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### Gender Socialization and Women's Political Participation: Family Concerns and Political Choices

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#### Abstract



*Societal expectations and cultural norms shape women's political attitudes and participation. It has been argued that the concerns of families influence the conventional and nonconventional participation of women in political activities in Pakistan. Highly educated and independent women are socialized to make independent political choices. This paper aims to document the experiences of highly educated employed women in exercising their political rights. However, their participation in specific activities, such as demonstrations and election campaigns, is negotiated within the family. The data highlights that the participants were empowered to vote independently. Nevertheless, women's ability to participate in demonstrations depends on family security concerns. Data for this paper were drawn from a mixed method approach, in-depth interviews conducted with thirty highly qualified women working in Pakistan's public universities. The survey was conducted on 400 female students studying in different public sector universities in Pakistan. The paper argues that gender socialization plays a role in making independent political choices.*

**Keywords:** Political Choices, Confidence, Security concerns, Educated working women, Socialization

#### Introduction

Political participation enables people to engage in political spheres. It is a platform for people to express their standpoint and exercise pressure "on the state and non-state institutions" (Becker & Jean-Aimé, 2008). Thus, political participation is primarily defined as citizens' activities influencing political decision-making (Van Deth, 2001). Additionally, political participation can be specified as deep-seated values of citizens and how these values serve as social welfare. The fundamental objective of political participation is to help citizens to express their opinions in a democratic state. Political participation includes all the activities that are aspired by citizens to influence the policies of the government (Milbrath & Goel, 1978). Political participation comprises all the activities carried out by the people to select public officials and observe their decisions (Kaase & Marsh, 1979). The purpose of political activities is to affect the systematic patterns of social behaviour (Norris, 1997).

Political participation of all citizens is crucial for the democratic process. However, in Pakistan, women face many problems regarding political participation. The socioeconomic factors are considered barriers to their political advancement (Zaheer, 2014). Many other socio-cultural barriers restrict women's participation in the politics of Pakistan. Moreover, gender socialization is the central organizing principle in Pakistani society. The patriarchal culture assumes women are unsuitable for politics (Bari, 2000) (Ullah, 2023).

Studies on women and gender socialization show that women are socialized to be more passive, caring, and sensitive (Eagly & Wood 1999). (Koenig & Ristikari 2011) (Leaper, 2002) (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). On the other hand, men are trained to be more authoritative, self-reliant, and leadership-oriented. Coffe and Bolzendahl (2010) argue that most obstacles to women's political participation are embedded in the gender socialization process. The different Socialization of men and women is a significant obstacle that hampers women's involvement in political activities (Kibanja, 2006). Stacey and Price argue that women's barriers to contemporary political achievement are

internalized and exist in the social structure. They also consider that gendered Socialisation restricts women from actively participating in politics (Stacey & Price, 1981).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theory of gender socialization suggests that learning societal norms and expectations regarding gender roles begins at a young age and continues throughout an individual's life. The socialization theory of political behaviour suggests that an individual's political beliefs and behaviours are shaped by the socialization process they experience. Societal expectations regarding gender roles can shape the political participation of individuals. The socialization process can influence women's political participation in various ways. Women may be socialized to believe that politics is traditionally male-dominated and that they do not belong or have a lesser role in political processes. This belief can result from societal gender stereotypes associating leadership and political power with masculinity. Consequently, women may internalize these beliefs and perceive political participation outside their sphere of influence or capability. This belief of women leads to lower rates of political engagement among women, as they may feel discouraged or excluded from participating in political activities (Eagly & Wood, 1999) (Galston, 2004) (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

### **Objective of Study**

This research study investigates how gender socialization influences the political participation of educated women residing in urban areas of Pakistan. The study comprehensively explains how gender socialization processes shape this specific group of women's political engagement within Pakistan's urban settings.

### **Materials and Methods**

Several studies have explored the effects of gender socialization on women's political participation, examining how societal expectations and cultural norms shape women's political attitudes and behaviours. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) conducted a comprehensive study of political participation in the United States, analyzing the factors influencing individuals' political engagement. The authors found that women's political participation is significantly affected by their socialization experiences, upbringing, education, and exposure to political information. Specifically, women who had more opportunities to learn about politics and participate in political activities during their socialization process were more likely to engage in political activities as adults (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

In the present research, both positivism (quantitative) and interpretivism (qualitative) paradigms were used. A quantitative research approach was employed to investigate the relationship between gender socialization and the political participation of young female university students in Pakistan. The present study utilized a cross-sectional survey research method, following a quantitative research approach. Data were collected from 400 respondents, who were selected using a random sampling technique. The survey questionnaire was designed to collect quantitative data on variables of gender socialization and political participation. The data collected were analyzed using statistical techniques, including descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, to draw conclusions and make generalizations about the population under study.

The researcher has also adopted a qualitative research methodology to examine the impact of gender socialization and political participation in Pakistan. Empirical materials for this study have been collected in qualitative in-depth interviews with 30 highly educated women working in different Universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The reason for choosing qualitative research was to explore the detailed standpoint of women regarding their Socialization and political participation through in-depth interviews.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Political Participation of Educated Women**

**Table 1 Frequency distribution of respondents regarding political participation N= 400**

Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Sd	Mod
	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)	f(%)		
I am registered as a voter	163	149	62	26	3.12	0.90	4.00
	(40.8)	(37.3)	(15.5)	(6.5)			

I cast a vote in the last election of	46	40	191	123	2.02	0.93	2.00
2018	(11.5)	(1.0)	(47.8)	(30.8)			
Casting to a political party of my	231	122	31	16	3.42	0.80	4.00
own choice is my constitutional	(57.8)	(30.5)	(7.8)	(4.0)			
right							
I am a member of a political party	24	30	209	137	1.85	0.79	2.00
	(6.0)	(7.5)	(52.3)	(34.3)			
I take part in political campaign	28	45	201	126	1.94	0.84	2.00
	(7.0)	(11.3)	(50.3)	(31.5)			
I have organized/participated in	29	58	192	121	1.99	0.86	2.00
any demonstration	(7.3)	(14.5)	(48.0)	(30.3)			
I have donated money to a political	36	54	187	123	2.01	0.89	2.00
candidate	(9.0)	(13.5)	(46.8)	(30.8)			
I have circulated a petition	21	47	201	131	1.90	0.80	2.00
	(5.3)	(11.8)	(50.3)	(32.8)			

**Note** f=number of female students, %=percentage

SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

The table demonstrates that 78.1% of participants stated they were registered to vote, and 78.6% claimed they had not voted in the most recent 2018 election. Furthermore, the data depicts that 88.3% of respondents stated that it is their constitutional right to vote for the political party of their choice. However, 13.5% of interviewees indicated they were members of some political party, and 18.3% indicated they participated in political campaigns. Moreover, data shows that 21.8% of participants point out that they have organized/participated in any demonstration, while 22.5% of participants stated that they had donated money to a political candidate. Only 17.1% of participants indicated that they had circulated a petition. Overall, the results suggest that, although a significant majority of the respondents are registered voters and believe it is their constitutional right to vote for the political party of their choice. However, the level of conventional political participation among respondents is relatively low. A relatively low percentage of respondents indicated low conventional political participation. Very few respondents indicated that they are political party members, participated in political campaigns, organized/participated in demonstrations, donated money to a political candidate, or circulated a petition.

The findings from the quantitative study, where few respondents indicated their involvement in political party membership, political campaigns, demonstrations, donations to candidates, or circulating petitions, suggest a lower level of active political participation among the surveyed women. As the qualitative study participants highlighted, these findings align with women's challenges and barriers in Pakistan's political landscape. The qualitative study reveals that security concerns are a significant deterrent for women to engage in political activities actively. Given the prevalence of violence and harassment in politics, women fear for their safety and the safety of their families, leading them to refrain from joining political parties or participating in public demonstrations. The qualitative study participants mentioned male dominance within political parties as a discouraging factor. The patriarchal norms often marginalize women's voices and limit their opportunities for leadership positions and decision-making roles within political parties. The lack of representation and influence can deter women from seeking party membership. Another reason the qualitative study participants highlighted is the scarcity of women in leadership positions within

political parties. The underrepresentation of women in higher-ranking roles reinforces the perception that women's perspectives and concerns may not be adequately addressed within party structures. In the in-depth interviews and survey, all the women expressed the importance of voter registration and the majority casted vote in the last elections. They emphasized their recognition of voting as a fundamental right and their active engagement in exercising it. It indicates a positive attitude towards political participation and the belief that individual votes can make a difference in shaping the democratic process.

**Table 2** Frequency distribution of respondents regarding gender socialization and political participation

Gender Socialization	participation				Mean	S.Dev	Mode
	SA	A	D	SD			
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)			
I am socialized to be confident to vote independently.	57 (14.3)	153 (38.3)	142 (35.5)	48 (12.0)	2.55	0.88	3.00
I am socialized to be confident to participate in election campaigns.	48 (12.0)	145 (36.3)	152 (38.0)	55 (13.8)	2.47	0.87	2.00
I am socialized to remain away from participating in political activities (demonstrations/election campaigns)	49 (12.3)	137 (34.3)	143 (35.8)	71 (17.8)	2.41	0.91	2.00
I am socialized to be confident in taking part in political discussions	50 (12.5)	127 (32.8)	152 (38.0)	71 (17.8)	2.39	0.91	2.00
I am socialized to be confident in participating in demonstrations	82 (20.5)	144 (36.0)	113 (28.3)	61 (15.3)	2.62	0.97	3.00
I am socialized to prefer gender mix political gatherings.	83 (20.8)	119 (29.8)	115 (28.8)	83 (20.8)	2.51	1.04	3.00

**Note** f=number of female students, %=percentage

**SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree**

This table presents the survey results about gender socialization concerning political participation. Most respondents, 52.6 %, agreed that they are socialized to be confident to vote independently. The finding aligns with the trend of increasing gender equality and women's empowerment in urban areas, particularly regarding access to education and political participation. In many urban areas, there has been an increase in educational opportunities for women, which may have contributed to the finding that many respondents felt socialized to be confident about voting independently. Additionally, as more women get higher education, they may have greater chances to make their own political choices (Kabber, 1999) (Boserup, 1970). The qualitative findings also support the quantitative findings that educated women in urban areas are socialized in a way that promotes confidence and encourages them to participate in all areas of life.

The study's findings suggest a trend toward increasing gender equality and women's empowerment in urban areas, and this does not necessarily reflect the experiences of all sampled women. Almost 48% of women respondents disagreed with the statement suggesting that many women in urban areas still face political participation and decision-making barriers. Additionally, the study sample is selected from urban areas. However, many families have migrated from rural to urban areas and follow their traditional cultural practices. These practices can include beliefs and attitudes limiting women's political participation and decision-making opportunities. For example, some families may discourage their daughters from pursuing education or engaging in political activities, believing these activities are inappropriate for women. Such attitudes and beliefs can persist even when families move to urban areas (Takemoto, 2009).

48.3% of the respondents agreed with the statement, "I am socialized to be confident to participate in election campaigns," and 51.7% indicated disagreement. 46.6% of respondents agreed with the statement, "I am socialized to remain away from participating in political activities (demonstrations/election campaigns)," suggesting that women in urban areas may be socialized to avoid political activities. Cultural beliefs and practices discourage women's political participation or the perception that political activities are unsafe for women. The in-depth interviews also supported the quantitative findings that most women participants did not participate in demonstrations and election campaigns. Only a few women with influential political backgrounds participated in such gatherings. The qualitative study participants highlighted concerns about safety and security as reasons for not attending political demonstrations or rallies. The reservations expressed by their families regarding activities like attending demonstrations or going alone to polling stations to cast votes reflect the significant impact of security concerns on women's political engagement in Pakistan. Such security concerns and family reservations can profoundly impact women's ability to exercise their political rights and actively participate in political events.

Previous research has also highlighted that cultural norms and gender roles often discourage women from participating in political activities, such as attending demonstrations and political rallies. Women who did participate faced various challenges, including threats, violence, and harassment (Nasir & Munir, 2018) (Kumar, 2017).

The finding that over half of the respondents (52.8%) agreed that they are socialized to be confident in participating in political discussions indicates that many women in urban areas feel empowered to engage in political discussions. Qualitative interviews also support the finding, and previous studies have also shown a positive correlation between women's participation in political discussions and their political participation. For example, a study by Karami and Lavasani (2017) found that women more engaged in political discussions had higher levels of political efficacy, knowledge, and participation. Similarly, a study by Lijphart and Waisman (2016) found that women's participation in political discussions was positively associated with their participation in other political activities, such as voting and contacting politicians.

50 % of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am socialized to prefer gender mix political gatherings," suggesting that there may be a cultural expectation or norm in their community that women should participate in mixed-gender political settings. This finding could be seen as an indicator of gender equality in political participation, as it suggests that women are being encouraged to participate in a broader range of political activities. The qualitative findings also support the quantitative findings; the interview participants explained that families allowed them to pursue higher education and participate in the labour force. They were also socialized to avoid mingling with men and attending gatherings where interaction with men was inevitable.

Furthermore, 50 % of women showed their preference for gender-mixed gatherings. As sampled, women already studying in gender-mixed universities could contribute to their positive attitude towards gender-mixed political gatherings. The finding is also supported by 13 female participants of in-depth interviews who explained their reasons for preferring gender mix gatherings. They explained that they prefer and encourage gender-mixed gatherings where the perspectives of both males and females can be heard and where males can listen to females' points of view.

Studies have shown that education can be crucial in empowering women to participate in politics and changing cultural norms (Inglehart & Norris, 2003) (Chen, 2017) (Sim & Mokre, 2013). The presence of women in mixed-gender political settings can positively impact their political efficacy and participation (Norris, 2004). In addition, gender-segregated political spaces can create barriers to women's political participation (Lijphart & Waisman, 2016).

#### **Association between Gender Socialization and Political Participation of Women**

Gender socialization can also significantly affect women's confidence levels regarding political participation. Women are often socialized to believe that politics is a masculine domain and that they are less qualified or capable than men to participate in political activities, which lowers women's political ambition and confidence (Schwartz, 2006). Research has shown that gender socialization can negatively affect women's political participation and confidence. Lawless and Fox (2010) found that women were less likely than men to participate in political activities, even with the same qualifications and experience. The authors suggest this may be due to gender socialization, which teaches women to be less self-promoting and submissive than men (Lawless & Fox 2010).

**Table 3: Correlation between Gender Socialisation and Political Participation**

Correlation Matrix

		PP		GS
Political Participation	Pearson's r	—		
	p-value	—		
Gender Socialization	Pearson's r	-0.253	***	—
	p-value	< .001		—

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

The matrix shows the correlation coefficients between "gender socialization" and "political participation." Pearson's r values indicate the strength and direction of the correlation between these variables. According to the matrix, Pearson's r value between "gender socialization" and "political participation" is -0.253, which suggests a weak negative correlation between these variables.

The use of in-depth interviews in the study helped provide additional insights into the experiences and perspectives of educated women, which can help understand the cultural and social context in which political participation occurs. The mixed-method approach allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between gender socialization and political participation among young, educated women.

According to the qualitative part of the study, the in-depth interviews revealed that the women did not feel they were socialized to be submissive and passive compared to males to participate in political activities. The relationship between gender socialization and political participation may vary based on the context and the demographic characteristics of the women in question. In this case, the women who participated in the qualitative study were highly educated and independent. They did not feel they were socialized to be shy or submissive regarding their political participation. However, they explained that the political system of Pakistan is highly male-dominated and does not support women's involvement in politics. They are socialized to avoid political demonstrations and protests due to violence, intimidation, and security threats. In addition, they have been exposed to different socialization messages emphasizing the importance of education, empowerment, and gender equality. As a result, they may have felt more confident to vote independently. However, they are restricted from nonconventional political activities such as demonstrations or campaigns.

The study findings are also supported by previous research, which shows that women's political participation is often hindered by gender-based Socialisation and cultural beliefs that women should remain away from political gatherings, specifically political demonstrations (Thomas and Winters 2019)

### **Thematic Analysis of Gender Socialization**

#### **Family Support and Confidence**

24 women participants cited that they have been socialized in a way that promotes confidence and encourages them to participate in all areas of life. This Socialization has positively impacted their educational attainment and career choices, as their families have supported them in pursuing higher education and prestigious jobs. Additionally, these women have been socialized to have a high level of confidence, which extends to their political choices. They are encouraged to exercise their independent judgment and make decisions regarding voting and supporting political parties based on their beliefs and preferences. The confidence and support these women receive from their families have enabled them to excel in various fields of life, including education and careers, and they can have independent political choices.

*My father always emphasized the importance of taking independent decisions. His continuous encouragement played a significant role in developing my confidence and nurturing my ability to make choices based on my beliefs and convictions (Aliya Personal Interview Dec 2023).*

*Thanks to my family's unwavering support, I have been empowered to have independent political choices. My family instilled in me the value of being politically aware, critically analyzing different perspectives, and making informed decisions aligning with my political beliefs and values (Huma Personal Interview Dec 2023).*

*My father's emphasis on independent decision-making extended to the realm of politics. By encouraging me to think for myself and explore diverse political ideologies, he fostered my understanding and appreciation of democratic values, empowering me to actively engage in the political process and exercise my right to vote according to my conscience (Maham Personal Interview Dec 2023).*

### **Influence of Political Background**

Only 12 women mentioned that they had been socialized to be confident and actively participate in election campaigns. Their families have encouraged and supported them to get involved in the political process. This support is crucial in nurturing their confidence and empowering them to engage in campaigning activities. Furthermore, out of the 12 women, 6 belonged to politically influential families. They have had the opportunity to witness the campaign process since their childhood. Growing up in such families, they have been exposed to the intricacies and dynamics of election campaigns from an early age. As a result, they have gained valuable experience and knowledge, which has prepared them for active involvement in election campaigns. These 6 women have been participating in election campaigns from a very young age, because their families have actively involved them. This early exposure and engagement have contributed to their confidence and competence in campaign activities.

*My father's background has significantly shaped my understanding of politics and confidence in making independent political choices. Growing up, I had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the impact of political engagement and the importance of active participation in the democratic process (Aliya Personal Interview Feb 2023)*

*Being involved in election campaigns from an early age has been a transformative experience for me. Guided by my father's expertise and surrounded by the energy of political campaigns, I gained knowledge about the intricacies of the political landscape. This early exposure has instilled confidence and a deep understanding of the significance of independent political choices (Maria Personal Interview Feb 2023).*

*While my family's political background has provided a strong foundation, I have also been encouraged to develop my political identity. With the support of my father, I have been able to strike a balance between honouring our family legacy and pursuing my independent political path, allowing me to make choices that reflect my convictions (Madiha Personal Interview Feb 2023).*

### **Family Socialisation and Security Concerns**

All the study participants emphasized that they are highly educated and actively engaged in the labour force. They attribute this achievement to the Socialization they received from their families, who did not suppress them but encouraged their education and participation in various spheres of life.

*Although I have been socialized to be confident in making independent decisions, my family's concern for my safety during demonstrations has led to some restrictions (Asia Personal Interview Feb 2023).*

*While I appreciate my family's care and worry, I believe it is crucial to assert my autonomy and engage in activities that align with my values (Rabia Personal Interview Feb 2023).*

*I understand that my family's restrictions stem from their genuine concern about the potential risks of violence during demonstrations (Hina Personal Interview Jan 2023).*

Although the study participants mentioned receiving support from their families for their education and participation in various fields, including the labour force, their families also expressed concerns about their safety and security regarding political participation. Specifically, their families had reservations regarding activities like attending demonstrations or going alone to polling stations to cast votes, resulting in restrictions on their political engagement.

These concerns about safety and security can arise from various factors, such as the potential for violence or clashes during political demonstrations, the possibility of harassment or intimidation, or the perception of unstable or dangerous environments surrounding polling stations. Families play a crucial role in ensuring the well-being and protection of their loved ones, and their concerns for their daughters' or sisters' safety in politically charged or potentially volatile situations are understandable. They prioritize the physical well-being of their female family members and choose to impose restrictions to mitigate potential risks. The participants highlighted the importance of Socialization within their families, significantly shaping their confidence. Being residents of cities and having received higher education, they have been raised to be self-assured individuals. This confidence is an



outcome of their family's socialization practices. However, it is essential to note that these safety concerns can inadvertently limit women's political participation and restrict their access to decision-making processes. Overly cautious restrictions may perpetuate gender inequalities and hinder women's ability to exercise their political rights fully.

#### **Gender-Segregated Political Gatherings**

17 women participants expressed a preference for gender-segregated political gatherings. They explained that while their families allowed them to pursue higher education and participate in the labour force, they were also socialized to avoid mingling with men and attending gatherings where interaction with men was inevitable.

*The preference for gender-segregated political gatherings arises from my upbringing, where I was taught to avoid situations that involve interacting with men (Hajra Personal Interview Feb 2023).*

*I appreciate the freedom to pursue education and work, but I am also aware of the cultural norms and gender roles that discourage mingling with men in specific contexts, including political gatherings (Asia Personal Interview Jan 2023)*

*The preference for gender-segregated settings in politics reflects the influence of my family's values and the desire to adhere to religious beliefs (Sara Personal Interview Feb 2023).*

*I find comfort and familiarity in gender-segregated political gatherings, where I can express my opinions and engage in political discussions without feeling uncomfortable or against the values instilled in me (Maria Personal Interview Jan 2023).*

*I am socialized to be very confident in interacting with men; however, I feel more comfortable and secure in an environment where I can freely express my opinions and engage in political discussions without the interference of men (Shzia persona; interview Feb 2023).*

These women explained various factors to attending gender-segregated political gatherings, including cultural norms, religious beliefs, and traditional expectations of gender roles within their communities.

The socialization process within their families plays a significant role in shaping the attitudes and preferences of women. While they have been encouraged to pursue education and participate in the workforce, there may be cultural or religious values that prioritize maintaining gender segregation in specific contexts, including political gatherings.

#### **Women's Preference for Gender-Inclusive Political Gatherings**

13 women participants expressed a different perspective from the previous group. They mentioned that they do not believe they were socialized to prefer gender-segregated political gatherings. On the contrary, they prefer and encourage gender-mixed gatherings where the perspectives of both males and females can be heard and where males can listen to females' points of view.

*I believe that gender-mixed political gatherings provide a platform for males to listen to and understand the perspectives of females, fostering empathy and creating space for diverse voices to be heard (Urwa Personal Interview Jan 2023).*

*I do not believe that separating genders in political gatherings is necessary or beneficial. Instead, I embrace the idea of inclusivity, collaboration, and understanding to build a more equitable society (Shazia Personal Interview Dec 2023).*

*Gender-mixed political gatherings are an opportunity to break down barriers and bridge the gap between genders, fostering equality and promoting a more inclusive society (Kanwal Personal Interview Dec 2023).*

*I was not socialized to prefer gender-segregated political gatherings; in fact, I believe in the importance of gender-mixed gatherings where diverse perspectives can be shared (Fozia Personal Interview Feb 2023)*

These women emphasized the importance of gender-inclusive gatherings as a platform for sharing diverse perspectives and understanding the problems faced by women in society. They recognized that participating in mixed-gender gatherings could raise awareness about women's issues and provide a unique perspective that might not be heard in gender-segregated settings.

These women mentioned that they were socialized to be confident and assertive, and their families have actively encouraged their participation in gender-mixed gatherings. They believe that by engaging in such settings, they can challenge stereotypes, promote gender equality, and foster dialogue between different genders.



## **Conclusion**

Socialization can impact individuals' confidence and willingness to participate in political activities. Broader societal and cultural factors may influence individuals' ability to engage in conventional and nonconventional political activities. The participants of the in-depth interviews have been socialized to be confident. They believe in their abilities to participate in various fields of life, such as education and the workforce. However, their families are concerned about their safety and security and hence restrict their involvement in protests and demonstrations. The study participants did not feel socialized to be submissive or conform to specific gender roles. The participants were raised in an environment that promoted gender equality and allowed them to explore their potential without gender discrimination.

The findings from the quantitative analysis demonstrate a negative correlation between gender socialization and women's political participation. However, the qualitative study highlights the nuanced reasons behind this correlation, revealing the complex dynamics. Despite being highly educated and raised with the expectation of achieving higher education, joining the labour force, and having independent political choices, the women in the study face obstacles when participating in political activities and explicitly attending demonstrations.

The primary hindrance to their participation is the concerns expressed by their families. The women prioritize their families' safety and well-being, leading them to avoid participating in demonstrations due to worries about security, violence, and intimidation. These concerns reflect broader societal issues that undermine women's safety and deter their engagement in political activism.

Moreover, the study highlights the diverse perspectives among women regarding attending gender-mixed and gender-segregated gatherings. Some women prefer gender-segregated gatherings, as they perceive them as providing greater confidence and comfort to express their opinions. In such environments, women feel more at ease sharing their experiences and concerns, knowing they are surrounded by individuals who can relate to and understand their struggles.

On the other hand, some women favour gender-mixed gatherings, recognizing them as valuable platforms for informing others about the issues women face. They believe including men in these discussions can lead to a broader understanding of gender-related challenges and foster empathy and support for women's causes. These women emphasize the importance of inclusivity and the power of dialogue in driving meaningful change.

In conclusion, the detailed findings suggest that while women may have received Socialization encouraging confidence, higher education, and independent political choices, various factors impede their political participation. The concerns expressed by their families regarding security, violence, and intimidation significantly discourage their involvement in demonstrations. Additionally, women hold differing perspectives on attending gender-mixed and gender-segregated gatherings, with some valuing the supportive and empowering nature of gender-segregated settings. In contrast, others stress the significance of inclusivity and the potential for broader awareness and understanding in gender-mixed spaces.

Addressing the negative correlation between gender socialization and women's political participation requires addressing security concerns and creating safe environments encouraging women's engagement in political activities. It is also essential to establish spaces that allow for open dialogue, accommodating both gender-segregated and gender-mixed gatherings, as they can serve as catalysts for empowering women, promoting gender equality, and fostering a comprehensive understanding of women's challenges. By acknowledging and addressing these complex dynamics, societies can work towards creating more inclusive and supportive environments that facilitate women's active participation in politics.

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