

Can Computer Mediated Communication be a solution for equity and performance related problems of educational group work in under developing countries of gulf region?

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Abstract

Group work is one of the effective modes of working, whether in educational institutions, financial institutions, political institutions, or business organizations (Ancona, 1990; Bettenhausen, 1991; Gallucci, 1985). Many researchers discuss different benefits of educational group work activities in practical life of the students. Switzer and Shriner (2000) supported this mode of learning of students in all educational stages. They suggested that students were the most obvious party who benefit from group work among students, teachers, and the community. They categorized overall benefits into four main types: 1) educational benefits which they receive immediately, 2) social benefits which they receive immediately, 3) critical thinking benefits, and 4) long-term career benefits.

Lawrance (1992) , and Yates (2001) were of the opinion that equity is one of the main obstacle(due to sense of empowerment) in implementing educational group work affectively. There are chances that domination of certain group can be produced due to identity of speaker, eye contact, nodding, moving the hands, and facial expressions etc, which ultimately can affect the sense of empowerment of the members of the group. In this type of situation, suitable adoption of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) technology can be consider to reduce this problem and improve the sense of empowerment of the members, where there is a chance of discrimination.

This research will be a further step in addition to the previous technological tools & group work related researches. In this researcher will try to explore that how suitable CMC tools can play a role to over come the group work problems and to increase the performance of the students in the developing countries like Oman. Bales famous IPA model can be used as a base of qualitative analysis of the online transcript of the 256 students to check their sense of empowerment change (equity level) after the use of suitable CMC technology. In addition to this, suitable statistical tools will be applied to check the performance of the students quantitatively after using this mode of learning.

Group Work Activities in Education

Group investigation is very commonly used form of collaborative learning in the education, and in this form of learning, members of group cooperate and support each other to work on a collective task, resolve conflicts, and provide suitable solution of the problem (Kroll, Masingila, and Mau 1992, cited in Paul & Ralph 2004). Good coordination and proper organization of a group can produce much better results of any task, as compared to completion of same task by an individual. In summarize way one can say that outcome of individual task is based on the skills of one individual, while result of a group task based on the composition of skills of many individuals. As an example, in modules like marketing and software development, students are required to work collaboratively in groups, to share their ideas and to finish big projects effectively. It is difficult for an individual student to produce same level of output individually. To achieve the same level of output of group work, the individual needs to put extra efforts, resources, and time, as he/she has to complete all task based on only his/her skills. This style of learning in a group environment can produce better results, therefore many disciplines of lower and higher education like: information systems, finance, physical sciences, marketing, human resources, business communications, software development, and social sciences are getting benefits from this well established style of collaborative work to meet learning outcomes (Johnson, Johnson, and Smith 1998; Millis and Cottell 1998; Slavin 1990, cited in Paul & Ralph 2004).

Many researchers discuss different benefits of group work activities in practical life of the students. Switzer and Shriner (2000) supported Mello's (1993) argument of the professional life benefits of students with the use of group collaborative work. Their main work was on assessment and implementation of the learning strategies of big classes and laboratories. They suggested that students were the most obvious party who benefit from group work among students, faculty members, and the community. They categorized overall benefits into four main types: 1) educational benefits which they receive immediately, 2) social benefits which they receive immediately, 3) critical thinking benefits, and 4) long-term career benefits. Researchers like Stamatoplos (2000) also supported Switzer and Shriner's group work benefits in his integrated teaching approach of research. According to him group work activities should be adopted in higher education to meet the objectives of the education and prepare students to handle their real life situations.

Evidence from different researchers in support of Switzer and Shriner's four types of benefits from group work activities are as follows:

- The first benefit is immediate educational benefit which comes from a prior study of Chan and Mao (1999), in which they compared traditional teaching strategies and group collaborative strategies. According to their suggestions, students actually learn more through collaborative learning strategies. Cohn (1999) also supported this benefit as outcome of the group work, according to him group work provides benefits like: students' ability to develop a plan, work on a plan, and sharing information and knowledge. This type of active role can provide immediate educational benefit to the student, it is argued. The current study will try to explore the possibilities of availing this benefit of group work by improving the cognitive empowerment of students during their group work activities.
- The second benefit, "immediate social benefits", refers to improvement of students' social abilities due to group collaborative work. During group work activities students will come to know each other, and also know those who have similar interests (Tanenbaum et al. 1998). Further, these bonds may eventually extend beyond the classroom, across semesters, and possibly throughout the students' lives. Dyrud (2001) argued in the favor of Switzer

- and Shriner's immediate social benefit, according to him incorporating group work in classes allows students to develop a socially supportive environment.
- The third benefit of group work is of critical thinking. Some researcher argue in support of this that the participants of group work activities are better able to develop their critical skills through their interactions with other group members, than those working on their own (Cohn 1999; Dundes 2001; Millis and Cottell 1998; Tanenbaum et al. 1999, cited in Elizabeth, Monk, & Brian 2005). Walker (1996) argued in the favor of Switzer and Shriner critical thinking benefit, according to him group members will share information and the situation of debate will develop. This debate can provide critical thinking in group work, which ultimately leads towards critically evaluated solution of the problems. These critical thinking skills eventually aid students in their workplace. The current research tries to provide an open form of discussion among students, which can help them to think critically.
 - The fourth benefit, which students can get from group work activities, is long term career benefits. Many researchers argued in the support of group work. According to them with the help of group work students will achieve long-term career benefits (Colbeck et al. 2000, cited in Elizabeth, Monk, & Brian 2005; Kendall 1999; Maranto and Gresham 1998). Welch (2000) also pointed out long term career benefits of students by learning team management, conflict management, and interpersonal communication skills. Kolb (1998) wrote in a similar way about the group work achievement, according to outcomes of his research, this is an opportunity to practice the interpersonal and teamwork skills which are essential for all professional fields. Currently in the context of globalization, it is hard to imagine any profession, where employees do not coordinate in fulfillment of their organizational goals. As the current research is focusing on sense of empowerment related issues, but a supporting research question research tries to explore the possible change in the sense of dealing with social and practical life situations.

All these benefits can be potentially valuable in any student's social, political, and practical life, but still group work is less applicable in many situations and environments like the current target population of Oman. It is very important to understand nature of the problem and obstacles, while applying group work activities in general and particularly in the target population.

Gender Equality Issue in Educational Group Work

In group work, gender inequity problem exists in the educational systems of many closed culture and isolated societies; mostly these equalities portray males as dominant and females as submissive (Tracy, 1987; Streitmatter, 1985, cited in Llatove, Zinaida, and Shmuel, 1998). This inequality can produce an opposition from female students to work in a mixed gender group environment. When the researcher start working in the target population Dhofar Region of Oman several years back, he realized that the female students of the target population are not allowed to communicate freely, and also restriction in their movements, due to their cultural and social norms.

Due to these restriction and cultural bounded ness females of this region are afraid that they might face a problem of male domination in group work and it might result on decline of their academic performance. These inequalities and restriction of female students' movement decrease their frequency of accessing the resources out side campus, while male students have much better access to the resources. Such as male

students can visit physically to different organizations and libraries with in the city or even outside the city to collect information, while in the case of female students it is very difficult for them to move outside their houses after campus hours.

This gender inequity is one of the main issues of underdeveloped countries, where male and female are not considered equally. This inequity is reflected in the selection of the areas of the specializations also. Yogev & Ayalon (1990) argued in their research outcomes that due to some inequalities between genders, female students traditionally choose humanistic fields, as compared to male students having more interest in science and technology fields. The enrolment record of the University is also showing that majority of the female students are joining education department, to become school teachers of girls school after finishing their education. Separate schooling system is showing them a temporary solution to join male dominancy free institutions. Where as male students are not significant in education specialization.

To find the solution of this gender inequality problem in group work of higher education, it is important to explore the main sources of this problem first, so that after reducing these obstacles female students should feel encouragement to work in groups. There are many sources for this inequality of behaviour in the environments like current environment; commonly main source of this problem is lack of female empowerment. Before exploring the solution of this problem, to improve the sense of empowerment of female students, it is useful to have the concept of empowerment from the point of view of educational group work.

Female Empowerment in Educational work group context

In the educational contexts of the current population, famous four Stromquist's (1993) dimensions could be translated into two types of empowerment: Affect empowerment and Cognitive empowerment. These categories are more relevant to the educational side, as compared to her economical and political empowerment categories. Economical empowerment is less relevant to higher educational side and current political structure in the country it is not allowed to conduct any political empowerment related research in educational and non educational sector.

The level of female affect empowerment in group work is based on her feelings, and further these feelings can be a cause for her motivation, influence, attitude change, and anxiety level. For example if one female student will feel good and comfortable in any environment, she may be motivated to produce much better results as compared to normal results. One research question of the current research will also try to explore the possible way to improve the female students' sense of affect empowerment during group work.

The second category of empowerment in group work is cognitive empowerment, based on knowledge and understanding of any situation/topic/lecture/person. For example cognitive empowerment of a female student in group work may be reflected through her level of knowing and understanding about the situation or topic under consideration. One aim of the current research is to explore possible ways to improve the female students' sense of cognitive empowerment during group work.

These two categories will be the main focus of the current research. This researcher as an instructor in the business field believes that group work should be essential part in business related higher education courses. The first reason for this belief is the nature of collaborative work required in the job market now a day in the field of business. The second reason is to avail benefits of group work explained earlier; especially the

benefits explained by Switzer and Shriner in their research outcomes. The third reason is the feedback from management of different companies about our female graduate students, according to that they lack in coordination and team based work.

Proper higher education will have a direct effect on any society, depending on how learning outcomes can be met. As explained earlier in Switzer and Shriner's study about benefits for the students to work in a group work activities, these benefits include positive impact on the society, and also support them to work in a highly competitive business environment. The present study will try to give a solution to the problem faced due to lack of empowerment in the group work by the female students of the Dhofar region. This solution may improve the sense of empowerment level of female students, and it may lead to decreased resistance for working in group work.

Solution to the Problem

The problem discussed above is that, in the cultural context of Oman, female students are resisting to work in face to face group work. The reasons behind this resistance are that they are not in the habit of communicating in a mixed gender environment, which might produce discomfort for them while working together, secondly they have fear of not learning properly, which might result in the decline of their performance. These reasons are reflecting females' lack of empowerment during mixed group work. As a drawback of not working in group work environment, female students are not getting the benefits of group work discussed in the previous chapter like: educational, social, critical thinking, and long term practical benefits. One of the reasons of this lack of empowerment during group work can be due to not having a proper mode of communication other than face to face communication fitting the needs of the local community.

The current research suggests that traditional face to face interaction in group work does not solve the problem of female empowerment. It is necessary therefore to think of an alternative that would respect the general scope of group work (in terms of its multisided but interactive effects) but favours involvement of females in sharing and communicating information with their male fellows. One way to do this is through the use of suitable Information Technology tools like Computer Mediated Communication.

Research Questions

Three main research questions of the current research will try to address the empowerment and performance issue of the female students. These questions will try to explore that whether or not CMC will help female students of Dhofar region of Oman to solve their empowerment related problems during group work. There is not much evidence regarding whether it would actually be effective in practice. This, therefore, means that there needs to be an empirical study done. It is also very important while exploring any solution for female students' empowerment problem to consider male students, as they are sharing educational environment with them. Therefore, for in-depth analysis of the questions, the main research questions will be divided into subsidiary research questions. The research questions are as following:

- To what extent does CMC Empower students Affectively?
- To what extent does CMC Empower students Cognitively?
- How important is CMC in improving the performance of students?

Research Procedure

This study was carried out in Dhofar University (Oman) by the researcher and involved 256 undergraduate students. The students were divided into balanced mixed groups (male & female) by the course instructor (the researcher); all the groups were treated equally and they communicated with the help of CMC tools during their group work activities. It was not possible to have a control group using face to face communication due to the cultural and religious issues these students had with face to face communication in collaborative group work (open face to face communication of different genders is forbidden culturally in this community).

It was a real world educational situation heavily influenced by local society norms. It was initially proposed to have control and experimental groups among students by the researcher. However, considering local norms he avoided using a control group, because the control group would need to conduct its group activities using traditional face to face communication, and this was not possible culturally. A second main reason for avoiding using a control group was that it was important that all students should have an equivalent educational experience, and a control group approach could lead to a distinctly different educational experience for some students. In addition to this, the current research was not directed at comparing results between the mixed groups; rather it was aimed at trying to explore the answers to the research questions related to solving group work problem of students, by using computer mediated communication tools.

In order to explore the relationship between use of CMC technology and the empowerment process, an initial survey was conducted. It was a very small survey, intended to provide some insight into the current status of face to face interaction, students' familiarity with CMC tools, and empowerment in the current society.

In the main research activities, from the start of the semester each group was given a task by the researcher. Each group had to work collaboratively on their group assignment task. This was for the first time in the history of the University that mixed gender groups worked together to perform their tasks. Computer mediated communication was selected as a mode of communication, in fact this was the change of mechanism of communication from traditional face to face communication to online communication. Online transcripts of students were used as qualitative data to observe any change in the sense of empowerment level during group work of the female students after using CMC. Yahoo online groups were selected by the researcher as the means to facilitate online communication for group work activities. Students were given training sessions in the beginning of the course in the use of the Yahoo online groups, so that they could use them more efficiently for their group work communication. This training helped them to understand the components and characteristics of this mode of communication. The initial survey provided an overview of the familiarity of the female students with CMC, and this training was aiming to boost the technical knowledge of those students who were weak or not familiar with CMC.

This research made use of online working groups; each group member (male or female) communicated with other group members to discuss his/her group assignment task/activities. In each group there was a group leader from the students (male or female), who led the group for the entire group task. Privacy of the identity of the group members was maintained during the entire research process.

The group members communicated with each other through their assigned identifications (assigned by the course instructor). The group leader was responsible for breaking down the work of the assignment among the group members. All communications between the group members were through the online message board and there was no face to face communication. Every group member was required to submit his or her work

report at the end of each week or within the time frame given by the group leader. So, each group member was expected to send messages during the assignment period of approximately three months. Students were notified at the beginning that their online communication frequency would have a role in addition to the quality of work in their assignment evaluation.

Group members sent messages about their progress, collecting information about their tasks, sharing the files, sharing the calendar, sharing the databases, and sharing their on-line group communication statistics through yahoo online groups' website. All the communication was related to course work, and any communication other than regarding educational work was prohibited. Only authorized group members and the course instructor could view their group communication. The students of one group could not see the communications of other online groups due to password protection.

To address the research questions, qualitative and quantitative data analysis were used. The students also took part in a personal interview conducted by the course instructor (researcher) at the end of the assignment period (almost three months), to analyze and to evaluate their assignment work. The main reason for conducting these interviews was that due to cultural boundaries and the hidden identities of students during group work, group presentation about their achievement was not possible. In the end the course, grades of the course of the students were compared with their CGPA by using suitable statistical tools to explore any possible change in the performance of the students with the use of CMC in group work.

Determination of Analytical Categories & Sub Categories of Qualitative Data Analysis

The analytical categories were mainly determined from the sense of empowerment focus of the research questions. This selection of categorization is very important part in the whole analysis process, as it is taking the results of qualitative data towards the answers of the research questions (Titscher et al, 2000; Holsti, 1968). All coding process is dependent on these selected categories and wrong or inappropriate category can lead to start the whole process of coding from the beginning.

In selection of categories of the current research, the researcher considered models of categories of different previous researches of content analysis which can be adopted in the current situation. One of the major models of content analysis was developed by Bales in 1950; it is famous as Bales's Interaction Process Analysis (IPA). Many researchers of different disciplines are using this model as a standard of content analysis (Titscher et al 2000). It consists of four meta categories which are subdivided into further three categories. Many past researches like Hiltz and Turoff (1993) have a successful history of adopting this model into their researches. Bales's model also faced criticism from different researchers like Pavitt (1998), Huczynski and Buchanan (1991). They criticized the model of Bales, due to examining the functions at the low level rather than including content. In spite of these minor criticisms, still Bales's model is one of the widely used models in content analysis.

Chou (2000) was one of the main followers of Bales's model; she incorporated some changes in the original model of Bales and provided an alternative model. One can say her model was adoptive model of Bales's Interaction Process Analysis (IPA). She expanded the model of Bales from 12 to 16 categories. Although, Chou's study was in a different area, it has some similarities to the current research. She wished to compare the contributions of students when working synchronously and asynchronously. This model cannot fit hundred percent in the current study because the current research is not comparing between synchronous and asynchronous work of students, rather it is focused on change in the sense of empowerment of students while

using asynchronous mode of communication, but Chou's model could be helpful while developing the categories in the qualitative data analysis of the current research

The current research tried to adopt some relevant categories of from Chou's model, which is adopted model of Bales' famous IPA. In addition to these categories, the researcher introduced some new categories after over viewing the collected data, as many studies developed coding categories as the analysis processes rather than on prior bases (Hendriks and Maor, 2001; Jones et al, 2000; Salmon, 1998; Gunawardena et al 1997). So final categories proposed in the current research are combination of categories adopted from previous researches on prior basis and categories suggested after going through the collected data. These additions of categories are called inductive categories (generated during examining the data).

Some times categories can be organized at different levels. That is, a set of subcategories might fall beneath certain categories and even certain category might itself fall under an even higher level category. This type of hierarchical categories helps to combine same type of categories under one main category. Frontman and Kunke (1994) suggested a very useful style of hierarchical categories to explore the answer of certain research question. They divided categories according to different levels of sub categories under one main category. The lower level is the actual operation level arranging the data and main categories are focusing on the answers of the research questions. Table 1.1 shows the final list of categories of the current research.

<u>Main Categories</u>	<u>Level 1 Sub Categories</u>	<u>Level 2 Sub Categories</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Sense of Affect Empowerment	Feeling	Better/ comfortable	New category	Showing Positive Reaction
		Not Better/ Not comfortable	New category	Showing Negative Reaction
	Motivation	Positive	New category	Showing Positive Reaction
		Negative	New category	Showing Negative Reaction
	Class Interaction	Show Agreement	Bales	Showing Positive Reaction
		Disagree	Bales	Showing Negative Reaction
	Anxiety	Show Tension Release	Bales	Showing Positive Reaction
		Show Tension	Bales	Showing Negative Reaction
	Attitude	Positive	New category	Showing Positive Reaction
		Negative	New category	Showing Negative Reaction
Sense of Cognitive Empowerment	Learning Abilities	Asks for Topical Information	Chou adaptation of Bales	Showing Positive Reaction
		Asks for Technical Information	Chou adaptation of Bales	Showing Positive Reaction
	Group Strategies	Give Suggestion	Bales	Showing Positive Reaction

		Give Opinion	Bales	Showing Positive Reaction
	Knowing Capacity	Give Topical Information	Chou adaptation of Bales	Showing Positive Reaction
		Give Technical Information	Chou adaptation of Bales	Showing Positive Reaction
	Skill Development	Positive	New category	Showing Positive Reaction
		Negative	New category	Showing Negative Reaction
Misc./others	Miscellaneous/others		New category	irrelevantAll content

Current Research Categories in Tabular Form (Table 1.1)

Results

Female Students' Qualitative Data Analysis: Qualitative data analysis uses content analysis of online transcripts of female students during research period. This content analysis uses final list of categories to analyze the data. Final list of categories have three main categories including: sense of affect, sense of cognitive, and miscellaneous. Further each main category is divided into level 1 sub categories and level two categories. Level two subcategories are distinguished on the base of negative reaction and positive reaction categories.

Results of qualitative data analysis show that female students have no significant difference in their four positive reaction categories of sense of affect empowerment monthly data over the period of research. In four negative reaction categories there is significant difference in their monthly data collected during research period of four months. It reflects based on qualitative data our new mode of communication CMC is not changing female students' sense of affect empowerment significantly but on the other side it is significantly diminishing the ideas generation under the negative reaction categories of sense of affect empowerment. From the qualitative data analysis results of female students, it is clear that female students have more number of average ideas produced under positive reaction categories as compared to negative reaction categories, although the results are not significant of positive categories. Overall this is improved sign for female students in their sense of affect empowerment because they are not changing their positive reaction categories level but on the other side they are significantly decreasing their negative reaction average number of ideas over the period of four months.

Results of qualitative data analysis also show that female students have significant difference in their seven positive reaction categories of sense of cognitive empowerment monthly data over the period of research. In one negative reaction category there is significant decrease of ideas over the period of four months. It reflects that our new mode of communication CMC is improving female students' sense of cognitive empowerment significantly. It is also significantly declining the ideas generating under the negative reaction category of sense of cognitive empowerment of female students. From the qualitative data analysis results of female students, it is clear that female students have less number of average ideas produced under positive reaction categories or negative reaction category, as compared to ideas produced under sense of affect empowerment categories. Overall this is the sign of improvement for female students in their sense of cognitive

empowerment because they are improving the positive reaction categories and dropping the negative reaction categories over the period of four months.

Overall the qualitative data analysis of female students of the current research shows that female students are significantly improving their sense of cognitive empowerment. They have no significant improvement in positive reaction categories of sense of affect empowerment but they have significant decrease in their negative reaction categories of sense of affect empowerment during the period of research.

Male Students' Qualitative Data Analysis: Results of qualitative data analysis shows that male students have no significant difference in their four positive reaction categories of sense of affect empowerment monthly data over the period of research. In four negative reaction categories there is significant difference in their monthly data collected during research period of four months. It is reflecting that our new mode of communication CMC is not changing male students' sense of affect empowerment significantly but on the other side it is decreasing the ideas generating under the negative reaction categories of sense of affect empowerment. From the qualitative data analysis results of male students, it is evident that they have more number of average ideas produced under positive reaction categories as compared to positive reaction categories, although the results are not significant of positive categories. Overall this is an improved sign for male students in their sense of affect empowerment because they are not changing their positive reaction categories level significantly but on the other side they are significantly decreasing their negative reaction average number of ideas over the period of four months.

Results of qualitative data analysis also show that male students have significant difference in their seven positive reaction categories of sense of cognitive empowerment monthly data over the period of research. In one negative reaction category there is significant decrease of ideas over the period of four months. It reflects that new mode of communication CMC is improving male students' sense of cognitive empowerment significantly. It is also significantly dropping rate of the ideas generating under the negative reaction category of sense of cognitive empowerment of male students. From the qualitative data analysis results of male students, it is clear that they have less number of average ideas produced under positive reaction categories or negative reaction category, as compared to ideas produced under sense of affect empowerment categories. Overall this is an improved sign for male students in their sense of cognitive empowerment because they are improving the positive reaction categories and decreasing the negative reaction categories over the period of four months.

Overall the qualitative data analysis of male students of the current research shows that male students are significantly improving their sense of cognitive empowerment and also sense of dealing practical and social life situation after this research. They have no significant improvement in positive reaction categories of sense of affect empowerment but they have significant decrease in their negative reaction categories of sense of affect empowerment during the period of research.

Performance change of Students after CMC: Quantitative data analysis uses data collected from registration department of the University for the Courses female students take during research and cumulative average before the start of the research. Comparison between the cumulative averages of female students at the start of research with the percentage of secondary school certificate at the entry level of the University shows that averagely female students are decreasing their performance by 4.8 percent after joining the university, this comparison provides an idea about the general trend of female students after joining the university as compared to their school achievements. Statistical results of comparing current course grades

and cumulated average of female students at the start of research show that female students have significant change in their performance level after the research. Averagely each female student shows 4.8 percent improvement in their course grades at the end of research. It is reflecting that our new mode of communication CMC is helping female students to improve their sense of empowerment and also their academic performance at the end of research.

Same like the analysis of female students, a comparison between the cumulative averages of male students at the start of research with the percentage of secondary school certificate at the entry level of the University show that male students are averagely increasing their performance by 4.9 percent after joining the university. Statistical results of comparing current course grades and cumulative average of male students at the start of research show that male students have no significant change in their performance level after the research. Averagely each male student shows only 0.54 percent improvement in their course grades at the end of research. It is reflecting that our new mode of communication CMC is helping male students to improve their sense of empowerment significantly but not helping them to improve their academic performance significantly.

Conclusion

The study found that technology like CMC can be used to overcome the empowerment related issues of the group work activities. This empowerment problem is one of the vital problems generating resistance among female students to join collaborative work. As discussed earlier that traditional mode of communication in educational institution is not fitting in the needs to over come this issue of empowerment in the group work. These female students have fear of not feeling comfortable, not learning properly, and even loosing their performance in mixed group environment. Before starting the current research, the researcher was of the view that if a suitable alternative of communication can be provided to female students of the target population of Dhofar Region of Oman; it might help them to change their view about collaborative learning and also reduce their resistance to use this style of sharing knowledge and learning, The results of the current research also supported the view and idea of the researcher about the use of alternative mode of communication, which was computer mediated communication (CMC).

Initially it was looking very difficult for the researcher to conduct a research with strong cultural constraints of the local environment and without having any prior research conducted in this isolated region. One thing researcher admitted that his same religious background and origin (sub continent) helped him a lot to understand the local cultural values and believes. The researcher was from the same religion, so it was easy for him to differentiate between the restrictions of the religion and restriction due to cultural norms. His background also helped him to answer many questions raised by the students related to religious aspect of the current research. After finishing the research process, the research believes that if any other researcher from west or with different religious background started this research on his place, it can cause a big resistance from the local community or even from the students.

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