

WOMEN'S VOICE AND LEADERSHIP

PAKISTAN

"GENDER AND POWER IN DIGITAL SPACES"

Change or a Different Shade

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“Gender and Power in Digital Spaces” Change or a Different Shade

The increasing interaction among the family members, relatives, fellows, and colleagues has made life different, easy, or difficult depending on the usage and understanding among the interacting members. This online usage of digital space has positive and negative consequences among the members inside and outside the families. The big city of Rawalpindi, Pakistan is a mix of cultures and communities, it is to understand how use of smartphones and their types of applications by different age group, gender, has impacted the family relations as well as its consequences on them. Moreover, how these new digital spaces have produced, reproduced, or challenged existing gender norms

and the presence of power dynamics during online transformation within the families. Rawalpindi is a Municipal Corporation city and consists of 46 Union Councils (UC). The average population of one UC is approximately 25000 to 30000 adult population. UC 38 which is named as Ganj mandi is selected because of its unique location in the city as Ganj Mandi is residential as well as busiest business center for the whole city. It consisted of large number of mohallas like Bagh Sardar, Kashmir Colony, Warkshapi Mollaha, Akal Garh Mollaha, Choungi Number 3, Raja Bazar, Nawalti Cinema, etc. People living in this area have settled belonging to all the ethnic backgrounds from all over Pakistan.

Methodology:

Mix method was used,

- Qualitative through Exploratory interviews with semi structured questions to get the detailed and thick information conducted with 300 families (4 members with equal distribution of gender and young and above 40 years) total of 1200 adults in UC 38 Ganj Mandi, Rawalpindi.
- Quantitative through Survey Research method for use of smartphone and applications used for these phones from 4 members of each family.

Findings:

- There is no gender difference in the access to smartphone but younger has more access than older. There is disparity in ownership of smartphone as of age related and gender.
- The young men as compared to young girls use more apps like food and travelling while the old men as compared to old women more use these apps to fulfil their basic needs.
- There are no gender and age differences in communicating through WhatsApp. The results indicate that Facebook is more popular among young and older men as compared to younger and older women while the results show the popularity of Instagram among younger and older women as compared to younger and older men. The TikTok is more popular among young men as compared to young women and older men and women.

- Show slightly gender difference in using entertainment, gaming, and watching movies apps between younger and older men as compared to younger and older women.
- Shopping applications are more used by the women as compared to men.
- More family relations are affected due to digital technologies. The youth is not having enough bonding with their families.
- Digital technology has positive effect on women for online business and other facilities and made them independent.

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