ABSTRACT

This qualitative study focuses on the challenges faced by the upper caste Brahmin women in rural areas of the district of Katihar, Bihar, India; by keeping a contrast on their education, cultural values, choosing the means of livelihood in the milieu of ‘newly transformed rural areas’ in Bihar. With a drastically decreasing educational quality in terms of skill and the morality, the message of Education translated as knowing the rights to maintain equity and equality have made the upper caste girls excluded from the benefits of the government policies. There is a paucity of research which could reflect the suppressed voice of insecurity and psychological dependency of these women who like other communities are integral part of ‘harmonious rural transformation.’

Based on Grounded theory, this study was instrumentalized on 20 individual semi-structured interviews of the upper caste women (age 24 to 44), engaging them in an average 56 minutes of interview (longest 140 minutes and shortest 39 minutes) from three villages accomplished in 29 days. The analysis of the qualitative data do reveal the agents of hindrances which keep 'this lot' of rural India economically 'handicapped' and thus as a dependent but 'commodity of honor' among their relatives or as a liberated but a commodity of sex for the rests.

KEYWORDS

Rural Brahmin Women, Caste, Conservation of Resources Theory, and Grey System Theory.

1. INTRODUCTION

The target of this study is the Brahmin women who reside in the far flung rural area of Katihar district, Bihar in India. Katihar district comprises of 8 Blocks and each block has 4 to 8 village panchayats. All the villages are in the close proximity to each other within the radius of 3 kilometers to 20 kilometers. Due to the sensitive the identity of the target group of this

Fig 1. Political Map of Bihar

Source: Online Source Govt. of Bihar
research, I had to use snow-bowl sampling to reach to these Brahmin women. I have chosen three villages of different identity for this study, named Pokharia, Nepra and Manihari, falling between the varied ranges of 10 to 20 kilometers from the district head quarter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HQ</th>
<th>Kathiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>3,057 sq. kms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Total</td>
<td>18,25,380 Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC Population Total</td>
<td>1,60,046 Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST Population Total</td>
<td>1,01,792 Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub Divisions</td>
<td>Barsoi, Kathiha Sadar, Manihari.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks</td>
<td>Kathiar, Warsoi, Kadwa, Amadabad, Manihari, Bairampur, Korha, Fakka, Alamnagar, Barari, Pranpur, Mansahi, Samelli, Kursailla, Hasanganj, Dendkhora.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Paddy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers</td>
<td>Mahananda, Ganga.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Data of Katihar District

Source: Online Source Govt. of Bihar

Apart from literature review from the previous caste based research, I recently had the opportunity to spend continuous 29 days with my respondents as an engaged researcher. Idea of the research was bestowed in the fact finding measures through the detailed probing, talking and formal interviews with the target group of my research to investigate what type of psychological, economic, social and educational problems they are facing while choosing to step out of their home. What problems they do face when they are identified with the rural poor Brahmin girl identity in contrast to that of SC/ST and OBC of the society?

Despite the fact that ‘un-touch-ability’ was abolished under India's constitution in 1950, the lower castes and those who own the wealth but are categorized as backwards have been showing solidarity to ‘conserve their resources’. If we read carefully then the basic tenet of Conservation of Resources theory is that individuals strive to obtain, retain, protect and foster those thing that they value (Hofboll, 2001:p341). Moreover, ever since India has got independence, caste based politics has emerged as a grave problem due to a long run and constant pro-Dalit government policies and schemes that have been implemented in the rural areas (Jannuzi, 1974; Michel, 1999; Kohli, 1990; Singh, 2000; Gupta 2004). Sahay, (2009:p412) finds that caste based problems are fabricated in loyalty and networking, “Caste may enter into the political process in a number of ways. Firstly, appeals may be made to caste loyalties in a general way. Secondly, networks of interpersonal relations are activated both during elections and at other times for mobilizing support along caste lines, caste associations, may seek to articulate caste interests in an organized manner.”

India has a long tradition of patriarchal social system (Bhasin, 1993; Dube, 1988; Kumar, 1993) and the modern day politics in India have always targeted the caste based discrimination rather than the gender based disparities. Caste at least does not debar people from earning their livelihood as it is a classification based on the kind of occupation one clan has been involved in rather than chaining the freedom of all kind; as it happens, in the cases of upper caste women. The new government policies and schemes have not yet been made to directly target the poor sections of India. Brahmin female being least populated, deprived economically, socially and educationally, is marginalized in terms of both gender and the caste are making the most disadvantageous identity in India.

Are Brahmin young women falling behind in the stampede for qualifications and jobs? Are they suffering from new form of social, economic and educational disadvantages today? If one is to believe the Indian media, press and the social world researches since mid-70s till date
then answer to this question is ‘certainly yes’. There have been cases when scheduled caste and economically well-off OBC people have fraudulently used scheduled tribe fake identity to get jobs in Bihar; one of the headlines included, “44 fake STs as teachers” (Patna, Indian Express 10 Jan, 2012). This research becomes significant when no research has yet been conducted on the upper caste women in Bihar of north India.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

To access the previous research based articles and their reviews on this particular subject in English language, I explored the websites of academic journals and articles at the National library of China, Beijing; during 28th to 30th of August, 2013. I was interested in the recent academic articles which concentrate their study on the caste based problems in northern India. I limited my search for the materials between January 2009 to December 2013 but did not limit to, with the keywords e.g. Dalit, Brahman and the keywords of the similar values if found in the title of the research articles on the academic journal database. Among these articles some were not directly related to the research on rural woman of north India and therefore, were excluded from the literature listing (See table 2 below). For example, Modernity as a “Rain of Words”: Tracing the Flows of “Rain” between Dalit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEYWORDS</th>
<th>PROQUEST</th>
<th>EBSCO_host: H.I.C</th>
<th>SAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dalit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahman</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caste</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalit Wom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahman Wom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At National Library of China, Beijing (28th-30th August, 2013)

Women and Intellectuals in Tamil Nadu (Ram & Kalpana; 2009) has investigated the rationalization of gender and caste owing to resonant phrases in movies, daily use languages of tradition across the divisions of social strata in the southern province of Tamilandu, India. Other articles i.e. ‘Critical Response to the Marginalized: Dalit Poetry in Telugu. (Rao; 2009); Can There Be a Subaltern Middle Class? Notes on African American and Dalit History (Pandey, Gyanendra; 2009); Contemporary Dalit Assertions in Kerala: Governmental Categories vs Identity Politics? (J. Devika; 2013); Master and Munshī: A Brahman secretary's guide to Mughal governance Rajeev Kinra (2010) etc. (See Appendix 1.2) were not included for research review as they were not directly related to the topic of investigation. One of the articles was focusing on politics, caste and religion during 18th century and the another one was related to early modern India; yet another one was related to high caste Hindu woman in the US; and similarly one of the articles was focusing on the immigration and caste based society at Stuart in the UK; seven articles were related to various kinds of caste based problem in the Southern provinces of India; and four articles were related the caste based problems in Pakistan and Nepal (See Appendix 1.2).

Nevertheless, all the articles selected for literature review were mainly explaining about the problems of Dalit people in India, none of the articles even suggested the problems faced by Brahmin woman from the northern part of India, particularly from the province of Bihar. For example, J.Devika (2013) has pointed out that the Dalit identity politics’ has been perceived as a serious threat by Kerala’s powerful left parties whereas the transformation of politics itself
in the mid-1990s from the ‘public action’ mode to the ‘liberal’ mode, was rejected by the Dalit and tribal communities. The government of India initiatives has been to abolish the caste system but the wrong implementation of the policies have encouraged the lower caste people to keep their identity intact. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar ever asked his Dalit followers to enlighten the ‘Dalit’ of greater values, “Through your literary creations cleanse the prescribed values of life and culture. Do not limit your objectives. Remove the darkness in villages by the light of your pen. Do not forget that in our country the world of the Dalit and the ignored classes is vast. Get to know intimately their pain and sorrow, and try through your literature to bring progress to their lives. True humanity resides there”. Laura Brueck (2010) agrees that the Dalits have been able to achieve striking success using new forms of literature as a vehicle for radical social change, “Dalit, no longer content to be represented by others, have now turned a critical eye on mainstream literature that claims to speak from a Dalit perspective. No longer wanting to be limited as objects of sympathy, revulsion, or desire, Dalit writers have embraced the call of Ambedkar to not only intimately reveal the ‘pain and sorrow’ of Dalit lives, but more significantly also to “bring progress”. Very especially the attempt to demonize the Brahmins from the title of the article, “Fighting Back: Good Dalits and Bad Brahmins” establishes the fact that the academia is blind folded due to the plethora of research and literatures available in support of the Dalit community in India now a days. The myth that the Brahmins are living a ‘heavenly life’ established through these literatures is a stark example of partiality by the academic researchers especially for the upper caste woman who are constantly facing the fate of ‘multilateral’ suppression.

3. METHODS

For this study, I used semi-structured interviews with long and extensive probing on political, cultural, educational and social disadvantages these rural Brahmin women perceive today. The information so obtained was starkly against the established presumption that the lower caste people are the real sufferers in India. Fairbrother has rightfully stated the qualitative method as the best fit for such studies, “In the qualitative tradition objectivity is challenged, & the process of research & the facts it reveals are seen to be laden with values; Qualitative approaches see researchers themselves as instrument of data collection” (2007:p42).

The questions were asked in the colloquial language of the respondents and later were translated into English, then lastly were cleaned as data. The 20 recorded interviews were transcribed and prepared for coding into NVIVO-10. On the basis of the grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) the themes were deduced. The coding was performed upon four main axes viz. social, cultural, political disadvantages and disadvantage in terms of getting a livelihood faced by them today. Being culturally too traditional, there were instances when my respondents found themselves culturally bound to not to answer some of the questions, especially if related to their marriage, husband and personal life but at the same time they did not hesitate much to explain their political, cultural and occupational expectations. All such unclearly answered data or not answered responses of the interview has been coded into the GreyZone (See Figure 2).

Proposed by Julong Deng, the Grey system theory has also long been used by social scientists in order to provide techniques, notions & ideas for resolving and (analyzing) latent and intricate systems. Grey System has been defined by JuLong Deng as, “Grey (partially informed) system theory focuses on the system, structure and event that fall in between the white (informed) and black (un-informed system) and has been widely used in social world research today” (JuLong Deng, 1982:28-29). Sifeng Liu explains, “The application scope of Grey System Theory has extended to industry, agriculture, social affairs, economy, energy, transportation, oil, geology, water conservancy, meteorology, ecology, environment, medicine,
education, sports, military, legal, financial and other fields, and have resolved a large number of practical problems in production, life and scientific research successfully.” (2007: p117).

Figure 2. Dimensions of Themes of the Data

To be more precise and to break the prevailing ‘myth’ that Brahmin are living a heavenly life, I have selected respondents of this research from those Brahmin families who do not have any member working in the government sector currently. They were asked about their perceptions about the consequences they are facing and remedies they expect under these unfavorable social conditions. Noticeably, when asked explicitly they seemed not to recognize the government favored schemes made for them. The themes deduced from the data were embedded in the free nodes of NVIVO-10, as illustrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Emergent Nodes from the interview

4) RESULTS

The findings of this study illustrates descriptions of the categories that emerged from the interview data and it also deals side by side how these categories are inter-related with each other. Apart from the demographic information that the informants have given in detail, I was also interested in knowing their educational qualification, dependency for living, income in Rupee (Currency of India) per month, and the number of off-springs presently they have. Educational qualification and income were further categorized as shown in the table4 below. The dependency-status of the informants was further divided into two categories. Table 4 below, explains that the incomes are sparsely scattered with

Table 4: Income RS/Month Vs Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B: Edu Qual</th>
<th>C: Univ</th>
<th>D: :12 to BA</th>
<th>E: :12 to 12</th>
<th>F: E:1 to 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1500-1000</td>
<td>1000-500</td>
<td>Above 1500</td>
<td>Below 500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study conducted 06th Oct to 20th Oct; 2013

different degrees of educational qualifications of the respondents. As it appears in the data the less educated are having less income, in the matter fact the more elderly ladies had reported to have less income than the younger ones. The reported data has shown the same kind of trends when education is compared with dependency for living and income is compared with education. A matrix between their educational qualification and status of dependency has been explained in the table 5 below. These patterns would be later discussed in terms of law of conservation of resources theory and social capital theory. The data collected for the rural
Table 5: Dependency Vs Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Dependent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study conducted 06thOct to 20th Oct; 2013

Brahmin women identity from the informants were categorized into two distinct dimensions of advantages and disadvantages; moreover these two dimensions were further categorized symmetrically into political, cultural, social and occupational themes. To respect the respondents’ right to privacy, and giving due respect to the sensitivity of the informants’ identity some questions were not further probed and hence some of the data were not obtained clearly enough to be categorized in any themes. These data have been put into the GreyZone (See figure 2). In terms of their identity, as a rural Brahmin woman, the data when coded have shown a distinct trend with the research dimensions as shown in the table 6 below. It is very clear from the table 6 that the most of the women do feel that they are culturally better but they do strongly feel that they are socially and politically backwards.

Table 6: Education Vs Themes of Advantage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grey Zone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study conducted 06thOct to 20th Oct; 2013

Lastly, if we could recall from the table 3 above it is distinctly clear that the informants have reported themselves more disadvantaged if their response is calculated in terms of their rural Brahmin women identity. The perception of being the disadvantaged was proportionate to the decrease in educational level (Table 7). In contrary to the trend of perception of disadvantage with respect to the educational qualification, the perception of disadvantage was in declination with the decline in income of the respondents (Table 8).

Table 7: Education Vs Disadvantage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupational</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Zone</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study conducted 06thOct to 20th Oct; 2013

There is an acute anger in these rural Brahmin women towards the government policies and they find the negligence of government in policy making responsible for their marginalized plight today. One of the respondents explains her perception in tears, “Being a Brahmin woman, we could not get along with them and live the way they live. We pay three times more than Scheduled caste students for admission in schools, for job applications and we have the same income as that of theirs. They have ‘reservation’, and you know, government make their home. Do we...?”
Table 8: Income Vs Disadvantage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1500 About 1000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 About 500</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 1500</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 500</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Study conducted 06th Oct to 20th Oct, 2013

5) DISCUSSION

The data and its varied projections in terms of advantage and disadvantage has brought the realities of these Brahmin women against the prevailing myth in the academia that presumes them to be wealthy and privileged. Keeping a very direct interface with the data, a constant comparison between the prevailing presumption and the reality about these Brahmin women have been discussed in this section.

There is a wide spread myth that Brahmins’ are at the top of the caste system forming the most dominant group in the social hierarchy (Dumont, 1980; Brown, 2000; Mitra, 1992, and Deshpande, 2001). India, as a democratic republic, values the number of votes. This number is exercised as an index of dominance in the politics by choosing the representatives of one’s caste (Srinivas, 2002; Sahay, 2010). Sahay has expressed this dominance as a numerical strength, “Dominance is constructed through a range of measures, including numerical strength, and economic and political power, but it is also contested” (2010:p412). On the basis of the theory of conservation of resources, individual with greater resource are less prone to resource loss and more capable of resource gain, and in contrary to this who lack resources are more prone to resources loss and less capable of resource gain. SC and ST are not the un-wealthy section of India. To conserve their resources and privilege they side with OBC to form one interest group to retain and protect the affirmative actions taken by the government for them. This dominance is quite visible at the lower level of society. One of the respondents reports, “If I go out they behave in a very un-civilized way. They knowingly want to quarrel with us and take us to the police station. They are in all offices and government departments. They insulted me on caste line and all standing there side with their caste.” On the grass root level this solidarity of SC and ST with OBC has endangered the normal life of the rural Brahmin women in India.

Another respondent blames the use of mobile for their insecurity, “They use abusive words and do not know how to respect relationships. I really do not want to talk to these people. Why should I put my life in danger? If I go for college they would call each other on phones and would gather together to taunt on me. There are so many in numbers. Why my brother does not do such things to girls? They do not have good intentions towards us and our family.” One of the respondents who is 29 years old and is a widow explains her social status as, “Your brother (her husband) died last year. I am left with two children and have the responsibility to take care of them. I could not eat everything could not wear everything as I have restrictions (A widowed Brahmin woman does eat (vegetarian) and wear the simplest after the death of her husband. It’s a wide known culture of Brahmins).

Those who make the rules must be pure (Declain, 2012; p123). A 36 year old dependent woman reports, “It is not good to be Brahmin. They comment on us if we eat meat. They abuse us. My husband has opened a small shop even that is criticized by these lower caste people. They told my husband either you work like a priest or you sell things; could not do both.” A many respondents have shown this kind of trend from the people around indicating as if the social agencies and services want these Brahmins to remain as Brahmins only. More
importantly, these rural Brahmin women are not aware about the government policies or schemes that are implemented for women and girl children in the state of Bihar, India. In most of the cases they think the schemes are only made for the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and the other backward classes, “They have everything better than us, and government gives them. They have home, food and even jobs. I have three children. Two of them are not able to study because of money. We asked the school headmaster for stipend. He replied we do not have schemes and funds for Brahmins”.

5.1) GAPS IN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

Government already has implemented some schemes and programs, targeting rural areas, in most cases the lower caste people. For example, Jawahar Rojgar Yojna (also called Gram Samridhi Yojna) which is in effect since 1989 to help scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, but it reserves 30% of jobs for women in the rural area. Planning Commission Report, PEO study no 147 reads, “Though the people below the poverty line were the target group for employment, the preference was to be given to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and freed bonded laborers. Thirty percent of the employment opportunities were to be reserved for women in rural areas. Gram Panchayats were to be involved in the planning and implementation of the program”. Another government plan called Swarnjayanti Gram Swaozgar Yojna, (SGSY) was launched in April, 1999 by the central government (funding 75%) with the collaboration of state governments (funding 25%) to provide self-employment facilities to the rural people. Introduced as a ‘holistic’ plan to eradicate the poverty from the rural area; the scope of this program reads, ‘giving major benefits to the SC/ST in the rural area’. It majorly covers the families below poverty line in rural areas of the country.

SGSY, Online Government of Bihar has quantified the objective of this program as, “This programme covers families below poverty line in rural areas of the country. Within this target group, special safeguards have been provided by reserving 50% of benefits for SCs/STs, 40% for women and 3% for physically handicapped persons. Subject to the availability of the funds, it is proposed to over 30% of the rural poor in each block in the next 5 years.” Irrespective of the fact that the Bihar government has launched new programs and schemes for rural women yet these schemes are not reaching the rural Brahmin women.

At the ground level the government employees are mainly from the lower castes who have been getting reservation in government jobs since the very day India got independence. To conserve their resources these employees use nepotism and side on the caste line while distributing these funding. One of the respondents in tears, “They would push us, abuse us and if we just open our mouth they would shout for SC & ST case. We are truly even afraid to talk to them, they abuse when they spot us. Could we leave home in such circumstances? The schools are made especially for them, most of the teachers are from their community, and head master is from their community. For one certificate we need to pay them twice more than what lower caste students pay them. No one is for us, no one is from us.”

6) CONCLUSION

Due to multiple layers of deprivation arising from the caste-kinship between the scheduled castes and the well-off OBC as interest groups of reservation polices, un-favorable government schemes and programs, traditional values of culture, and the gender based discrimination have made these rural Brahmin women one of the most segregated and disadvantaged group of all in India today. They are forced to and destined to live a marginalized life.
According to rational choice theory one should assume that each individual is a rationally ‘self-interested’ and ‘utility maximizing’ agent, besides his behavior and transactions are driven by the interests (Rawls, 1993; 1999 and Clements, 2005). When opportunities are provided to according to the caste then the government policies could hardly reach them. It is the demand of the hour for the government at central, provincial, district and even rural levels to take initiatives for the Brahmin women residing in the rural areas of India. Reservation in education, jobs and other affirmative actions taken by the government has got translated into ‘interest’ to form the interest group and as a ‘resource’ to conserve, it has made the rural politics quite detrimental for the upper caste Brahmins. Being traditionally employed as priests or teachers they have forced to lose their occupation and dignity today. The state government must take initiatives to reach this deprived lot directly through its schemes and program.

Lastly a question which deserves to be the core of the answers of all the questions offered above, “Who should be offered the economic and social opportunity to live a dignified life, a woman or a Dalit? The fact of the matter is that the type and the quality of education as one of the most important factors determine the economic-competitiveness, health and hygiene (Greg Shaw, 2010) of the society but due to the ‘wicked problem’ of caste based preferences these rural Brahmin women have become the most deprived lot of India. Nevertheless, no one could disagree with the fact that the women need more preferable actions from the society to live a dignified life due to biological and socio-cultural reasons in all kind of society on the globe.
7) REFERENCES


Appendix 8.1. List of semi-structured interview:

1) How do you feel when you go for job opportunities with a rural Brahmin Identity? (Probing)
2) What is your status as a rural Brahmin woman as compared to other caste woman? (Probing)
3) Which government policies you are benefited with? (Probing)
4) How advantaged or disadvantaged you feel while as a Brahmin women in terms of social, cultural, educational, political and opportunities for livelihood? (Probing)
Pakistan


