980). Sources of Resisting to Local Self-Reliance. In J. Galtung et al. (Eds.), *Self-Reliance: A Strategy for Development.* London: Bogle L' Ouverture Publications.

- Rahman, A. (1986). *Role of Muslim Women in Society*, (first edition) London, Seerah Foundation.

- Rahman, T. (2005). Passports to Privilege: The English Medium Schools in Pakistan. *Peace and Democracy in South Asia, 1*(1), 24-44.

- Rahman, T. (2004). *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan.* Karachi, Oxford University Press.

- Rai, Shirin M., Parpart, J. & Staudt, K., (2007, May). *(Re)defining Empowerment, Measuring Survival.* Paper presented at the workshop on 'Empowerment: Obstacles, Flaws, Achievements' Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.

- Rao, Vijayendra and Michael Walton (Eds.), (2004). *Culture and Public Action*. Stanford University Press.

- Rappaport J. (1987). Terms of Empowerment/Exemplars of Prevention: Toward a Theory for Community Psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, April *15*(2):121-48.

- Rathgeber, E.M. (1990). WID, WAD, GAD: Trends in Research and Practice. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. *24*, pp. 489-502.

- Rawi, Mariam (2004). Betrayal, *Reproductive Health Matters*, *12*(23), 116-19.

- Reed, M. (1996). Organisational Theorising: A Historically Contested Terrain. In S. Clegg, C. Hardy and W. Nord (Eds.), Handbook of Organisational Studies, London: Sage.

- Reetz, Dietrich. (2009). *From Madrassa to University - The Challenges and Formats of Islamic Education.* The Sage Handbook of Islamic Studies.

- Rehman, Javaid (with Ayesha Shahid), (2009). *Sharia and Application of Human Rights Norms of Equality and Non Discrimination in the Family*: *A Case Study of Family Law in Pakistan*. German Association of Arabic and Islamic Law, (Jubilee Edition), [Gesellschaft für Arabisches und Islamisches Recht] (Peter Lang Publishing Group, New York, Berlin, Oxford).

- Rehman, Tariq. (2002). Education in Pakistan: A Survey. *Pakistan Journal of History & Culture Vol. XXXIII*: No. 2 (July-December 2002), pp.19-42. (Also in Discussion Paper-2, 2003 SPO, Islamabad as Omar Asghar Khan Memorial Lecture. www.SPOPK.org).

- Riaz, Ali. (2008). *Faithful Education: Madrassahs in South Asia*: Rutgers University Press.

- Ritchie, Jane and Lewis, Jane. (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice: A guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. SAGE Publications.

- Robeyns, I. (2006). Three Models of Education Rights, Capabilities and Human Capital. *Theory and Research in Education, 4*(1), 69-84.

- Robinson, F., (2007). *Islam, South Asia and the West*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

- Robinson, Francis. (2001). *The Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia,* London: Hurst & Co. Ltd.

- Ronnow, Karin. (2009). Documenting CAI's Work. *Journey of Hope*, *Vol. 3*. Central Asia Institute. Bozeman: Montana.

- Roodt, M. (2001). Participation, Civil Society, and Development, In *Development Theory, Policy and Practice,* edited by JK Coetzee, J Graaff , F Hendricks & G Wood. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

- Rosenthal, Franz. (2007). *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*. Brill Classics in Islam, Volume 2. Leiden: Brill.

- Rosly, Dahlia and Rashid, A.A. (2012, April). *Incorporating Well-being into Sustainable Development Indicators Framework.* Paper presented at 43rd Annual Conference of the Urban Affairs Association. San Francisco, California, United States of America.

- Rostow, W.W. (1990). *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-communist Manifesto.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Rostow, W.W. (1960). *The Process of Economic Growth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Rowlands, J. (1998). A Word of the Times, but What Does it Mean? Empowerment in the Discourse and Practice of Development. In Haleh Afshar (Eds.), *Women and Empowerment: Illustrations of the Third World* (pp.11-34). Macmillan: Basingstoke.

- Rowlands, J. (1997). *Questioning Empowerment*. Oxford: Oxfam Publications.

- Rowlands, J. (1995). Empowerment Examined. *Development in Practice 5*(2), 101-7.

- Russell, Bernard H. (2006). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

- Russell, Bernard H. (1994). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Fourth Edition, Sage Publications Limited.

- Schneebaum, A., Mader, K. (2013). *The Gendered Nature of Intra-Household Decision Making in and across Europe*. Department of Economics Working Paper Series, 157. WU Vienna University of Economics and Business, Vienna.

- Schwandt, Thomas. (2015). *The SAGE Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry*. 4th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Seguino, Stephanie (2011). Help or Hindrance? Religion's Impact on Gender Inequality, *World Development*, *39*(8), 1308-21.

- Sekaran, U. (2003). *Research Methods for Business, A Skill Building Approach*, 4th Edition, John Wiley and Sons.

- Sen, A. (1999a). *Commodities and Capabilities*. OUP Catalogue.

- Sen, A. (1999b). *Development as Freedom*: Oxford University Press.

- Sen, A. (1995). Gender Inequality and Theories of Justice. In M. Nussbaum and J. Glover (Eds.), *Women, Culture, and Development*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Sen, A. (1990). More Than 100 Million Women are Missing. *New York Review of Books, 37*(20). Available at: http://ucatlas.ucsc.edu/gender/gratio.html.

- Sen, A., & Nussbaum, M. (1993). Capability and Well-being. *The Quality of Life, 1*(9): 30-54.

- Siddique, Q. (2009). *Weapons of Mass Instruction? A preliminary Exploration of the Link between Madrassas in Pakistan and Militancy*. Oslo, Norway: Norwegian Defense Research Establishment.

- Sikand, Yoginder (2006). *Bastions of the Believers. Madrasas and Islamic Education in India.* New Delhi: Penguin Global.

- Sikand, Yoginder (2001). The Indian State and the Madrassa, in *Himal*. From:www//:himalmag.com

- Sikand, Yoginder (1999). Women and the Tablighi Jamaat, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, *10* (1): 41-52.

- Singer, Peter W. (2001, November). *Pakistan's Madrasahs: Ensuring a System of Education Not Jihad.* (Brooking Institute: Analysis Paper No. 14).

- Sleboda, Jennifer (2001). Islam and Women's Rights Advocacy in Malaysia, *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, *7*(2), 94-136.

- Soares, Benjamin F. (2006). Islam in Mali in the Neoliberal Era, *African Affairs*, *105*(418), 77-95.

- Sookhdeo, Rosemary (2008 edition). *Secrets Behind the Burqa*, McLean,VA:Isaac Publishing.

- Stiglitz, J. E. (2002). Towards a New Paradigm for Development: Strategies, Policies and Processes. *Applied Econometrics and International Development, 2*(1):116-122.

- Stiglitz, J. E. (1999). More Instruments and Broader Goals: Moving Toward the Post-washington Consensus. *Revista de Economia Politica*, *19*(1), 94-120.

- Stiglitz, J. E. (1998, October). *Towards a New Paradigm for Development*. 9th Raul Prebisch Lecture presented at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Geneva.

- Strauss A., & Corbin J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. SAGE Publications.

- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). *Grounded Theory Methodology: An Overview. Handbook of Qualitative Research*, pp. 273-285. London, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons and Evaluative Criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*, *13*(1), 3-21.

- Swarup, Hem Lata & Sarojini (1991). *Women, Politics and Religion*. Etawah: A.C. Brothers, India.

- Tadros, Mariz (2011). Introduction: Gender, Rights and Religion at the Crossroads, *IDS Bulletin, 42*(1), 1-9.

- Tadros, Mariz (2010). *Faith-based Organizations and Service Delivery: Some Gender Conundrums*, UNRISD, Gender and Development Programme Paper No.11.

- Talat, Kausar. (2013). *Degenerated Madrassas and Leadership Crisis in South Asia a Critical Study of Madrassas in Pakistan*, University of Phoenix, Published by ProQuest LLC.

- Talbani, Aziz. (1996). Pedagogy, Power, and Discourse: Transformation of Islamic Education. *Comparative Education Review, 40*(1): 66-82.

- Tomalin, E. (2013). *Religions and Development.* London and New York: Routledge.

- Tomalin, E. (2013). Gender, Religion and Development. In Matthew Clarke (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion* (pp.183-200). Edwin Elgar Publishing, Inc.U.S.A.

- Thomas, Scott M. (2005). *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-first Century*. New York/ Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Todaro, M.P., & Smith, S.C. (2009). *Economic Development.* England: Pearson Education Ltd.

- Ul Haq, M. (1996). Reflections on Human Development. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- United Nations Population Information Network (UNPIN). (1995). *Guidelines on Women's Empowerment* in Guidelines on Women's Empowerement for the United Nations Resident Coordinator System. (Document prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action). New York, U.S.A.

- Visvanathan, N., Duggan, L., Weigersma, N., and Nisonoff, L., (2011). *The Women, Gender and Development Reader*, Fernwood Publishing Ltd, Novia Scotia, Canada.

- Warren, N. M. (2009). *Madrassa Education in Pakistan: Assisting the Taliban's Resurgence* (Pell Scholars and Senior Theses). Paper 44. Retrieved from: http://escholar.salve.edu/pell_theses/44 on 26 April 2011.

- Weber, M. ([1904] 1930), *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, London: Butler and Tanner.

- Williams, S. (ed.) with Seed, J. & Mwau, A. (1994). *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual.* Oxford: Oxfam.

- Williamson, J. (2009). A Short History of the Washington Consensus, *Law and Business Review of the Americas*, *15*(7), pp.7-24.

- Williamson, J. (2000). What Should the World Bank Think about the Washington Consensus? *World Bank Research Observer*, *15*(2), 251-264.

- World Bank. (2005). *World Development Report: A Better Investment Climate for Everyone.* World Bank.
  https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5987

- World Bank. (1996). The World Bank Participation Sourcebook. Washington: World Bank.

- World Bank. (1993). *Investing in Health.* (World Bank Development Report). New York: Oxford University Press.

- Zaman, Mohammad Qasim. (2002). *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Zaman, Mohammad Qasim. (1999). Religious Education and the Rhetoric of Reform: The Madrasa in British India and Pakistan. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *41*(2), 294-323.

- Zia, Afiya Shehrbano. (2009). The Reinvention of Feminism in Pakistan, *Feminist Review*, *Issue 91*(1), pp.29-46. South Asian Feminisms; Negotiating New Terrains, Editors, Firdous Azim, Nivedita Menon and Dina M Siddiqi, Palgrave Macmillan, London, UK.

- Zia, Afiya Shehrbano. (2009). Faith-Based Politics, Enlightened Moderation and the Pakistani Women's Movement. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, *11*(1), 225-245.
  Available at: http://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol11/iss1/15