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## Understanding Gender Power Relations and Emotions of Rohingya Adolescent Girls in Bangladesh

**ABSTRACT.** This paper sheds light on the intertwined aspects of gender, power, and emotion by exploring the lived experiences of Rohingya adolescent girls who are at risk of GBV which is widespread in camp settings. Narrative interviews and focus group discussions offered opportunities to twenty-five unmarried and married adolescent girls to talk about gender-based discrimination and violence in everyday household and community practices that reconstruct gender and power dynamics and shape girls' emotions. Drawn from the elements of the three domains of power (McDonald, 1980), the paper shows that the prevailing sexist practices in Rohingya society divide "girls" and "boys" into two different categories and create conditions for subordination of girls on the basis of sex-based irrational differentiation. Such power capability rooted in the contexts of power bases put boys as a group in the position to use power in extreme form as violence and successful power use underlies power outcomes. Importantly, negative emotions such as sadness, fear, anger, guilt, and disgust interact with these three domains of power. Projects that define power as empowerment would be supportive for girls' empowerment and experience of positive emotions.

**KEYWORDS:** girls, gender dynamics, power dynamics, emotions, Bangladesh

### Introduction

The interrelation between power and emotion is gaining prominence in the contemporary literature on power. Prior research demonstrates that "positive and negative views of power are likely to be associated, respectively, with positive and negative emotions (e.g., pleasure, enthusiasm, pride or anger, fear, sadness)" (Lawler & Proell, 2009, p. 169). Importantly, one interpretation of the positive and negative emotions is that "positive emotions make individuals well and happy, and negative emotions make individuals ill and unhappy" (Solomon & Stone, 2002, p. 422).

“Under the broad umbrella of the psychodynamic approach, emotions are considered to be individual and subjective feelings that may lead to different behavioral manifestations or reactions” (Hökkä et al., 2020, p. 3). Emotions can, thus, be considered as important drivers of behaviors (Izard, 2009, p. 2; Beaudry & Pinsonneault, 2010, p. 690). Similar to the “considerable debate on the nature and ontology of emotions” (Hökkä et al., 2020, p. 3), “power as a concept has several conceptual and operational definitions” (Suliman, 2019, p. 1). Some definitions refer power as “the ability of a person or group to get another person or group to do something against their will” (Rowlands, 1997, pp. 9–10). According to these definitions, “power can be described as ‘Zero-sum’: the more power one has, the less the other has” (Rowlands, 1997, pp. 9–10). This negative view of power is labeled as ‘power over’ used as a synonym for ‘power as domination’ (Allen, 1998, p. 22; Pansardi & Bindi, 2021, p. 51). Another way of conceptualizing power is to relate the definition of power with ‘power to’, ‘power with’, and ‘power from within’ and one aspect of ‘power to’ is the kind of leadership that comes from the wish to see a group achieve what it is capable of, where there is no conflict of interests, and the group is setting its own collective agenda (Rowlands, 1997, p. 12). This positive view of power labeled as ‘power to’ is equivalent to power as empowerment (Allen, 1998, pp. 22–27; Pansardi, 2012, p. 73).

Notably, “if power is defined as ‘power over’, a gender analysis shows that power is wielded predominantly by men over other men, and by men over women” (Rowlands, 1997, p. 11). Given that “gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power” (Scott, 1986, p. 1067); “understanding gender is thus significant to understand power and vice versa” (Koester, 2015, p. 1) and corresponding emotions of girls, specifically, adolescent girls who internalize oppression and are particularly vulnerable as they often face much greater adversity than boys including gender discrimination and are at higher risk than boys for mental health difficulties (Hartas, 2019, pp. 2–3). This paper sheds light on the intertwined aspects of gender, power, and emotion by exploring the lived experiences of Rohingya adolescent girls who were forcibly displaced from Myanmar into Bangladesh in the face of systematic discrimination, persecution, and violence.

Since the massive influx which started on 25 August 2017, over 720,000 Rohingya fled to Teknaf and Ukhiya sub-districts of Cox’s Bazar district of Bangladesh and created the largest refugee settlement and the

world's fastest growing refugee crisis in history (Ainul et al., 2018, UNDP, 2018; UNICEF, 2018). The vast majority of the forcibly displaced population are women and girls (ISCG, 2019, p. 1) and "girls who represent a larger proportion (57%) of the vulnerable group, are particularly at risk of neglect, sexual exploitation, and abuse" (ISCG, 2019, p. 1), and different forms of psychological and physical violence given that gender-based violence is widespread in camp settings (Islam & Nuzhath, 2018; Tay et al., 2018; Guglielmi et al., 2020).

Interestingly, Rohingya girls' exposure to sexual violence in Myanmar is understood as a result of Security Forces' "deeply gendered conceptions of power" (Global Justice Center, 2018, p. 1). Thus, the practice of age and gender-based violence targeted to Rohingya adolescent girls in camp settings draws attention to the phenomenon of 'power disparities', specifically, 'gender inequities in power' by recognizing that boys have power over girls, and that boys' domination and girls' subordination in hierarchical system is constructed on the basis of sex-based irrational differentiation. This kind of unjust power as dominance expressed in the form of violence is problematic for Rohingya adolescent girls because "sexual violence is related to the consequences of social stigma for the family of the girls, and difficulty getting the girl married in the future leading to economic consequences of additional family members" (Guglielmi et al., 2020, p. 2). Additionally, such negative power in the form of sexual and domestic violence may reproduce girls' conceptualization of socially defined gendered girls and boys, and sex difference-based power/powerlessness and influence girls' emotional well-being in negative ways.

Prior research on power analysis conducted in the Rohingya community in Bangladesh addresses household and community decision making and suggests that men hold decision-making power in both settings (Joint Agency Research Report, 2018). Besides, patrilocal marriage and the practice of dowry are identified as factors contributing to women's lack of power in household (Tay et al., 2018). Given that boys' violence against girls is frequent in Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) community, it is also crucial to explore: In which ways differences between Rohingya adolescent boys and girls and corresponding system of domination are justified and sustained in Rohingya community? In other words, what are the conditions under which having a resource is sufficient for Rohingya boys to influence Rohingya girls in the absence of power use? Additionally, how the power is used in social relationships? What are the power outcomes? What are the emotions do Rohingya girls experience? To answer these

questions, this paper draws elements from the three domains of power (McDonald, 1980, p. 843) and uses a) power bases (refer to the sources of power and is synonymous with resources), b) Power use (how the power is used i.e., the tactics chosen), and c) power outcomes (who ultimately possesses the control or who wins) as framework. The assumption of the research is that power bases lead to power use and power use is the basis for real power, and emotions interconnect all three levels of power. The insights gained from this empirical research will contribute to knowledge advancement and be useful for those who aspire to better comprehend, critique, and contest the subordination of Rohingya adolescent girls in a range of family, community, and cultural contexts and support girls to avoid pain and experience pleasure and happiness in general.

The paper is organized into three sections. Section one introduces concepts of gender, power and emotions taking into account of Rohingya adolescent girls' experiences of gender-based violence in camp contexts and describes methodological choice adopted to answer research questions. Section two provides evidence regarding the paradigm of power over, specifically, boys' power over girls in FDMN community and girls' experience of emotions. Section three concludes.

### **1. Methodological Choice**

This empirical research is designed to understand and potentially improve the lives of Rohingya adolescent girls by un-silencing the silenced, criticizing gender inequality and discrimination and resulting power dynamics that operate in 'everyday life' (Bovone, 1989, p. 41). Given that there are different ways of doing such research, this research starts with the view that "stories can be the foundation to change in the sense that stories, a crucial part of human culture, give us insights into individual and collective senses of 'how things should be done' and thus allow us to contest dominant modes of understanding, practice, and reproduction" (Fraser & Tylor, 2020, p. 8).

Furthermore, this research takes into account of injustice and oppression and prioritizes social justice and fairness. Consequently, the research involves Rohingya adolescent girls who are: a) devalued or ignored by being 'stateless population' (Rahman & Sakib, 2021, p. 159) in Myanmar which led them to be excluded from formal research (UNHCR, 2019, p. 51) and deprived them from expressing their stories or voices, and b) designated as oppressed or vulnerable as many of them have experienced violence

against girls and represent low socio-economic background. Providing an opportunity to tell personal stories, be heard, and representing these girls' stories or voices in a fair way can be considered as an important social justice issue (Fraser & Tylor, 2020). Therefore, decision was made to understand Rohingya adolescent girls' lives using narrative interviews given that the technique is most pertinent for studies which focus on disadvantaged or marginalized groups in societies and the technique is a way of collecting stories or narratives about girls' experiences or views of how the everyday practices reconstruct gender and power dynamics and shape emotions around these practices (Bates, 2004, pp. 16–17; Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2015).

Besides narrative interviewing, focus group discussions were chosen to gain data from Rohingya adolescent girls given that “focus groups are useful in accessing the attitudes, feelings, and experiences of groups who have been marginalized or silenced within society and who may feel disenfranchised or unsafe to participate in a research study” (Aanand, 2013, p. 2). Notably, girls are in general marginalized and silenced group in the Rohingya society.

Both narrative interviews and group discussions offered opportunities to bring these marginalized girls into the fore front. The girls who were aged between twelve and nineteen years, shared their stories, experiences, views, beliefs, and attitudes about the sensitive topic of GBV drawn from the interaction pattern in male-female sibling relation, and marital relation. All in-person data was collected between December 2019 and February 2020 from three camp settings in Cox's Bazar.

The narrative interviews provided an emotional space for the four unmarried and three married adolescent girls to talk freely about their experiences in the form of stories. These girls who manage household chores in daily life, preferred to be interviewed. To facilitate the interview process, top-down strict questions and answers were avoided. Interestingly, opening up an interview with a broad question, the researcher's willingness to be led by the pace and interests of the research participants, and the use of the open-ended questions as follow-up questions were useful to get data that has rich detail.

In the focus group discussion, two groups of girls who manage household chores and one group of girls who support adolescent girls as facilitators of an adolescent life-skill program displayed cohesion and connectedness when discussing their experiences that they felt important to share. The natural interaction and conversation among the girls enabled them

to recognize the nature of their shared overt or hidden common experiences and thus to collectively construct new meanings about the interplay of gender, power, and emotions. Thus, the group discussions served as a platform for understanding and empowering of girls. Interestingly, in the democratic environment of group discussions, each and every girl's experiences, and voices were listened to and recorded carefully, consequently, the girls felt that they all are valued and that all of their shared experiences were equally important.

At the end of the narrative interviews and the group discussion, some participants expressed their feelings to the researcher highlighting that they have never shared their painful experiences with others who are even close to them either because of the concern that it would be difficult for their family to hear these difficult experiences or due to the fear of the potential result of the self-disclosure. Importantly, research participants' trust regarding the researcher's intention to protect them as well as their understanding about the fact that they will be listened to and believed by the researcher in a non-judgmental way helped them to disclose all that they wanted to discuss. According to the research participants, such opportunities for self-disclosure of personal experiences enabled them to feel better.

During analysis and constructing knowledge, the researcher's role was to interpret the data fairly and to acknowledge the dynamics of power over that have emerged from the nuanced narratives and group discussions.

## **2. The Paradigm of Power Over and Girls' Experiences of Emotions**

This section illustrates voices and experiences of Rohingya adolescent girls who have experienced gender-based discrimination and violence in a range of family and community cultural contexts. The voices of these girls illustrate the paradigm of power over that is shaped by power bases, power use, and power outcomes and the link of the paradigm of power over to girls' experiences of emotions.

### **2.1. Power Bases**

A range of ideas demonstrate the sources of male power in the FDMN Community. The two possible sources of power emerged from girls' voices include: *normative resources*—i.e., cultural and sub-cultural definitions of who has the authority and *cognitive resources*—i.e., the influence the perception of power has on the individuals and others.

### 2.1.1. Normative resources: Cultural and sub-cultural definitions of who has the authority

#### *Culturally determined position of power*

The social structure of the FDMN community indicate uneven nature of power-based resource distribution and such unequal distribution results in men and women's imbalanced way of power to act. In many instances, the structure involves a position that provides *Head Majhis*, and *Side Majhis*, male local leaders, with resources or capability that others value. Specifically, customs legitimate these *Majhis* to the power of decision-making concerning adolescent girls' wellbeing and girls accept the decisions because *Majhi* has the authority to command and girls have duties to obey. Women in this context also should be given the opportunity to occupy positions of power in terms of decision making, however, in line with the reasoning that women cannot be decision makers as like men, women are largely excluded from holding the key positions and governing decisions that facilitate marginalized adolescent girls to make choices available to them. Given that the opportunity context that creates adequate conditions for *Majhis'* ableness to act as powerful group and to perform the role of decision makers, the *Majhis* often govern male biased decisions concerning violence against adolescent girls including 'sexual abuse', 'approval of the changing marriage pattern that permits polygamy' etc. and thus set rules for justice that effectively prevent girls, as less powerful group, from voicing their wishes. The power of making these rules essentially meets the interests of boys and contribute to sustain the dominant ideologies concerning patriarchal power and control, and relations of domination. For example, decision that influences girls to 'remain silent to the aggressive act of rape' means supporting the conscious process of intimidation by which boys keep girls in a state of fear (Connell, 1985, p. 264; McPhail, 2016, p. 3). Additionally, decision that 'permit men's physical aggression and verbal threats towards adolescent girls in order for justifying polygamous marriage' suggests approval of oppressive conditions that create unequal male-female power relations. Thus, the masculine nature of social structure creates conditions for sustaining the system of domination by 'excluding girls and women from the power to determine the rules under which they will live as well as by triggering the status, authority, and negative liberty of the male agents, in other words, *Majhis*, to make decisions that bear detrimental effects on girls' interests and freedom.

### *Power derived from customary law and practices of polygamy*

Another example of structural inequality is evident in the customary law and practices of polygamy that is widespread in FDMN community and that permits men to marry multiple wives and prohibits a present wife from objecting to her husband's marriage to a new woman (Brook, 2009, p. 113). Hence, polygamy deprives girls as a group from power and authority, and represents an unjustified asymmetry of power between boys and girls that legitimizes conditions for girls' subordination (Brook, 2009).

### *Access to economic resources as the source of power*

According to the local system of meaning, the conditions for relations of domination is maintained in the household as families allow boys to access economic resources i.e., income. Furthermore, cultural norms also suggest that "Rohingya girls are dignified when Rohingya men and boys can support their families" (Holloway & Fan, 2018, p. 7). Hence, girls' exclusion from access to subjectively relevant resources and, thereby, not being able to be financial provider for the family may reinforce 'decentralized domination', in other words, 'a group of girls' dependency over a group of boys' (Mader, 2016, p. 450). A girl describes the unequal allocation of task responsibilities that indicates difference in distribution of power-based resources in boy-girl relationship as,

A boy can bring fruits for the family what a girl cannot. Boys can cultivate rice, do business, and spend money as they wish. Girls cook rice, and stitch cloth ... a girl's involvement in earning would be sinful for a girl because boys will see her when she is out of home ... it is forbidden to use a daughter's earned money (FGD, unmarried adolescent girl, December 2019).

Thus, culture defines who has the authority in household by encouraging girls' inclusion in private space and influencing girls to conceptualize the difference in male-female boundary to act.

### *Stereotypic expectations in family*

A range of gender-typed practices are evident in Rohingya families that contribute to the gender-differences in expectations, values, preferences, and skills. In most instances, family sets primary goals for girls including marriage, performing domestic responsibilities, and accessing religious education. Girls interpret the internalized message of such goal



setting as, “girls will stay home, perform light tasks such as bringing water using small pots, access religious education, get married, and cook rice in in-law’s house”. Hence, family facilitates the process of marriage and girls’ dependence over boys by increasing girls’ age when preparing SIM card in order for enabling girls to get married before they reach eighteen years. In contrast, boys’ independence is greatly encouraged by conveying the meaning that boys will “go to abroad”, “work in a shop”, “do business and agricultural work”, and “do heavy work such as bringing relief items e.g., rice, flour, and gas for use in domestic space”. These cultural scripts define the one-sided allocation of domestic work and corresponding one-sided dependency and thus recreates conditions for sustaining boys’ power over girls.

#### *Cultural norms influencing expert power*

Culture also defines who has the authority by depriving girls from accessing other forms of rights, liberties, options, possibilities, choices and easier access to benefits that are often available to boys. A girl explicitly states the ways in which cultural norms function as determining constraints of girls’ education and training and thus mediate conditions for gender and power inequality. A girl’s remark such as, “I was withdrawn from class V due to my marriage but my brother continued till class X and he is earning as Head Majhi and Imam and keeping his children in school” indicates the ways in which the cultural emphasis on early marriage limits family decision about girls’ education and training and creates differences in girls’ and boys’ expertise and thus excludes girls from accessing such power-based resources. Besides formal education, boys’ aspirations to “learn how to drive, and play ball, cricket, and corks; are appreciated by family, by contrast, girls are encouraged to “cook and knit”. All these exclusionary practices sustain the difference in boys’ and girls’ role competence and cultural devaluation of girls’ strength. As a result, girls gradually learn that expert power imbalances, differential privilege, bias, and discrimination are systematically prevalent in sibling relationships.

#### *Family shaped emotion as the source of power*

Besides differential privileges in education and training, family preference to suppress girls’ pleasant feelings but to support boys’ such feelings can be viewed as source for male power in family context. Thus, ‘emotion as power-based resource’ creates an enabling condition for maintaining

the system of domination. According to cultural norms, 'girls cannot take pictures with others but family allows boys to do so'. Additionally, the distribution of goods and resources indicates representation of one-sided interests i.e., boys' interests. Examples such as 'family meets brothers' desire to buy whatever they wish including a car [van], however, sisters' desire to buy cosmetics are suppressed by saying that money cannot be spent as they wish'; 'family provides transport fare, money to smoke and eat betel leaf for the pleasure of brothers who are not earning, but girls are not supported by money even if they ask for money to buy food when they are hungry'; 'a girl saves money and a boy spends money'; 'when a brother and a sister eat together the brother takes the plate of good quality and sits on stool and the sister sits on the floor and takes the plate of poor quality'; 'when there is a disagreement between a brother and a sister family conveys the message that the brother will eat before the sister eats'; and 'family evaluates girls' behavior negatively and remains silent centering girl-boy sibling disputes specifically when brothers demonstrate physical violence and power over sisters'. These instances demonstrate that girls are largely undervalued in domestic space and such process of devaluation reproduces conditions for maintaining the system of domination in sibling relation. In most instances, family nurtures these differences between boys and girls because of the taken for granted perception that 'girls are the guests for few days in parental home, by contrast, boys are the future guardian of girls in the absence of parents. Furthermore, in domestic space, family behavior demonstrates greater affection towards boys compared to girls 'by ignoring boys' mistakes because boys have access to public space, as a result, they can leave home which is not possible for girls. Girls in such family contexts gradually learn culturally defined hierarchical status and culturally legitimated authority of boys in girl-boy sibling relations.

#### *Power influenced by religious norms*

Cultural and religious norms also define who has the authority by regulating girls' freedom of movement. For girls who have reached puberty, religious ideologies entail the meaning that 'it would be sinful for girls if boys see girls'. Despite that boys can go to 'market places', 'cut trees in hilly areas', 'return home at night'; in many instances, an unmarried girl is 'not allowed to visit market place with her brother to buy cloth of her own choice'; and 'needs an umbrella to hide her from boys when she moves unescorted from her house to a neighboring house located nearby'. Such cultural norms diminish girls' liberties, perhaps in return of security, and

provide boys as group with power to move freely and thus maintain the background condition for systems of domination. Girls' understanding of the relationship between girls' visibility and religious norms was evident when a girl was interviewed in a closed room. During the interview, as many times as she heard the voice of a male person passing by the interview room, she pulled down her face cloth to cover her face. This behavior suggests the gender-segregated socialization process in which she has grown up. As the girl describes,

When I was in Myanmar, schools were far away from my home. This is why I studied in a *Maktab* (religious school). When I reached 7 years, I stopped going to *Maktab* and moved around our courtyard. When I reached 12 years, I stopped to bring water from our courtyard. I have grown up only staying inside the home (*sat gherar vitor*). There was no scope for gossiping with girls, consequently, I did not have any friend. I passed time by talking to my mother and elder sister and helping my mother in her day-to-day cooking (Narrative interview, married adolescent girl, 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2020).

The quote shows the ways in which cultural norms restrict girls' autonomy in movement and thereby accessing education. Thus, cultural norms shape girls' opportunity context that bears constraining effects instead of enabling effects (Einspahr, 2010) that negatively influence girls' power as being able to.

#### *Use of culturally defined gendered space as power source*

Girls' experiences describe cultural definitions of who has the authority by illustrating the idea of the use of gendered space. Girls' use of gendered space in FDMN community is influenced by the practice of using gendered space in Myanmar. According to cultural norms and practice in Myanmar, adolescent boys play outside home but girls play in the garden located behind the home and in those houses where adolescent and adult boys and men are absent. Such practices sustain the exclusionary nature of girls' use of public space and reestablish the idea of domestic as girls' space. Additionally, as girls' reach puberty a curtain made of cloth is used to cover the courtyard of many girls' homes. One side of the curtain is used for girls to gossip and play and the other side is used by men to leave or enter the home. This dividing practice of the use of the domestic space indicates the constructed nature of gendered space and meaning of separate sphere within domestic space. The custom of dividing practice is

sustained in humanitarian settings where girls experience excluded from male gendered spaces. A girl's remark such as, "Girls will not go to shop because boys gossip in shops. Girls will gossip at home and boys will not be there. For boys, there are playground to play ball, shops, and market to sit. For girls, there are not many spaces except home" indicates that shops, playgrounds, and markets, in other words, public spaces are male spaces and domestic is for females and there are specific signs, and codes for girls in everyday routine use of forbidden male gendered spaces. In this context, cultural norms and gender ideologies that sustain boundary in girls' and boys' use of spaces create situations where "girls encounter relative constraints in their freedom of using public space and accessing options compared with boys who due to their social positions have more options or easier access to benefits (Einspahr, 2010, p. 6).

### **2.1.2. Cognitive resource: Perception of power**

In the research context, girls' perception or cognitive resource suggests that boys as a group are privileged and powerful compared to girls as a group. Examples such as, "being a girl, I will not be able to talk over a boy", and "a girl should not behave in a way that results in upset feelings in a boy" support the idea. Besides these examples, all the examples stated above illustrate that Rohingya girls are systematically denied power and influence. Consequently, they internalize the message they receive about what they are supposed to be like, and they may come to believe the message to be true (Rowlands, 1997, p. 11). This internalized oppression can be one of the most influential reasons of social domination.

The range of examples discussed above illustrate that in FDMN community power-based resources are distributed unfairly between a group of boys and a group of girls and that result in unequal distribution of power to act. Thus, unjust distribution of power-based resources between a group of boys and a group of girls legitimates conditions for 'reciprocal superordination and subordination' (Marder, 2016, p. 446) in relationships of power. Such practices of reciprocal superordination and subordination in girl-boy relations relate to the negative view of power that is likely to be associated with girls' negative emotion of sadness. Example such as "I am feeling very sad despite that there is nothing to do" represent girls' negative emotions of sadness by indicating the failure conditions for girls to achieve goals as well as by linking "girls' deficiency in personal control over their environment" (TenHouten, 2016, p. 86).

In sum, power-based resources such as normative resources, and cognitive resource create legitimate conditions for gender and power inequalities, boys' power of violence over girls, and girls' experience of negative emotion of sadness. Importantly, having these power-based resources are adequate for boys to influence girls in the FDMN community in the absence of power use. Notably, power bases constructed by varied power sources inspire boys to use power in a range of interaction pattern and thus to influence girls.

## 2.2. Power Use

The influence of power bases that distribute power unequally between a group of boys and a group of girls makes it possible for boys to use power by employing a range of control tactics, strategies, and interactional techniques. Examples of such strategies include 'communication of stereotypical belief or prejudice communication that supports girls' fate control and behavior control'; 'bullying to regulate girls' use of male gendered spaces and thereby to restrict girls' agency'; 'rumor spreading to influence girl-girl peer rejection'; 'making noise to resist elder sister's concern regarding the younger brother's safety and protection'; 'brother induced misbehavior on the ground that being younger than the brother the sister cannot be the winner in an indoor-game'; 'economic subordination', and 'assertiveness to win in the negotiation process in regard to bearing the expenses of none of the two wives'; 'emotional threat to suppress girls' wishes to entertain girls' family members, and to regulate girls use of public space specifically when a girl is seen sitting outside home to dry hair, and to regulate girls' interaction with other males specifically when a girl is seen sitting beside a man in a vehicle'; 'neglect of girls and children to force them to leave home that supports maintenance of boys' relations outside marriage'; and other control attempts to 'exploit girls' labor' that ultimately meets the needs of boys' everyday living.

Notably, boys use these strategies to get what boys want, however, such strategies can be described as patriarchal oppression against girls, in other words, "patriarchal terrorism" (Karakurt & Silver, 2013, p. 3) that relates to the negative view of power; and affects girls' honor, dignity, respect, and a sense of self. Because girls do not have meaningful options to escape from such negative views of power, girls experience negative emotion. In the research context, when describing oppressive behavior, most girls became upset and tearful that indicate girls' emotional pain and in-

ternal distress. In many instances, threats as emotional abuse resulted in anxiety and fear among girls. In the interview context, shaking her two hands, a girl mentioned that she always experiences the feelings of fear and anxiety thinking that “if she makes any mistake” or “if her husband marries another girl”. Besides threat, other forms of control strategies also develop fearful behavior and disgust feelings among girls in the sense of withdraw given that many girls “wish to escape, hide, or disappear from interacting with boys in order to maintain distance”. Furthermore, a girl’s facial expression and question such as, “If I were older than my brother, will the practice be continued?” indicates the girl’s anger in sibling relations. Additionally, many girls also felt ‘uncomfortable, awkward, and nervous’ because of these girls’ self-perceived discrepancy between the girls’ personal standards and how the girls are actually behaved and their damaged reputation in public and private spaces.

In sum, power bases encourage boys to use of power in the form of control attempts and strategies as they interact with girls in different social relations. Consequently, girls experience a range of negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, anger, disgust, and embarrassment. Importantly, boys’ such use of power is the foundation for power outcomes in different forms of power relations.

### 2.3. Power Outcomes

Given that boys demonstrate success in using power, boys make final decision regarding girls’ use of public space or male gender space, girls’ time to visit parents’ home, allocation of family resources that requires girls to bring financial support from parental home to meet the expense of girls’ treatment, and economic subordination i.e., boys’ decision concerning not to bear expenses of any of his two wives. Boy’s such decision-making shapes the process of sustaining boy’s freedom and girls’ unfreedom and thus reproduces the false mode of masculine power and feminine powerlessness and corresponding gendered selves.

Importantly, many girls experience anger due to such one-sided male dominance in decision making as a girl’s quote states, “I am saying repeatedly even though he is not listening to me. Why? I feel bad recalling [the interaction pattern] of my father’s home.” This quote also indicates that girls’ action-environment belongs to the control of boys and there is nothing to do from the girl’s side, as a result, the girl feels deeper level of sadness. A girl is specifically in fear because ‘there will be nobody to take

care of her specially when her father, who does not see in one eye, will pass away'. Girls such fear resulted from boys' decision making corresponds to girls' recognition of boys as independent. "Boys' existence as independent selves are dependent on the girls' recognition of boys as independent" (Gunnarsson, 2016, p. 7). Girls also explain the ways in which one-sided decision-making affects changes in the girls' view of themselves. A quote such as "Now I blame my fortune, it happened whatever was written in my fortune" suggests girls' false feelings of guilt resulted from depressed effects.

In sum, boys' real power to make final decisions leads to unfreedom and psychological violence of girls, consequently, girls' experiences of negative emotions such as sadness, anger, fear, and guilt interact with the level of power outcome.

## Conclusion

The prevailing sexist practices in FDMN community and the corresponding different opportunities and benefits that girls and boys systematically experience divide "girls" and "boys" into two different categories and create conditions for subordination of girls on the basis of sex-based irrational differentiation. Hence, in this community, "boys' power is predetermined by gender, by being male" (Allen, 1998, p. 23), consequently, to be a girl means powerless and to be a boy means powerful. Structural inequality, gender norms and culturally defined authority, and cognitive resources play greater role in the maintenance of such systematic disadvantage of girls, disparity between boys' power and girls' subordination, and boys' violence against girls. Such power capability rooted in the contexts of power bases put boys as a group in the position to use power in extreme form as violence and successful power use underlies power outcomes that prevent girls from voicing. Importantly, negative emotions such as sadness, fear, anger, guilt, and disgust interact in different domains of power i.e., power bases, power use, and power outcomes and thus support the idea that gender, power, and emotion are intertwined.

In the FDMN community, it is also possible that not all girls are victimized and not all boys are powerful. However, given that girls are largely fated to remain victims within patriarchal relations and such code of disempowerment is highly problematic for girls' wellbeing, feminist theoretical project could be designed or expanded in this community with

the focus upon positive emotions and positive view of power i.e., power as empowerment or power as resource that defines power as “the capacity to transform and empower oneself and others” (Allen, 1998, p. 27). Future research could therefore explore interventions for adolescent girls that are aligned to the principles of such project to understand how girls, individually or collectively, can bring about reform in the dominant power structure and thus experience positive emotions.

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