

Chapter- IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is constructed on the basis of the intense engagement with the Meo girl children, teachers, and parents and community members. Out of all the sample schools and areas, 60 students, 18 teachers, 48 parents and 15 community members were interacted continuously for almost sixteen months from April 2016 to August 2017. The perceptions of all the samples were recorded on several issues pertaining to the education of the Meo girl children. The literature review, in the context of Muslims, there were multiple reasons for their alienation. The PROBE Report, (1999) found that the marginalized sections of the society often show a positive desire to educate their children in better school where quality education could be achieved. This was against the basic perception that Meos does not want to send their girl children to school as a consequence of their lack of will towards their schooling. All these issues pertaining to Meo girl children, their struggle and schooling have been made a part of this exploration so as to understand Meo girls' experiences of resistance, schooling and change. The researcher tried to understand how the issues pertaining to Meo girl children situates in everyday life contexts, therefore, the perceptions of Meo girl children, teachers, parents and community members were mapped.

For processing the information extracted from the entire samples, each response was classified according to the objectives of the study in *four* sections. *Section-I (Schooling and Meo girl children's concern, despair and hope)* relates to the analysis on the basis of responses from the Meo girl children. *Section-II (Concerns, worries and hope: Voices from the teachers)* presents the analysis based on the perception of the teachers of the Meo girl children. *Section-III (Parents and the community members: Education and educating their girl children)* presents the views of the parents, as well as, the community members whereas, *section-IV* presents the *analysis on the basis of observation*. After the presentation of information in different sections,

a through discussion has been made in tandem in context of the objectives of the study.

The analysis has been done in descriptive manner in each part, and, linkages have been discussed in different contexts that emerged from the respective interactions. The entire presentation provided in different sub-headings the so has been analyzed according to the emerging areas of concern, particularly in contexts of the Meo girls' experiences of resistance, schooling and change. Classifying the responses in different sub-headings was one of the most thoughtful and difficult tasks, because certain responses were such, where the sample respondents diverted from the main discussion. These types of responses have been analyzed in contexts of understanding built through secondary sources. After having analyzed the parts separately, the chapter has been concluded in tandem, on the basis of results from all the four parts.

4.2 Section I: Schooling and Meo girl children's concern, despair and hope

This section of the data reflects the Meo girl children's concern, despair and hope in contexts of their experiences of resistance, struggle, breaking of cultural boundaries, schooling, escaping marginality and bringing change in their lives and so on. In totality, 60 Meo girl children were interacted on different issues. While working on categorizing these responses, a through master-sheet was prepared, where, similar and dissimilar responses were recorded. These exercise of noting the responses on master-sheet made it convenient to derive sub-areas of concerns, despair and hope that have been presented below in different sub-headings.

4.3 *Meo girl children, familial attachment and everyday life engagement*

For recording everyday life engagement of the Meo girls, it was decided to map the daily schedule of the sample girl children.s This was done to analyze their everyday routine, where they engage themselves. Hence, the very first task taken in the field was to prepare a chart, where daily schedule of the Meo girls was noted down. From each sample area 5 sample children were randomly chosen to map their daily schedule for 3 days. There was no set pattern of mapping the daily schedule of the children. It was both continuous, as well as, non-continuous. Staying in the field given me a chance to

record their daily schedule in a chart that was prepared with an interval of one hour starting from 5 am to 8 pm (see appendix I).

Table- 4.1: Daily schedule statistics

Daily Schedule			
No of children from each sample area	Total no of days of mapping	Total number of children	Total no of recording
5	3	15	45

The everyday life engagement showed that, at home, almost the entire Meo girls remained overburdened with too much workload relating to household chores, which provide them no time to engage themselves in their studies. Before preparing themselves for the school, the Meo girls accomplish all sorts of house hold work from brooming their house to prepare food, as well as, rearing their small siblings. Since supply of drinking water in the area is a matter of concern, therefore, the first task that they accomplish is to arrange drinking water, which is usually stored in all the utensils, as well as, water reservoir found in almost every houses in the form of small underground well. In the entire region, it is usually females who work inside, as well as, outside of the home such as, bringing vegetables, grains from the field and so on. This may seems a usual phenomenon in many regions of India, where female work in the field. However, in case of Meos, it is different in the sense that the male remain sitting idle doing nothing, or, among their male counterparts at the nearby tea stalls, or, at the '*darwaza* or *chupal*' of the village which remains missing in many other cases of other regions in India. They hardly concerns how arrangement of food will be made for the house, what will be prepared for meal and so on. These unconcerned engagement of the male in the house hold daily chores, overburdened the female members of the house to look after the daily affairs of the house. The familial attachment also reflects that more often, the relatives remain present at each-other places as the Meo society is a close knit society and the Meo girl enjoys good relations with their relatives. The girl children, thus, are socialized in the same environment and pick up the same work what a female do in the entire region. This was reflected in the entire sample areas. The familial attachment and everyday life engagement reflects in the conversation with one of the samples which shows the paucity of quality time to

invest in her learning. The sample was probed for her engagement in the household chores. The conversation in this regard is presented below:

Researcher: *Aap roz pani lene jati hain?*

(Whether you go to fetch water every day?)

Sample: *Ye to roz ka kaam hai. Hume hi to karna padta hai. Ghar ka kaam nahi karenge to kaun karega? Yahan hume (ladkian) hi sab karna padta hai.*

(It (the household chores) is the daily doing. It is we (the girls) who have to do the household chores. If we do not do the work, then who will do it? I am not able to complete the tasks of the school. I do not get the time to do it.)

Researcher: *Sara kaam kar ke aap school time se pahuch jati hain?*

(After doing the entire work do you reach the school in time?)

Sample: *School to jate hain madam, leking der ho jati hai. Na hi school ka kaam kar pate hain. Time hi nahi milta hai.*

(I go to school madam, but get late in reaching (school). Neither, I become able to complete the tasks of the school. I do not get the time to do it.)

Researcher: *Apko kaisa lagta hai jab aap ko school jane me der ho jati hai?*

(How do you feel when you get late in going to school?)

Sample: *kya karen madam ji? Ye ghar ka kaam majburi bhi hai aur zarurat bhi. Bachpan se karte aae hain aur age bhi yahi karna hai. School to time pe hi jan chahte hain. Lekin ghar ka kaam kie baghair nahi ja sakte.*

(What to do madam. The household work is compulsion as well as necessity also. I am doing it since my childhood and further in life also I have to do. I do want to go to school in time but I can't go without accomplishing the household work.)

Researcher: *School jana kaisa lagta hai?*

(How do you find going to school?)

Sample: *Madam ji, main na... padhna chahti hun. School me zyada kuch to nahi hota lekin achha lagta hai. Sab dost ban gae hain. Ghar ke kamo se dur thoda time mil jata hai. Lekin ab main class 9 me hun aur agle saal ke bad mera school jana bhi band ho jaega... phir to kaise padhungi nhi pata.*

(Madam, I want to study. Nothing more happens in school, but, I love to go to school. I have made friends out there. I get the time away from the usual work at home. But, now I am in class-ix and after next year I will not be able to go to school. Then, how will I study I don't know)

Researcher: *School jana kun band ho jaega? Kya apke papa aage nahi padhanega?*
(Why would your school get disrupted? Whether your father doesn't want to teach you?)

Sample: *Nahi aisi baat nahi hai. Wo to padhana chahnte hain leking main kaise aur kahan padhne jaungi? Yahan 10 ke baad school nahi hai.. bahar nahi behjenge padhne ke lie... islie kaha...*

(No no... it's not that... he wants to teach me, but, how and where I would go to study? Here in this area, there is no school after 10th and he will not send me away from the region for study. That's why I Said.)

(Sample-T-3/d2)

The conversation as mentioned above suggests that the attachment of Meo girl children with their family leaves no time for her to focus on her studies. Several other similar testimonials from the children upon the issue suggest that the engagement of the girls in household chores help the other female members of the house in accomplishing the house hold tasks collectively. Such engagement often frustrate the girl who think that they are not able to come out of this situation where they can devote their in their studies also. Further, the entire socialization of Meo girls happens in such an environment where they get adapted to their familial work as a tradition which becomes the basis where they lose their childhood. In the absence of any role model and learning environment, the girls though complete their schooling but without any aims. They do not find any opportunity for going beyond their secondary classes due to the administrative shortcoming of not having schools after secondary classes in spite of their desire of studying. The parents also are willing to provide education to their children as reflect from the conversation. The testimonial from some of the sample shows their frustration in this regard. While spending time with the samples, The researcher tried to map the perception of the sample Meo girls. The excerpts of the conversation are presented below which reflects the frustration and overburdened childhood.

Researcher: *Itni choti umar me aap ko kaam karna kaisa lagta hai?*

(How do you feel working in such a tender age?)

Sample: *Madam ji ghar me kaam to hota hi hai. Kaam karna buran nahi lagta. Lekin jab kaam nahi kar paate to ghar me aur school me bhi daant padti hai. Tab bura lagta hai. School ka kaam nahi kar pate islie school me bhi sun na padta hai. Na hi school time pe ja pate hain to man karta hai kaam chor dun. Padhne ka mann karta hai. Lekin phir kaun karega?*

(Madam, within home there remains work. I don't find working bad. But, when I don't work I get a scold in home as well as school. Then I feel bad. Due to work when I don't complete my school work then I get a scold in school also. Neither I am able to go to school in time so sometimes it feels that I should leave study. I love to study but then do not know what to do.)

Researcher: *Lekin phir aap apni padhai kab karti hain?*

(But then when do you study?)

Sample: *Nahi karte... subah jaldi uthna padta hai aur paani laana hota hai. Janwaron ko bhi dekhna hota hai. To jaldi so jate hain. Apni padhai nahi kar paate. Samjh bho nahi aata. Koi samjhane wala bhi nahi hai.*

(I don't do. In the morning I have to get up early to fetch water. Also I have to see cattles. Therefore, I sleep early. Thus, I am not able to study. Also, that I don't not understand. No one is there to make me understand)

Researcher: *To phir aap padhai ko kaise pura karti hain?*

(Then how do you accomplish your study?)

Sample: *Tension hoti hai madam ji. Nahi kar paate pura. Koi samjhane wala hota to samjhne me aasani hoti. Lekin yahan par koi itna padha nahi hai jis se samjh lun. Islie kaam pura nahi kar paate aur chor dete hain.*

(I get tension madam. I am not able to complete. Had there been any person who make me understand then it could be easy. But here, no one is there who are so learned who could guide me to understand. That's why I do not complete my work and leave it.)

Researcher: *Apke bhai apki help nahi karte?*

(Whether your brother do not help you?)

Sample: *Nahi madam ji. Yahan ladke ghar ka kaam nahi karte. Sab humko hi karna padta hai. Unko koi kuch nahi kahta. Sab hume kahenge.*

(No madam. Here boys do not work at home. It is we who have to do all the work. No one says anything to them. Everyone will tell us)

The conversation suggests that the everyday work hinders the educational development of Meo girl children in multiple ways. The irregularity of the Meo girls to the school is related to their involvement on household work. The Meo girls desire to study, however, their involvement in household work do not provide them time and space to accomplish their educational desire in its entirety and thus frustrate them. In such situation, the scolding from home, as well as, school, for not accomplishing their tasks, adds more to their frustrations. Similarly, the absence of help from any learned persons in the vicinity, also frustrate the Meo girls, as, it brings a situation of conflict

in accomplishing their educational desire. On the contrary, the gendered distribution of work between home, and, outside, provides more freedom to boys than girls. At home, the girls are supposed to work, whereas, the boys often remain free from these household chores, as they have more freedom in male dominated Meo's society.

4.4 Meo girl children and their worldviews

To record the worldviews of Meo girls relating to education, projective techniques was utilized apart from the general conversation and interaction. The researcher believed that projective techniques in the form of the writings from the sample Meo girls will provide much attentive and focused understanding of their worldviews. Further, the researcher believed that going through the writings of the Meo girls will provide deeper understanding for analysis. Then there was a challenge that the worldview often remains dynamic and cannot be mapped in its entirety. Hence, it was decided that, projective techniques should be taken in addition to the conversation and interaction of the samples. Apart from this, the researcher believed that worldview can only be analyzed in tandem, and not in isolation, therefore, another challenge was to decide for the aspect upon which the researcher wanted to map their worldview. The discussion from my mentor, seniors and colleagues, led me to decide that one broader open ended question should be provided to the samples in a theatrical workshop mode which will provide much help in understanding the worldviews of the Meo girls.

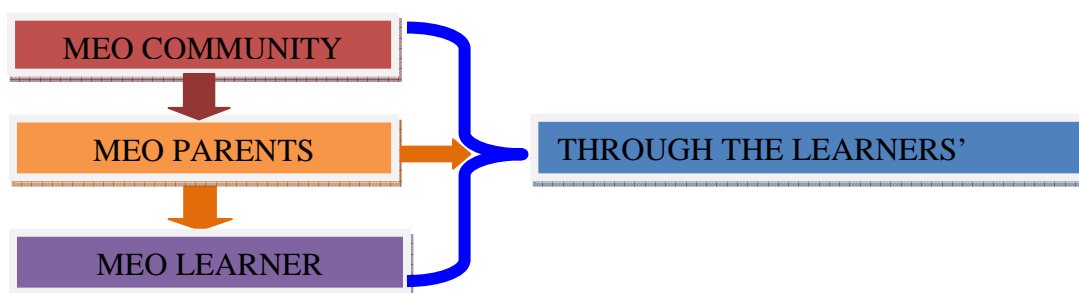
In the theatrical workshop mode a workshop is conducted where the children are involved in continuous conversation upon some specified aspects. During conversation they are taken a back into their lives, when they were small kid, and, make them recall some incidents of life which they still remember and recall. As for example, remembering first scold that they got in their life, first gift that they got from anyone and so on. Once they become involved in such conversation upon such specific issue, they are projected to the present situation, and then to the future, when they will be in their parenthood. Then they are interacted and discussed how they will treat their children on that particular issue in their situation of being a parent. Thus, in theatrical technique, after the general discussion they are provided a broader question and asked to write their views on a piece of paper. The researcher believed that this technique will help in understanding worldviews of Meo girls deeply. Therefore, a question '*If I*

had to change one in relation to home, school and society then...' was given to the sample Meo girls to write. The answer to the question was later analyzed in relation to the objective of the study. However, because of its limitations, the researcher also made interaction with the selected samples. In totality, three small hour workshops were conducted in three sample areas with the available samples. This was because of irregularity of the samples to the school. The constitution of the samples in the workshop for projective writing was as follows:

Table-4.2: Projective Workshop

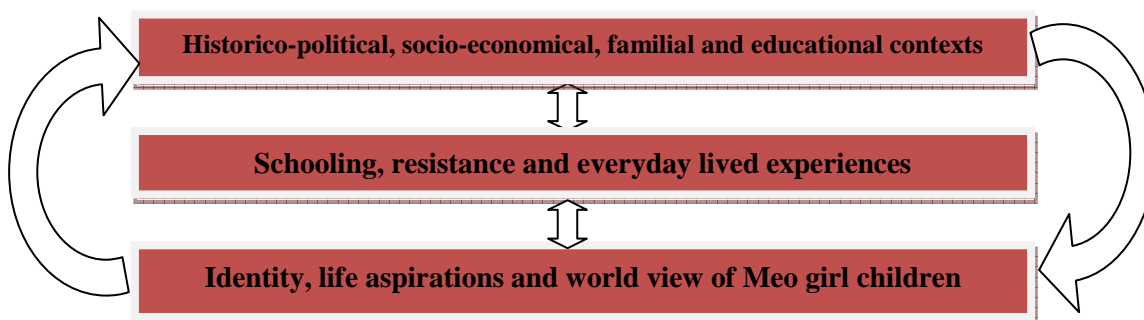
Sample Area	Taoru	Nuh	Punhana	Total
No of Meo girls available in the workshop	7	12	11	30

From the entire sample areas one workshop each with the available sample children was conducted for the purpose of projective writing. 7 Meo girls from Taoru, 12 Meo girls from Nuh and 11 Meo girls from Punhana sample area were involved in the projective workshop, conversation and interaction. Since the sampling had already been done therefore, only those Meo girls were involved in the workshop, conversation and interaction, who had already chosen as sample. No new sample was included in the workshop, conversation and interaction. These workshops were conducted one day each in consecutively for three days. In the case of Meo girls, there seemed to be substantial continuity between the Meo girl as an individual, and as a member of a family. The same continuity was also prevalent as a member of community and society. This is because they shared their individual cultural ideas in contexts of member of a family, community and society. This is why the learners' voice was more important to be recorded. This interrelation may be seen through the diagrammatic representation below (Diagram 4.1).



(Diagram-4.1: Interrelation of Meo individual as a member of family and community)

Actually, these ideas emerged through their participation in the projection workshop and on the basis of interaction made with them. The projection workshop gave an idea that a Meo girl is located in varying contexts which can be seen diagrammatically in the following manner (Diagram-4.2):



(Diagram-4.2: A Meo girl as located in a web of varying contexts)

Thus, the researcher thought it to be essential to comprehend the interrelated issues that impact on Meo girls as an individual, as a member of the family as well as community. Actually, the formation of everyday perceptions of the social world as an individual, often lead to construct and reconstruct social life which bring order and meaning to Meo girls' collective social life. Further, the fragmented responses of the Meo girls reflected range of perspectives and approaches, with regard to their world view. Going through their responses from the projective workshop, the researcher was able to derive several issues of concerns that have been discussed in the thematic presentation in the coming section. It also provided me a concrete direction to further explore some of the major concerns in an in-depth manner. It was found that several Meo girls fail to see the processes of schooling synthesizing into a unified whole and bringing a positive aspect to their life because of the fact that beyond their secondary classes they do not have opportunity to groom themselves educationally. This is because, the lack of opportunity for upward mobility in terms education, as, institutions beyond secondary classes are rarely available in the Mewat region where as the desire of upward mobility through education are high in the Meo girls. Actually, most of the schools in Mewat area are limited to primary and secondary classes only, and, very few senior secondary schools and college are available in the vicinity which could nurture the educational desire of the Meo girls. Thus, to their dismay, it turns several of Meo girls away from attaining education up to a level where they could

have their desire fulfilled. There are several other instances which reflected the positive hope for life through schooling and education.

4.5 Shattered hope of opportunity, trust deficit and the sense of powerlessness:

Through the projective responses, it was emerged that majority of Meo girls feel a sense of powerlessness just because of being a girl in the region of Mewat. The general perception with regard to education reveal through projective workshop that Meo girls firmly believe in the developmental aspect of education. However, on the contrary, they feel that the opportunity structure for them is totally blocked, as they do not have prospect to grow educationally, beyond secondary classes in the absence of educational institutions in the region on the one hand, and, on the other, due to the apathy of the male dominated society, which do not permit them to continue with their studies beyond school. Testimonial from sample school in Punhana corroborate the same. The researcher interacted with Sameena, a bright Meo girl who used to be regular in her school. The excerpts of the conversation are given below which shows her shattered hope emanating out of poor accessibility, facility and opportunity:

Researcher: *Aage future me kya karne ka socha hai?*

(What have you thought of doing in future ahead?)

Sample: *Madam ji daswi pas kar lun wohi bahut hai.*

(Madam I pass tenth, that is enough)

Researcher: *Kun aage nahi padhogi?*

(Why? Would you not study ahead?)

Sample: *Padhna to chahti hun. Lekin...*

(Yes I want to study further. But...)

Researcher: *lekin kya...*

(But what?)

Sample: *Papa nahi bhejenge...*

(My father will not permit)

Researcher: *kun?*

(Why)

Sample: *Agla school yahan se 30 km hai aur phir jana bhi bas se ya phatphat seva se pade hai. Kaun itni dur bhejega? Hamare ladkion ko waise bhi zyada na nikale hain. Yo school to pas tha to bhej dete the. Par yahan bhi koi khas padhai na hai... na pani aata hai. Pine tak ka pani na*

milta. Light bhi na aawe hai. Hamari class to phir bhi theek hai...pahli class dekhi? Bachhe baith bhi na paawe hain..main to daswi kaise karuungi ye socho hun.

(The other school is 30 km far from here and commuting needs bus or local jeep. Who will send so far? Here in our community girls are not even permitted to go out. This school was nearby so they permitted me to join. But here also education is not upto the mark. Neither water supply is available here, nor, is the facility for drinking water available. Poor electricity is another problem. Our class is although better. Have you seen first class? Children cannot even sit properly. I think how would I pass my tenth class?)

This is due to the fact that in most of the cases they are married in their tender age setting aside their educational concerns. It is also because the parents do not want to send their girl child farther for higher educational studies. Therefore, the researcher found the perception of shattered hope emanating due to causal factors, such as. trust deficit, lack of access to educational opportunity especially after secondary school, and so on. The other factors, such as, poor education provided by schools in the region also contribute quite considerably for shattering positive hope among Meo girls. These Meo girls exhibited that the education in the schools located in their areas do not provide them any prospects of growth and their upward mobility in their life. Actually, majority of people see education in terms of life prospects that it brings to the person (Ahmad, 2016; Alam, 2008; Hasan, 1995). The same is also true in majority of the case of Meo girls, who do not see any life prospects from education in their region. While the researcher was collecting data, it was seen that children singing National Anthem in the games period loudly and incorrectly. The researcher tried to interact with Nighat, one of my samples who was also singing the same. The testimonial indicates the improper transaction of curriculum which diminishes the future prospects.

Researcher: *Ye tumlog Rastra Gaan kun gaa rahe ho?*
(Why are you singing National Anthem?)

Sample: *Sir ne kaha hai practice karo*
(Sir has told to practice)

Researcher: *Par ye to tumhara games ka period hai.*
(But this period of yours is of games)

Sample: *Han... par sir kahte hain ki Rastra Gaan gaa lo*

(yes... but sir says to go and sing National Anthem)

Researcher: *Par tum log games khel sakte ho*

(But you can play games)

Sample: *Sir khilawe na... hamara to mann kare hai kabaddi ka aur dusre khelon ka. Madam ye Shakila bahut achhi kabaddi khele hai apne mohalla me..par yaha koi khilawe hi na hai*

(Sir do not guide play us to play. We want to play Kabaddi and other games. Madam this Shakila play Kabaddi in her area very well. But here no one guide us to play)

The researcher understand that poor curricular transaction contribute considerably in diminishing the growth and life prospects. It also diminishes the quality of education which spiral other problems in life. In case of non-achieving capacity of such prospects, people often gets demotivated, and as a consequence, they slowly develops feeling of estrangement which discourage them to invest time, money and energy in education for longer duration so as to achieve their target (Ahmad, 1981). The researcher conversed with Faiza from Sample school at Punhan who remain irregular to school. Her conversation shows her shattered hope due to environment in home, as well as, school. Testimonial from Faiza suggests that poor educational environment have made a deep impact upon her regularity and tarnished her hope for growth.

Researcher: *Aap to kai dino se school nahi aa rahi thi. Sab theek to hai na?*

(You were not coming to school for long. Is everything fine?)

Sample: *Madam roz nahi ati main to.*

(Madam, I do not come everyday)

Researcher: *Kun? School aana Achha nahi lagta?*

(Why? Don't you like coming to school?)

Sample: *Madam, bas aise hi nahi aa rahi thi*

(Madam, it's just I don't come)

Researcher: *Leking kuch to wajah hogi?*

(But there must be some reason?)

Sample: *Kya faida is school me aakar. Yahan se jakar phir ghar ka sara kaam karo. Yaha bhi to kuch padhai nahi hoti. Pahla period lagta hai. Usme bas attendance lag jati hai. Phir koi period lagta hi nahi. To phir aakar kya karu? Ghar jao to thak kar ghar a sara kaam karo. Is se achha to ghar ka kaam hi kar lo. Na to school me padhai ka mahaul hai aur na hi ghar me.*

(What advantages are there coming to this school. After going from here I have to do entire household chores. Here also classes do not takes place regularly. First period always regularly held where only attendance is marked. Hence after, no period held regularly. So what to do coming to school? After going from here I get tired working at home. It's better to work at home. Neither there is an environment of teaching learning in school, nor is it there at home)

The researcher comprehend that such dissatisfaction towards education has purely causal relations and it is reflects among Meo girls because of its failure in shaping their future positively. This is because, while interaction, the researcher found that those Meo girls who showed their dissatisfaction towards quality of education provided by schools located in Mewat said that education that they are receiving fail to nurture the career and hence they cannot compete with other receiving better education. Further, they pointed out that with school education up to secondary classes, they have developed their interest in education, but they cannot receive higher education because of unavailability of higher education in the region. While collecting data in sample school at Nuh, some of the sample girls came to me and plead to request the principal to upgrade the school upto XII. These children were very keen to take higher education. The testimonial suggests that it is education itself which emanates the sense of powerlessness among Meo girl children.

Sample: *Madam ek kaam kar do*

(Madam. Please do one help to us)

Researcher: *Bolo*

(Say)

Sample: *Aap na hamare principal sahib ko bolo ki is school ko XII tak kar den*

(Please tell our principal to upgrade this school up to XII)

Researcher: *Aap log kun nahi bolte?*

(Why don't you people say?)

Sample: *Hum to principal sir ko baar baar kahte hain ki school ko XII tak kara do. Hum to padhne ke lie yahin aa sakte hain. Babu bhejega nahi Gurgawan padhne ke lie. Paisa bhi to bahut lagta hai*

(We have already spoken to our principal to upgrade this school up to XII. We only can come here to study. Father will not send us Gurgaon for further study. Too much money will be expensed)

- Researcher: *Par sarkari school me bahut paisa nahi lagta*
(But, in government school expenditure do not take place so much)
- Sample: *Par dur hai na madam ji. Achha hamari class ko padhane ke lie JBT karna padta hai na madam ji? Bahut sari didiyan jati hai JBT karne.*
(Madam but it is too far. Whether JBT is required to teach our class Madam? Several sisters go to do JBT)
- Researcher: *Tumhari madam bataengi. Unse puchna*
(Your madam will let you know this. Ask them)
- Sample: *Wo nahi bataengi madam ji. Aap bata do. Wo daant deti hai aur chup kara deti hai*
(They will not tell us madam. They scold us and make us silent)
- Researcher: *Apke school me assembly me career lecture hota hai kya?*
(Whether in your school career lecture takes place in assembly?)
- Sample: *Ye kya hota hai madam ji*
(What is this madam?)
- Researcher: *Career ke bare me batate hain*
(They tell us about career)
- Sample: *Hume to kisi ne bhi nahi bataya aaj tak*
(No one has told us about this so far)

Apart from these, the complex triangulation between male-female perceptive relations, generation gap and cultural boundary contribute to draw different parallels between Meo girl children and Meo male in the society. Majority of the first generation male members within the community has realized the importance of education and have got involved in opening educational institutions in the area. As a consequence of the realization of the importance of education, several Madarsas in the region have started Open Basic Education by accrediting their programme from National Open School. However, even the first generation male members of the community have not been able to change the age old male domination in decision making for girl children. Thus, it was found that there exists dissonance acculturation between the neo-literate Meo girl children and the male members among the community.

Due to such dissonance acculturation the girl children and the male parent draw two different parallels of perception and attitude towards education. The Meo girl children strongly desire to continue their study further, after their secondary classes, keeping in

mind hopeful better life prospects and aspiration. The Meo girls are well aware of the positive impact of education and dream better life through their educational journey. However, the parent, particularly the male, tries to get their daughters married even in the unmarriageable tender age by dropping them out of the school. Such marriages are commonly practiced in the entire community, whereby, majority of the Meo girls are married in their childhood. Those Meo girls who are taking education have got the awareness and ill effects of child marriage, but are not able to change the situation within the community which shatters their hope for educational growth and opportunity increases distrust and creates discord among relations. This is one of the major reasons emerged that lead to develop in them the sense of powerlessness. The researcher tried to comprehend the experience of a Meo girl in contexts of home and school. Hence, the researcher talked to Samina in sample school, in Taoru. Undoubtedly, such dissonance creates two parallel and conflict of opinion among the parent and the child which can be seen from the conversation made with the sample below.

Researcher: *Apko school aana aur padhna kaisa lagta hai?*

(How do you like coming to school and studying?)

Samina: *'Mujhe padhna bahut achh lagta hai lekin ghar walon ko bhi mera padhna achha lagna chahie*

(I like studying very much but it should be liked by the family members also)

Researcher: *Aisa Kun? (Why so?)*

Samina: *'kun ki hamare yahan ladkion ko zyada nahi padne dete. Shadi kara dete hain. Hume bolte hain ki itna padh ke kaun si naukri karni hai. but padh lia...lekin main to padhungi... lekin kabhi kabhi lagta hai ki sirf school padh ke kya karungi? Agar college padh pati to kuch kar pati..*

(Because, in our community girls are not allowed to study more. They marry the girl. They say whether you have to do job that you will study. Already you have studied school...but I will study. Sometimes I think only school education is not enough. Had I been able to complete college education I could have done something.)

Researcher: *Lekin aisa kaun aur lun bolte hain?*

(But who and why do speak like this?)

Samina: *kun ki hamare yahan shadi jaldi karwana dete hain. Ghar me papa aur bhai bolta hai. Sochte hain ladki hai zyada padhaenge to dikkat hogi.*

(Because in our community they marry a girl in early age. In house father and brother speak they think that if a girl will study more it will become problematic for them).

Researcher: *Aisa kun sochte hain?*

(Why do they think so?)

Samina: *'unko nahi malum ki ladkion ki shadi jaldi nahi klarani chahie. Lekin rishtedar bhadka dete hain ki mat padhao...itna padhaya to shadi me dikkat hogi.. ladkian kya kare sab faisla to papa ya bhai leta hai'*

(They do not know that gils should not be married so early. But, relatives prompt them negatively and say not to educate girl so much. If they will study much then there will be problem in finding the match... what a girl can do... decisioiin are made by father and brother)

Researcher: *Apki ma aka faisla nahi chalta?*

(The decision of your mother is no accepted?)

Samina: *'yahan aurat ka faisla nahi chalta.'*

(Here decision of women are not accepted)

Researcher: *To ab aap kya karenge?*

(So what will you do now?)

Samina: *'Main to unke faisle ko nahi manungi...ladungi..mujhe padna hai'*

(I will not accept their decision. I will confront... I want to study)

The conversation suggests that trust deficit as a consequence of dissonance acculturation and male-female attitudinal relations among the family and within community further aggravate to their perception of powerlessness, which depresses them towards education. The concersation made with Dilshana, from Punhana reflects the existence of dissonance leading to sense of powerlessness due to gender bias (Box 4.1).

Box 4.1: Two parallels of perceptive opinion: The case of Dilsahana

Dilshana is a studying in class X at Punhana. She says that she wants to change the tough situation faced by their fellow girls in the region mostly because of male domination. This is why their life in Mewat is very difficult and they are not free from hardship. Dilshana perceives that within houses, girls work like a servant and slave in the age where they have to study. Reflecting gender discrimination she says that the male members of the family enjoy all sort of freedom and there is no objection if they study. However, in case of girls the male family members restrict them in almost every aspects. In villages the girls are confined to their houses and the male members do not let them come out even for their study. The girls do not have equal rights as boys enjoy. They are married in their early age and the family of the groom demands dowry as well as learned wife. Dilshana says if girls will not study how will groom's family

get the learned wife. These double standard in the community disheartens Dilshana as it does not let the Meo girls come forward and excel in life.

(Code: S/56/Punhana/PW/2017)

However, the same sense of powerlessness and demoralization also empower and equip them to resist the male dominated decisions at many occasions with regard to education. Contrary to the above mentioned feeling of powerlessness, there were several instances of resistance, though with tiny might, which show the positive hope of Meo girl children towards education. The conversation also shows that these Meo girls have become able to break their traditional cultural boundaries and thus, come out of their marginality though in very limited sense. The detailed conversation in this regard has been presented below.

Researcher: *Ghar walon ka apki education ke lie kya rawayya hai?*

(What is the attitude of family members towards your education?)

Sample: *Ladkian to ghar me kaamon ke lie bani hai yahi samjha jata hai. Gha me maa baap bhi bhed bhaao karte hain. Ladkion ko koi aazadi nahi milti unhe. Pahle to hamare gaaon me school bhi nahi the. Ab to kam se kam school aane dete hain*

(Girls are made to work in the house. This is what is understood here. Even in the house the family members discriminate among male and female. Girls are not free in the area. Initially there was no school in our village. Now there is some schools so the parents permit us to come to school)

Researcher: *Tum agar ghar walon se baat karogi to padhne denge.*

(If you talk to your family members perhaps they will allow you to study)

Sample: *kai bar kar chuki hun. Lekin yahan ladkion ki nahi mani jati. Sab faisla aadmi lete hain.*

(I have talked several times. But here the decision is made by males and girls are not entertained in decision making)

Researcher: *To tum kya padhai nahi karogi?*

(so will you not study further?)

Sample: *Karungi main to padhai. Meri shadi laga rahe the. Maine kah dia ki mar jaungi agar nahi padhaya to. Mujhe bahut maara.*

(I will study. My family members were looking for my match but I resisted. I said if I will not be allowed to study then I will die. I got beathen up)

Researcher: *To ab kya kah rahe hain?*

(So what are they saying now?)

Sample: *Ab to maan gae hain aur school bhi aane de rahe hain*

(Now they havr agreed. They are letting me come for school)

Researcher: *Tum kaya ban na chahti ho padh kar?*

(What do you want to be ?)

Sample: *Main wakil ka couse karungi taki apne haq ke lie ladungi.*

(I want to become lawyer so that I can fight for my right)

The resistance can be seen in the conversation above. Through their resistance, several Meo girls escaped their marginality and became able to achieve much in their educational life journey. Another sample Meo girl also reflects this triangulation i.e. the sense of powerlessness, the success through their resistance and breaking the cultural boundaries through their success journey (See Box 4.2).

Box 4.2: Kulsoom and her educational journey

Kulsoom is a Meo girl from Firozpur Jhirka village of Mewat district. She has studied up to graduation and has earned a professional degree in education. She has completed her Bachelor of Education and got her permanent employment in a school run by the Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad at Nuh. The life of Kulsoom is full of struggle and resistance for getting educated. She evaded marginalization as any other Meo girl children of the area due to her resistance, education and employment. She is dedicated to bring change in the area and is looked upon as a role model by other Meo girl children. While interacting with her she revealed that she always wanted to study, but her parent and male members of the family were against her study as they used to say that since she do not have to get employment therefore it is not necessary to invest for her study. She resisted such concern of her male family members and continued her study in spite of resistance from her male family member. She came to live with her relatives in Delhi and continued her study by giving tuition to other students. When she completed her graduation and Bachelor of Education, she applied for her job in the Nuh Model School and got her permanent selection. Once she got her employment, the attitude of her family member changed, as she started contributing financially in her family. She said that, the family used to think for her marriage which is often done in early age. The family members were also worried for the dowry, which is very common in her community. Therefore, they were against her study as the family members were having the opinion that finding match for her

marriage will be difficult. However, with much resistance and determination, she completed her studies and got her employment. She became a role model for other Meo girls in the vicinity and therefore, she wants to open an educational center for other Meo girls and also desire to complete her Masters Degree for further career advancement. She said, that had she succumbed to the demand of male family members she could not have achieved what she has achieved with her resistance. Thus, she believed that her resistance has helped her escape her marginality.

(Code: S/26/Nuh/PW/2017)

Thus, deviating from some of the secondary sources, the researcher understand that it is largely the causal relation that have marred its negative impact upon poor education of Meo girls, rather, the existence of general hatred, tendency of rejection of modern education and attraction towards religious education of the community. The non-access of schooling beyond secondary classes that could meet the desire of the Meo girl children and poor prospects for the upward mobility have generated an environment of shattered hope towards life prospects of the Meo girl children. However, through their resistance, majority of Meo girls are getting attracted towards modern education which is reflected from the enrolment and regularity of Meo girl children in schools. Realizing the importance of education, the Meo community has also changed their perception towards girls' education, but, the unavailability of schools beyond the secondary classes still is a challenge for meeting the desire and demand of the Meo girls.

4.6 Meo girls as a member of community: Perspective and educational involvement

Being a researcher within the community, it was thought to map the community perspective peeping through the voices of the sample Meo girls. The researcher assumed it essential to understand how Meo girls view education in terms of necessity and consequence. The researcher also thought it significant to comprehend the expectations of students from education so that pragmatic solution can be arrived at for their better educational intervention. This was thought to be necessary, as the researcher believed that, once the Meo girls conceive fulfilling their expectation from education, it will be delineating for them, and will attract more Meo girls towards schooling. Hence, the Meo girls were particularly interacted into six areas of relevance

namely *familial support, equitable opportunities on the part of the government, employability and earning, teachers' support, educational facilities* at school and home and *general environment surrounding the habitat*. Apart from these specific areas the samples were free to respond any points of relevance during interaction. During interaction with the sample girls the researcher remained conscious to map the highest number of responses upon particular issue with a belief that the most numbered preference of response would be the most expected consideration for education of the sample Meo girls. Thus, the preference of reference determined the hierarchy of requisite and preferred expectation of sample Meo girls from education.

The analysis of the responses reveals that majority Meo girls considers and desire employability with handsome earning and better lifestyle through their educational journey. The researcher comprehend that the developmental aspect of education by the new generations is seen mostly in terms of handsome earning and better lifestyle. However, in case of Meo girls, such desire is mainly due to their poor economy and livelihood, as well as, their long suppression of desire due to extreme patriarchal society. The resistance of Meo girls can be seen in terms of their coming out of traditional male domination in decision making and of their marginality. The understanding for such analysis is based upon the projective writing which is given below (see box 4.3)

Box 4.3: The resistance and achievement of Tahira

I am Tahira, a Meo girl and I am the eldest of my three siblings. I was born in Punhana area of Mewat. My father was a petty farmer whose income was based on a small rain fed farm land. In the initial years of my childhood, I studied in a Madarsa located in my area. However, while I came under my teens, at the age of 14, I had to leave my study as any other Meo girl of the region. However, I always dreamt of studying upto higher level and doing something better in my life. I was also aware of my economic, cultural and geographical circumstances, which usually do not allow the girl child to study more often, and, they are married at early age. I never desired to marry early, and, wanted to study. Therefore, in my regular prayer, I always prayed for getting some chance for study, and, doing something better in my life. After leaving my study my usual work was limited to agriculture and household chores. When I revealed my desire of my further study to my father and other relatives, they flatly refused saying that in our family girls do not work and hence there is no need to study further. They said that in an year or so I will be married. I resisted their decision and became

stubborn in my decision to study further by whatsoever means I can arrange for myself if my parent do not support. I realize now that my prayer and determination has paid me for what I am today.

One day, a relative of mine came from Delhi. I was having an argument with my parent in my house for my educational desire. I was weeping that time also. Hearing my argument, my relative became convinced to my points of view, and said to my father, that I am correct, and, he should not stop me studying. My father said, that, he cannot teach me further due to his poor economic condition, and also, because he has other children to look after. He believed, that, If he allowed me to study, he would do injustice to his other children, as, he would not be able to support them in the same manner, as I would be supported, and, later in his life, he will repent that he discriminated among his own children. Hearing all these commotion, my relative told to my father, that, if he permits, he will support my study, and, will take me to Delhi for my education. Initially he did not agree, but later, looking to much of my resistance, he agreed, and permitted me to stay in Delhi with my relative. I completed my Ph.D. in Urdu from University of Delhi, and now, I am working as a post graduate teacher in Delhi, which I could not have achieved, had I not resisted the decision of my father. Whenever my father retrospects his own decision, he always praises me, and says that, I was correct in my resistance and decision making for myself. I think now, had I not resisted, I could have been any other marginalized girl in Punhana, married to anyone in Mewat.

(Code: S/45/Punhana/PW/2017)

Another projective writing suggests the change of perception among parents towards girls' education which is reflected in the story of Rahila (Box 4.4).

Box 4.4: Perceptive change and escaping marginality: The case of Rahila

I am Rahila, the younger sister of Tahira. I am working as sub-editor in National Urdu daily located at Delhi. What I am today is because of my sister Tahira. The attitude of my father towards my education got changed due to my elder sister Tahira. I was too young when my elder sister went to Delhi for her study with much resistance. Then, I was totally unaware, that, I would also be able to do something educationally and better in life. I followed the path of my sister, and, studied till my primary classes in Punhana. However, looking to my interest in studies, one day my sister said to my father, to let me go with her, as she would be supporting me for my study. Looking to the success of my sister, my father had already changed his perception towards girls' education by now. He readily agreed, and, permitted me to go along with my sister for better education, as in our locality, there was no good institution, where I could have studied. I also stayed with our relative in Delhi, and followed the footsteps of my sister. I got admitted in Delhi University in the Department of Urdu, and, later completed a

professional course in Mass Media and Journalism. I did not have to resist for my study, as my sister had to do, because my father already had changed his perception towards girls' education. Now I am working as media professional and want the girls of my village to achieve better in life. But there is much need of attention by the government for the development of the area.

(Code: S/47/Punhana/PW/2017)

The change is important in the sense that the parents are now not only supporting their girl children study but they many of them are migrating to an area form where they can support them at every step for their quality education. Such support is reflected in the projective writing of Shumaila (Box 4.5).

Box 4.5: Changing parental perception: The case of Shumaila

I am Shumaila and I am 15 years old Meo girl from Chanderi village of Mewat. I am the youngest among my three siblings. My eldest sibling got married to a sub-inspector when she was in class X and now lives in Faridabad district of Haryana. The second elder sibling also got married at the age of 15 without completing her class X. My father was a Sub-Inspector in Boarder Security Force and superannuated from the service. In Chanderi village I was living in a joint family and thus, the decision of other male family members were important in my case, being a girl. I was keen in my study and wanted to pursue my study further. However, my brother in law objected for my further study and was not in my favour of pursuing my education. When I brought my willingness to my parents, they decided to support me for my educational betterment. Therefore, my parents decided to migrate from Chnanderi village to Taoru and stay with me to support me in my study. In Taoru, I live with my father and am studying in girls' secondary school. Since there were no one to look me in Taoru, therefore, my father decided to stay with me to support me educationally. After schooling from Taoru, my father has decided to take me to Faridabad for my further quality higher education which is unavailable in Taoru. I am very fond of my father who have changed his perception towards my study. Had he chaned his perception earlier, my other two sisters may have studied also like me.

(Code: S/17/Taoru/PW/2017)

The reference of Meo being a resisting and freedom loving community is totally reflective in the story of Tahira and Rahila and Shumaila above (Box 4.3, 4.4 & 4.5). In some of the sample cases, the perspectives of the Meo girls as a member of the community remained totally clear with regard to education. The dedication and donation of land for the purpose of educational institutions for girls by Meharunnisa, a

Meo female community member, is another example which shows her resistance and perspective towards education (See Box 4.6).

Box 4.6: Donating the land and building school for the cause of girls education

The story of Meharunnisa

Meharunnisa belongs to Pinangwa village of Mewat district of Haryana and is the second of their five siblings. She studied her primary classes in a Madarsa in her village Pinangwa, as there was no modern school located in the vicinity of her habitat. She had to walk almost 3.5 kilometer every day to reach the Madarsa. She was keen to study further, but, in the absence of school, and, as a general practice for girls, she has to leave study after her primary classes. She was married to a sub inspector of Delhi Police from Nuh subdivision of Mewat district at the age of 15 years, and settled as a house wife. During her marriage, her father gave one *Bigha* of land in her village to Meharunnisa as her property, apart from other goods as dowry. After her marriage, she shifted to Delhi with her husband where she realized the importance of girl's education, as she came in contact with other well learned ladies around her post marriage new habitat. Realizing the importance of girls' education, she decided to build a school in her village for girls on the land given to her by her father. In spite of having no experience in running a school her decision was firm for opening schools that would cater to girls' education. After registering a society with the state government with the help of some of the people of the area, she built 8 rooms school for girls on the land provided by her father. The school provides both religious, as well as, Open Basic Education to girls, which has been registered with Open Basic Programme of National Institute of Open Schooling. While interacting with her in her in-laws house at Nuh, she revealed, that, she regret not being studied herself, but, wants the girls of the village to study and grow with other community. She also mentioned that she encountered several problems within the community as well as outside with the administration and still encountering problems as she herself is not learned. However, she said, that since she has a noble cause with firm belief and power to resist hurdles, therefore, she become able to come up with a school which otherwise she could not have been able to bring.

(Code: S/38/Nuh/PW/2017)

The researcher believe that the lack of familial support due to financial and cultural constraints in case of girl children has led the Meo girl children become resistant in case when they feel that their upward mobility is thwarted. The Meo girl children feel that the underdevelopment of their area of their habitat is deliberate on the part of the government due to various reasons which hinders their path of development. This is

one of the reasons of attributing the inequitable opportunity on the part of the governmental agencies as deliberate action of the successive governments. They compare their area of habitat with neighbouring developed areas and feels that the responsibility of their educational wellbeing is hindered due to negligence of the area by the government as it do not open the path for their better livelihood. They feel that equitable opportunity for them is not only missing in the area but it is also missing within the family of most of the sample girls. Farida, another sample from Nuh said that,

“is ilaqe me Sarkar dhayan nahi deti. Ye aaj ki baat nahi hai. Itne saalong se ye ilaqa pichra hai. Pahle ye baut bada ilaqa tha. Ab chota ho gaya. Is ilaqe me pani nahi hai, upaj nahi hai, aane jaane ki suvidha nahi hai, train nahi hai, kuch bhi to nahi hai...school ki bahut kami hai. Ye to Sarkar ko bhi dikhta hoga... pas hi me Gurgaon ko dekh lijie, develop ho gaya lekin is ilaqe ko develop nahi larte. Vote ki khatir. Hum nahi padh paate aur na hi aage badh pate hain kun ki yahan ek to school nahi hai..dusra padhai achhi nahi hai...teesra paisa nahi hai aur chuatha yahan college nahi hai... aur sab se bada sawal hum Mewati hain... Sarkar Mewation ka bhala nahi karegi...itne saalon se nahi kia to ab kya karegi.”

(In this area the government does not give attention. This is not a matter of today. Form so many years this area is under-developed. This are (of Mewat) was bigger than what it is today. Now it has become small. In this area neither there is water, nor harvest, transportation facility, train, nothing is there. School is unavailable. The Government must be aware of these. See Gurgaon nearby...it got developed. But this area the government will not develop. This is because of vote. Neither we are not able to study nor grow in life because here school is unavailable... education is inferior and the most important question is we are Mewatis. The government will not help Mewatis. They haven't done in so many years what to expect from them now)

(Code: S/37/Nuh/C/2017)

The detailed discussions with some of the sample girls in this regard suggests that the Meo girls strongly feel that teachers' support is essentially needed for their development and upward mobility. Many of the sample Meo girls informed that they got enrolment in the school because of the help of teachers who convinced their parents by repeatedly visiting their family.

“Ye to hum aaj jo padh rahe hain wo apne master ji ke karan padh rahe hain. Roz aate the ghar par ki ladki ko padhne bhejo. Tab jakar

yahan se ladkian padhne jane lagi. Master ji bahut madad karte hain. Agar wo madad nahi karte to hum itna bhi aage nahi aa pate”

(If we are studying today it is because of our teacher. He used to visit every day to say send the girls to school. Then only girls started going to study in school. The teacher helps us a lot. Had he not helped us we could not have even studied whatever we have studied here.)

(Code: S/39/Nuh/C/2017)

However, the sample girls also showed their worry that in the absence of promising and quality education facilities in their schools, they cannot compete with others in the era of contest mobility. This is also because they have no option to continue with their studies as there are no schools available for them beyond secondary classes. The fact is that there are only few schools available up to senior secondary classes which cannot cater to the school going girl children in the area. The request for upgrading their school has not been met so far which demoralizes them as it blocks their path of educational development.

“Lekin yahan padhai achhi nahi hai aur na hi aage padhai karne ki vyavastha. Aage kaise padhenge.. kaise badhenge... kaise muqabla karenge auron se...kaise apna sapna pura karenge.. ye sab soch kar dil ghabrata hai”

(But here education is inferior and neither better opportunity for further education. how will we study further, how will we grow, how will we compete with others, how will we fulfill our dreams. all these thoughts haunts’)

(Code: S/40/Nuh/C/2017)

Apart from these, I also found that the general environment of their habitat is non-conducive for their involvement in educational activities. To their dismay majority of Meo girls fail to find motivating factors which could bring them into fold of contest mobility whereby they could positively compete with each other or take help of each other beyond school times. In a collective interaction at sample school in Taoru, conversation was made with sample Meo girls. The testimonials shows general environmental concerns.

Researcher: *Aap log ghar per jakar kab padte hain?*

(When do you study going back home?)

Sample 7: *Madam ji yahan ka mahaul dekha hai na apne*

(Madam, have you seen the environment here?)

Researcher: *Han*

(yes)

Sample 9: *To ap hi batao, padhne ka aisa mahaul hota hai kya.*

(Then you say us, is that educational environment reflects like this?)

Researcher: *Mahaul to banaya jata hai*

(Environment are made)

Sample 7: *Lekin yahan kaise koi banae..koi padhna bhi chahe to ghar ke kaam ke bojh tale kaise mahaul banae..kaise padhe.*

(But how one could made (the environment) here. If someone even wants to study at home how she could do in the dearth of household chores)

Sample 10: *Charon taraf unpadh log hain...madad bhi na kare hain..*

(Everywhere illiterate people are there..even if we want some help they can not help)

Sample 13: *Kahan jaya jae kisi se puchne jo dikkat aati hai padhne me*

(Where to go for help if we encounter some problem)

Sample 10: *Mahaul to zaruri hai madam ji padhne ke lie.*

(Madam environment is necessary for learning)

The researcher comprehend that the positive consequence of education often attracts a person to devote time, money and energy for a longer duration. Contrary to this, in its absence in the region of Mewat, the Meo girls feel depressed and thus, shw their resistance as they have realized the positive aspects of schooling.

4.7 Inferior education and improper training for life

Satisfaction with the school education was another issue, which the researcher wanted to comprehend at the micro level. This is because, the researcher presumed that there may be several issues with regard to schooling, which may be covertly or overtly affecting the Meo girls' education and its relation with their future prospects. Therefore, it was necessary to map the everyday lived experiences of the Meo girl children with regard to their schooling. This was also necessary to understand the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the Meo girl children in order to comprehend their resistance, schooling and change. Therefore, it was decided to interact upon the issue and understand in context of fulfilling the objective of the study.

The analysis reveals that majority of Meo girls were happy going to school mainly due to *two* reasons. *Firstly* that they get some freedom to come out of their home and *secondly* because they get some times away from their daily household chores. These two reasons make them enough happy. The researcher interacted with the Meo sample girls upon the issues at all the sample areas. What came as a common response across the entire sample areas was that the Meo girls are overburden with household chores which they have to accomplish before coming to school. This is why, while interacting with the samples majority of the samples equivocally said, “*ghar me to fursat nahi hoti na madam...school aane pe ghar ke kaam se kuch der ko nijat mil jati hai*” (I did not get the time at home. On coming to school at least I get some time away from household chores). Some other samples said that they come to school as they have developed their interests in education in spite of inferior activities in school. What was most remarkable was the response of Rubina of Nuh and Malti of Taoru. Rubina said,

“Madam, apko bhi ab tak pata chal gaya hoga ki is school ki padhai bahut achhi nahi hai. Main to islie aati hun ki mera bhai aur taau mujhe school se hatana chahte hain. Mujhe nahi padhana chahte. Kahte hain ki ab bahut padh lia. Ghar ka kaam kar le ghar baith kar. Agle sal teri shadi karwni hai. Teri padhai se kuch na hoga. Ghar ka kaam sikhegi to khush rahegi. Maine mana kar dia ki main to jaungi padhne. Jo karna hai kar lijo. Beti padhao beti bachao ka nara na sun rakha kya. Main to padhungi. Is khatir aati hun ji madam ji main to. Maine unki baat na man ni aur ghar na baithna”

(Madam, you may have got to know by now that education in this school is not up to the mark. I come to school just because my brother and uncle want to withdraw me from the school. They are not in favour of my study. They say that now you have already studied too much. Now sit at home, and, learn household chores. Next year you will be married. Nothing is going to happen with your study. You will be happy, if you will learn household chores. I said, I’ll go for study, whatever you want to do, you may do. Have you not heard the slogan Beti padhao Beti Bachao? I come to school just because of this reason Madam. I don’t want to follow their order and keep sitting at home)

(Code: S/34/Nuh/C/2017)

Similar response was put forward by Malti, who was studying at sample school in Taoru. She said,

“Mere ghar se mera bhai mujhe bahar nahi aane deta. Agar school nahi hota to mujhe to ghar me band rahna padta. Meri 2 bahne hain.

Unko bhi nahi padhne dia. Ab main padh rahi hun to unko ye baat khatakti hai. Main kuch karna chahti hun padh kar. Khud se kamungi to unpar bojh to nahi rahna padega na. Madam ap batao...main kya ghalat kar rahi hun. Roz dhamki dete hain ki school se nikal lenge. Main bhi unki baat nahi manti. Wo sab ko bhadka deta hai. Main to roz lad kar aati hun padhne ko.”

(From my home my brother does not let me come out. Had there been no school then I had to stay back confined to home. I have got 2 sisters. They were also not been permitted to study. Now that I am studying then it is objectionable to him. I want to do something through my education. if I will earn then at least I will not be burden upon them. Madam, you tell me...whether I am doing anything wrong? Every dya he threatens me that he will withdraw me from school. I also do not accept his command. But he intrigues every one against me. Every day I have a fight with him to come to school)

(Code: S/11/Taoru/C/2017)

From the responses of both the respondents it is clearly reflected that they resisted and defied the command of male members of their family to attend the school in a hope of doing something better in life. Thus, by resisting and defying the male dominated diktat of family members, the Meo girls are to trying to come out of the processes of their marginalization to do better educationally in life.

4.8 Emotional bonding, unpleasant encounter and challenges: The voices of the Meo girls

Both, emotional bonding and unpleasant encounter with schools were clearly reflected throughout the educational journey of majority of Meo girl children. This was another dimension that Meo girls have developed in the process of their schooling. Actually, regularity in coming to school, cordial relation with the teachers and bonding with their peers contributed in the development of such bonding. Further, schooling also provided them space to share their feelings with their peers and also have motivated a number of Meo girls in dreaming better life prospects. Several testimonials suggest that the Meo girls have developed positive motivation for education. Shefali from Taoru sample school said, “*Madam mujhe school se pahle bahut dar lagta tha. Ab nahi lagta. Ab bahut achha lagta hai. Mujhe roz haziri ka award bhi mila hai*” (Madam, initially I used to afraid coming to school. Now I feel very good. I have also received award for being regular to school). Similarly, Fareeha, a 9th standard Meo girl

from Nuh feels that school has changed her thought and life in several ways. She said that when she was enrolled in first standard she was not willing to come to school. However, in a short duration of time she got motivated in her schooling due to her teacher who always encouraged her in her studies. She said, “*ab mujhe school se ghar jane ka mann nahi karta*” (Now I don’t want to go back to home from school). Several such testimonials suggest that school has generated some sort of positive attitude among several Meo girls.

However, such happiness remains short lived and starts fading once the Meo girls reach in 9th standard. It further gets completely eroded once they reach in 10th standard. When the researcher tried to understand the reasons for the same, several sample Meo girls said that this is because they will not be able to come out of their houses after their class X. Since most of the schools are limited to secondary classes in the entire region of Mewat, therefore, chances of access to schooling beyond X standard become quite bleak. In spite of the demand of upgrading secondary schools to senior secondary schools, it has not met so far. The already available senior secondary school does not suffice the number of school going Meo girl children due lesser number of schools, high demand and its distance. The chances of access also become bleak because most of the Meo girls are married in their early teens and do not get the chance to continue with their studies. In-depth interaction with Rubina shows that she had developed emotional bonding with the school in the process of her growing up. Testimonial from Rubina shows the emotional bonding developed with the school.

Researcher: *Ab to aap 10th me aa jaengi. Kaisa lagta hai itna padh kar?*

(Now you will come in 10th standard. How do you feel coming so long in your educational journey?)

Rubina: *“Madam ab to hume fir se wohi ghar me qaid rahna hoga. Ab to nikalna bhi nahi ho paega. Na hi doston se mil paenge aur na hi aage padh paenge. School to hai nahi aage”*

(Madam now I have to remain confined to my home. I will not get the chance to come out of my home. I can’t even meet my friends and neither I will be able to study further. There is no school for further study)

‘Fir se wohi ghar me qaid rahna hoga’ (again I have to confined to home) and *‘nikalna bhi nahi ho paega’* (I will not be able to come out) suggests the emotional

bonding with the school that Rubina had developed in the process of growing up. Further, '*na hi doston se mil paenge*' (neither I will be able to meet my friend) and '*na hi aage padh paenge*' (neither I will be able to study further) shows the sudden vacuum due to the unavailability of senior secondary schools in the area. It also suggests the positive emotional impact that school has made upon the perception of the girls in general and upon Rubina in particular. Apart from this, '*school to hai nahi aage*' (there is no school for further study) shows the challenges with regard to education of the girl children in Mewat. Losing of friends after completion of schooling up to secondary class also reflects from the testimonial which becomes one of the reasons that dishearten the girls. On the other hand, the testimonial also suggests that girls in Mewat region are overburdened with household chores which hinders their educational path, demoralizes them and shatters their positive hope of life aspiration.

However, there were other testimonials which suggest the worries of Meo girl children. In fact, several Meo girl children had developed interest in education after much resistance, struggle and persuasion in their home. Such Meo girl children have dreamed to excel in life through education which gets shattered due to unavailability and inaccessibility of schools in the region. This is why, with the inception of their 10th standard their educational dream and desire starts fading off as they are not able to see the educational horizon which they had desired for.

There were also reflections of unpleasant encounters in the school which the Meo girl children revealed during conversation. Such unpleasant encounters relate to attraction and advances towards opposite sex. It also relates to exploitation of some of the Meo girls by the physical education teacher which saw multiple negative effects upon the education of Meo girl children. During the data gathering processes in the field, the researcher came across two such cases of unpleasant encounters that were sexual in nature and had multiple negative effects upon schooling.

One of the cases relate to a girl from '*Akheda*' who fell in love with a motor mechanic working in a motor workshop nearby to the school. While interacting with sample Meo girls the researcher had an in-depth conversation with the sample friend of the girl who fell in love with the mechanic. The conversation ad-verbatim is presented below.

- Sample: *Main to bas is pariksha ke baad nahi padhungi.*
(I will not study after this examination)
- Researcher: *Aisa kun? Padhna acchha nahi lagta hai apko kya?*
(Why so? Do you not like studying?)
- Sample: *Lagta hai. Leking ab mujhe ghar se aane ki ijazat nahi denge mere ghar wale.*
(I do. But I will not be permitted by my parents to come to school)
- Researcher: *Kyun? Wo apko kyun nahi padhne denge?*
(Why? Why will they not let you study?)
- Sample: *Sab Mansi (name chnaged) ke karan hua hai...*
(All this is because of Mansi (name changed))
- Researcher: *Ab usne kya kar dia?*
(Now what did she do?)
- Sample: *Rahne do madam.*
(Leave it Madam)
- Researcher: *Phir bhi batao to...usne kya kar dia? Apke ghar walon ko apke lie kuch bol dia kya?*
(But let me know.. What did she do? Whether she said any thing against you to your parents?)
- Sample: *Nahi. Kuch bola nahi.. Bas uski wajah se ab mujhe bhi mana kar dia ki ab aage nahi padhana tujhe. Bahut sari ladkian ab aana band kar dengi. Kitni saari to ab aati bi nahi. Bahut kahne par mujhe pariksha dene tak aane de rahe hain. Warna mujhe bhi mana kar dia tha ki ab tu school nahi jaegi*
(No. She did not say anything. Only because of her now my parents told me that they will not send me for further study. Several other girls now will stop coming to school. Many of them has already stopped coming. After much pursuance I have been permitted to come till my exam. Otherwise I had already been said that you will not go to school)
- Researcher: *To usne aisa kya kar dia?*
(So what did she do like that?)
- Sample: *Madam aap kisi se bologi to nahi*
(Madam, tell me you will not say anything to others)s
- Researcher: *Nahi bolungi..batao to...*
(No. I will not speak to others...tell me)
- Sample: *Wo na... yahan ek ladka hai uske saath school se nikal ke chali jati thi.*
(Actually, here, there is a boy with whom she used to go from school)

Researcher: *Kahan chali jati thi?*

(Where does she used to go?)

Sample: *Madam, usko payar ho gaya tha... yahan wo gadi wali dukan hai na jab aap aate ho school to raste me padta hai. Wahan ek ladka hai. Us ke saath uska chakkar chal gaya tha. Sab ko pata chal gaya. Uske ghar wale use school se nikal ke le gae. Shaadi kara rahe hain uski. Ab uski shadi bhi nahi ho pa rahi. Koi nahi de raha ladka. Sab ko pata chal gaya hai na..islie*

(Madam, she fell in love. While you come to school, in the way there is a mechanic workshop. There is a boy. With that boy she fell in love. Everyone got to know about this. That's why her parents withdrew her from school. Now her marriage is being arranged. Now her marriage is also getting difficult. No one is willing to give their son as groom. Everyone got to know her relations that's why.)

Researcher: *Phir? Tumhe tumhare ghar wale kun nahi padhana chahte?*

(So why your parents are stopping you from studying?)

Sample: *Wo meri friend thin na. islie mere ghar me bhi gharwalon ko aisa lagta hai ki kahin mere saath bhi aisa kuch hua to wo badnaam ho jaenge. Islie mujhe ab nahi padhaenge. Mujhe aage padhne ka aur kuch karne ka bada mann tha*

(She was my friend that's why. My parents also feel that if something like her happened to me then it will bring bad name to my family also. That's why they will not let me study. I wanted to study further and do something in my life)

Researcher: *To tumne bola nahi ghar me ki aisa nahi hai..*

(So did you not tell your parents that its not like that?)

Sample: *Wo nahi mante. Bas hukum de dia hai ki aage nagi padaenge. Ghar ka kaam karne ko bola hai.*

(They will not accept. They have already ordered that they will not make me study further. They told me to do household chores)

The conversation above shows the manifestation of the idea of patriarchal autocracy where the decision of the male member of the community is bounding upon female irrespective of Meo girls' legitimate desire relating to study. '*Bas hukum de dia hai ki aage nagi padaenge*' suggests the prevalence of patriarchal autocracy within the family and family affairs. It is largely acceptable in the Indian society across communities. Further, '*mere ghar me bhi gharwalon ko aisa lagta hai ki kahin mere saath bhi aisa kuch hua to wo badnaam ho jaenge. Islie mujhe ab nahi padhaenge. Mujhe aage padhne ka aur kuch karne ka bada mann tha*' shows that, in many cases,

the parents garrote their daughters' desire to live with her worldview, dreams and life aspiration.

Box 4.7: Life at risk: Experiencing the unpleasant and uncomfortable environment

The girl of Akheda

Mansi (name changed) is a fourteen year girl of village Akheda, near Nuh sub-division of Mewat. She is the youngest among 2 brothers and 3 sisters. Her father is a farmer and owns 3 bighas of land in Akheda village, where he usually grow Musterd, Wheat, Barley and Sugar cane depending upon the monsoon. Mansi's eldest brother works in a factory in Faridabad district of Haryana and ususally comes in weekend to her village. The other two sisters did not study and have been married in a nearby village. The second brother of Mansi is just elder to her and works with her father during seasons of harvest and runs a small tea stall cum partune shop in the village. Mansi is the only girl who was enrolled in the school and studied till her Ninth standard until she was withdrawn from the school. She was enrolled in 1st class and was doing very well in her studies as she was one of the brightest among her siblings. While she reached in her eight standards, one day she realized while entering the school that a boy keeps gazing her and wait for her near the school. The school is being run in a rented building and is totally unprotected where any one can come and go frequently. Mansi says that in the beginning she did not feel any inclination towards him as she thought that the gaze of the boy was natural and ususal. However, she sensed within a week that the boy comes deliberately to see her. She says she do not know how, but started liking him after ward. She says '*shayad gahr me mujpar dhyan nahi dete the*' (may be because I was not getting attention at home) ya '*shayad mujhe ghar me pyar ki kami mahsus hoti thi*' (I was desiring to be loved which I missed at home) '*ya shayad umar ka takaza raha hoga*' or may be (it was a matter of age) but she accepts that she craved to see him every day. She says she used to come to school regularly only because she would be able to see him and will go out with him after the school hour. At times she also used to go during school hour without making her attendance in the school. She says that she slowly started distracting from studies and deteriorating her academic result. She never realized when she fell in love with him and started outing with him everyday after school. The boy was a motor mechanic and was working in a motor workshop nearby to the school which was added avantage to her as she can watch him even being in the school. Howver, the most unpleasant and uncomfortable environment she experienced when she was caught with him and the entire school, her family members and the community came to know about her relations with the boy. The situation compelled her to leave her studies and sit at home. Further, she says that now for that situation she is being accused regularly by their family members and relatives as they are not able to find match for her marriage.

Everyone refuses to marry as the entire community in the locality knew her relation with that boy. She repents for the moment and situation as due to her several girls were taken out of the school and discontinued their studies. She herself feels that she had dreamt to go for higher studies which she could never do in her this life. She says she herself put her life on risk. She questions why is it that she can not live her life as she desires. She also questions when is it that the community perception towards girl will change? When are we going to accept girls' desire having legitimate value? When are we going to develop? Mansi have several such unanswered questions that she keeps trying to find out.

(Code: S/Disguised/Mansi/Nuh/conversation/2017)

Another case was of a girl coming to school from 'Nalhar' village. This girl was sexually exploited by a physical education teacher of the school (See box 4.8).

Box 4.8: Nalhar ki Wakila

Wakila (name changed) is a girl from Nalhar village and was studying in a school at Nuh along with her one sibling. Wakila studied till her eight standards when she was withdrawn from the school by her parents. However, her sibling continued her study and is now in ninth standard. She said that she was very chirpy and bright among all of her five siblings therefore, her parents got both of them enrolled in the school. Both of the siblings used to come along with other fellow students from Nalhar village which is around ten kilometer from the school. She was also bright in sports and therefore she loved to play games. However, one of the physical education teachers of the school used to touch her inappropriately while in the games period. In the beginning she did not realise the bad touch as she was not able to distinguish between good touch and bad touch. Once there was a district sports and she was selected to represent the school in the sports at district level. The Physical Education teacher accompanied her to the venue and often used to touch her again and again when she realized the intention of the teacher. She did not had courage to resist and therefore, she remained silent and started avoiding his appearance. Wakila says that whenever, the teacher got the opportunity he used to touch her and his frequency started increasing day by day. She further said that the teacher got aware that she understood his intention but in spite he did not stop himself from inappropriately touching her. She repent that her cowardness of not resisting his touch was considered by the teacher as welcoming sign and one day he hugged her when no one was around. However suddenly her sister appeared and saw her in the arms of the teacher. Her sister returned back from the spot while the teacher loosened Wakila from the clasp of his arms. On return back home her sister told her parents the story. The parents disbelieved Wakila and thought her to

be at fault. Her parents then after dropped her from the school. Out of the fear of social stigma, her plight was not brought to the notice of the school and no complaint was filed for the incident. Wakila says that had she shown the courage she could also have been studying as her sister is studying.

(Code: S/Disguised/Wakila/Nuh/conversation/2017)

However, both the cases were suppressed without any punitive action against the mechanic or the teacher due to social stigma. Since the Meo community is a close knit community, therefore, such unpleasant incidents have multiple social impacts. As a consequence of the incident, therefore, several community members withdrew their girl children from school due to the fear of safety and stopped sending the girl children to school. Further, several others have to dropped out of the school as their parents did not permit them even to complete their existing classes. The news of the incident got widely spread among the community and as a result, several others who wanted to send their children for schooling dropped the idea of sending their girl children to schools. Such incidents, though uncommon, clearly creates hindrance in the schooling of the Meo girl children as it increases trust deficit among the girl children and the parents.

4.9 Utilitarian perception of education and blockage of path: Meo girls' experiences of rural abode

With regard to educational quality, majority of Meo girls were only partially satisfied with their schooling. This is because most of the Meo girl children see schooling only in terms of its utilitarian or functional aspects where by they feel that they can develop themselves, cross their narrow boundaries and will get empowered. Theirfore, when they come to school, they dutifully and obediently accept ritualistic instructions from the teachers and never get courage to question or challenge any of its activity. Conversation in this regard shows that they do not think that their demand may bring change in the existing scenario of schooling pattern. The researcher conversed with the samples to understand whether they consider if they can force change in the school activities and even in its structure through their constant and continuous demand. Conversatioin in this regard with the sample girls ad-verbatim are presented below.

Researcher: *Apko school ki activity kaisi lagti hai? Kabhi aap kisi activity ko karne ke piche karan pucha hai apne teacher se?*

(How do you like the activity of schools? Whether you have ever asked your teacher the reasons behind doing any activity?)

Sample 12: *Hume to kuch bhi karne ko bolte hain to hum karte hain. Kabhi kabhi samajh nahi aata ki kyun karwa rahe hain activity.*

(We do whatever they instruct us to do. Sometimes we fail to understand why such activity are being done)

Researcher: *To ap puchte hain kya ki kun karwaya ja raha hai ye sab?*

(So do you ask why the activity is being performed?)

Sample 2: *Nahi hum nahi puchte*

(No. we don't ask)

Researcher: *Ap kabhi activity karne ke karan teacher se nahi puchte?*

(Never do you ask why the activity is being performed?)

Sample 17: *Nahi hum to nahi puchte. Jaisa kahte hain waisa karne lagte hain*

(No. We do not ask. We do whatever they (the teacher) want us to do)

Sample 9: *Hum kya mana kar sakte hain activity ko? Matlab hum kya activity badalwa bhi sakte hain?*

(If we can refuse also to do the activity? Means...if we can get the activity changed also?)

Researcher: *Aap me se kabhi kisi ne school ko senior secondary karne ke lie apne teacher ko bola hai?*

(If anyone among you have ever asked your teacher to make this school a senior secondary school?)

Sample 8: *Madam, hum to kabhi kabhi bolte hain...lekin hamare kahne se nahi hoga aisa teacher kahte hain.*

(Madam. We sometimes say. But our teacher says that your saying will not bring change)

The conversation suggests that the students are not equipped to challenge the existing norms of the school and its activities. They fail to see schooling from critical point of view. This is one of the reasons majority of the schools in the entire region of Mewat has failed in upgrade itself up to senior secondary level in spite of the demand from the stakeholders. However, majority of the Meo girls seemed to be happy coming to school as the processes of schooling have developed the taste of education among them. A sample girl from Punhana said,

‘Hum to kuch bhi karne ko tyar rahte hain. Hume to kuch bhi karne se achha lagta hai. Kam se kam yahan ghar ke kaamon jaisa kaam nahi karna padta hai. Teacher jo karwate hain usme mann lagta hai’

(We always remain ready to do anything. We love doing anything. At least here we don't have to do work as we used to do at homes. Whatever teacher gives us work we love to do that).

(Code: S/49/Punhana/C/2017)

The school has generated positiveness not only among their students, but, also among the Meo parents, who, in majority of the cases, came out of their reluctancy towards education of the girl child and have started sending them for schooling. As a consequence of schooling, several Meo girls feels themselves empowered to even resist and challenge the traditional thoughts of their male dominated community. It is because of teachers that they travelled educational life journey away from their regular involvement in household chores. Several samples from Nuh said that,

‘Hum yahan apne sir ki wajah se hi aa pae hain. Sir roz humare ghar aate the kahne ko ki beti ko school bhejo. Bahut bar kaha to hume ghar walon ne aane dia. Warna nahi behjte school ko kabhi bhi’

(It is due to sir that we are able to come here. Everyday sir used to visit our home to tell our parents to send the daughters to school. Several times he said then our parents sent us. Otherwise they would have never sent us to school)

(Code: S/29/Nuh/C/2017)

However, some of the Meo girls also showed their dissatisfaction with the education provided in the region as school has failed to upgrade itself and open their path for higher education. Several girls also found their school education unattractive, inactive and non-promising due to poor quality, functioning and lack of basic amenities such as proper drinking water, bathroom and sanitation. In this regard a sample girl from Taoru having desire to study in college said,

‘...lekin itna sa padh ke aage college kaise padhungi. Yahan to na achhi padhai hai na upar ke school aur na hi college. Aisi padhai se college ho jaegi kya? College kaise padhne jaenge. Ya to padhaen hi nahi ya agar padhana hai to college bhi padhaen. Itna sa padh kar kya ho sakta hai’.

(How will I study in college by studying so little? Neither here good education are available nor higher school or college. Whether with such education we will be able to access college? How will we go to college with so little education? either don't make us study or else if

you want us to study then let us study college as well. What can we achieve with studying so little?)

(Code: S/19/Taoru/C/2017)

4.10 Encountering and traversing marginality: Insights from the Meo girl children

The researcher understand marginality in terms of socio-economic position of a person who lives on the fringes of the society with lack of access of resources, opportunities of development of personal competencies, and, lack of freedom of choices. All these attributes of marginality can be seen in case of Meo girl children. Thus, the Meo girls are the most marginalized section of the society, as well as, within their own community. Therefore, it was imperative to understand the experience of the Meo girl children in order to comprehend how they encounter and traverse their marginality. Thus, the researcher tried to understand their struggle and resistance, conflict and negotiation, consistency and inconsistency, through their own voices, which helped them come out of their situation of marginality. This reflected from the conversation made with the sample in Punhana sample area where many Meo girls come from as far as ten kilometer regularly to school for the schooling.

Researcher: *App itni dur se kaise aati hain?*

(How do you come from such a far place to the school?)

Sample: *Madam, aana padta hai... humare gaaon me ladkion ke lie koi school nahi hai. Is ilaqe me yahi school hai. Hum log auto se bhi aate hain kabhi kabhi. Kai bar to paidal hi aana jana hota hai. Ab to aadat pad gai hai*

(Madam, I have to come....we do not have any school in our village for girls. In this area this is the only school. We come by autorickshaw sometimes. May times we come on foot. Not we have got accustomed)

Researcher: *To roz itni dur se paidal aati hain?*

(So you come everyday on foot from so far off place?)

Sample: *Roz paidal nahi aate...kabhi kabhi aate hain....warna toh bus se*

(Everyday we do not come on foot. Sometimes we do. Otherwise we also come by bus)

Researcher: *Bus mil jaati hai aaram se?*

(You get the bus easily?)

Sample: *Nhi ...kabhi 5 mint mein aa jati hai toh kabhi bahut der ho jaati hai...par kya kre aana padta hai.*

(No. sometimes it comes within five minutes. Sometimes we get late too much. But what to do we have to come like this)

Researcher: *To aur koi suvidha nahi hai aane jaane ki...*

(So you do not have any other means to come and go?)

Sample: *Nahi madam... ladkion ke lie to nahi hai... ladke to motorcylcle se ya cycle se aa jate hain.. humare lie nahi hai aisi koi suvidha*

(No madam... for girls there is none.. boys comes by motorcycle or cycle..for us there is no such facility)

Researcher: *To kaisa lagta hai itni dur se itni dikkaton ke baad yahan padhne ke lie aana?*

(So how do you feel coming from so far off place to study?)

Sample: *Madam, is ilaqe ka kabhi bhala nahi ho sakta...itne saal beet gae... yahan koi railway station tak nahi bana... na aane jaane ki suvidah achhi ki gai... Mewat me is se bhi kharab ilaqe hain... hum to phir bhi aa jate hain... yahan roz aisi dikkat ka samna karte karte itne din beet gae.*

(Madam. This region can not get facelift. So many years have passed. Not even a railway station was built in this area. In spite we come. Here we have got habituated facing such hardship in this area)

Researcher: *Ap ke neta yahan kuch nahi karte?*

(Whether your leader do not do anything for this area?)

Sample: *Karte hain na Madam, sirf apna bhala karte hain... janta ka koi bhala karta hai kya? Na hi Sarkar yahan kuch karti hai... Sohna tak to karti hai...lekin Mewat me nahi karti hai.*

(They do madam...they do wefare for themselves...whther any leader do any good for common people? Neither the government do good for this area. They have done till Sohna...but for Mewat they do not do)

Researcher: *Mewat me suvidha kyun nahi deti hai Sarkar?*

(Why is it that the government does not provide facility in Mewat?)

Sample: *Humlogon ke saath bhedbhaao karti hai...yaha toh bijli bhi nhi rehti hai...btaiye kya krein?*

(They discriminate with us. Neither electricity is provided in many areas..Tell us what to do?)

Researcher: *Par mewat se nazdeeq toh gurgaon hai waha toh bijli ki koi dikkat nhi hai...ab toh mewat NCR mein bhi count hota hai pta hai tumhe..?*

(But Gurgaon is near from Mewat. electricity is not a problem there. Do you know now Meat comes under NCR)

Sample: *Pata nhi madam par hum toh hamesha se pichde hue hein...*

(Do not know madam. But we are constsantly under developed)

The experiences of the Meo girls suggest that they are marginalized in terms of being located in remote and harsh environments of habitat. Being a Meo girl, they are excluded, discriminated against, and do not have the access to services or opportunities as any other girls from any other community other than Mewat region. They do not have trust upon the leader of the area who was accused by the sample girl for their own welfare rather than welfare of the region. In a response to whether your leader do not do anything for this area the sample girls said, they do welfare for themselves and not for the people of the area. Locating in the harsh environment of their habitat and travelling for a far distance for schooling also shows the determination for study in a wake of better future. The conversation suggests that living with breathing hope and endeavoring constantly to aspire better from every previous day in spite of several hurdles in life is one of the ways that show how the Meo girls encounter their marginality.

Box 4.9: Patriarchal autocracy and breathing hope: The voice of Dilshana

In houses the males keep the girls as a servant whereas they could have been sent for study. When they can teach boys, why can't they teach the girls? When the girls also have the right then why do they keep the girls at home? The girls are also free to study. But the parents do not permit their daughters to come out of house for receiving education. They keep the girls inside the house just for the household chores. In villages, girls are confined to their houses, where as, boys are permitted to study. Is that girls can not study? They can. If they can send girls to study then girls also can do better than boys. But the girls are now also coming out and making their names in education and games. They are participating in every activity as they have realized that they also have the same rights as boys. In the society people demand dowry and learned girls as bride. If they will not permit the girls to study then how will they get the learned bride? The girls are married in their early tender age. If the girls will study then there may be lots of change in the community and this society. I am studying with this aim in my life.

(Code: S/49/Punhana/C/2017)

The projective writing (Box 4.9) of Dilshana suggest that they encounter enumerable problems perpetuated largely by their patriarchal autocrat community and society, which do not provide them time and space to see better educational horizon. It also suggests that the girls have realized their rights and are coming out of their home to

receive education. They are having positive hope that one day they can change the thought and will bring change.

The analysis also suggests that, as a result of non-accessibility of quality higher educational institution in the region, majority of the Meo girls fail to make it to the opportunity structure which they aspires for. However, for few of them, the non-accessibility of institution has paved the way for their determination to resist, encounter and negotiate with the situation so as to traverse their marginality (see box 4.10).

Box 4.10: Seema and her struggle

Seema is an orphaned girl whose parents died in her childhood when she was around eight years old. She was survived by her elder brother who started working in a factory and looking after her sister. Her brother got Seema admitted in the school with the perception that school will provide her food, on the one hand, and on the other, she will study while her brother will work in the factory. Slowly, Seema developed her interest in studies and started excelling in education with the help of her teachers. When she reached her eight standards, her brother started finding match for her so that she can be married. Seema wanted to continue her studies and therefore, she refused to marry. However, her brother kept on insisting and persuading her for marriage. Seema was so keen to study that she resisted the decision of her brother. She requested her teacher to talk to him in this regard and ask him not to pressurize her for marriage as she wants to study. When the teacher talked to her brother, he misbehaved with the teacher and asked not to interfere in their family matters. Finding no respite, Seema decided to run away from home. However, the teachers collectively decided to take her responsibility and help her in her studies. After her tenth class, the teachers got her admitted in open schooling from where Seema completed her senior secondary school. She also completed her graduation from Indira Gandhi National Open University with the help of her teachers. She is now doing B.Ed course from Regional Centre at Nuh run by Maulan Azad National Urdu University. She aspires to become a teacher which she hope very positively. She says that had she not resisted her brother's decision, she could not have achieved what she has achieved among the entire community. While narrating her story, she constantly thanked her teachers without whose help she thinks she could not have achieved the distinction.

(Code: S/57/Punhana/C/2017)

The failure of school to equip the Meo girl children for higher educational opportunity consequently have made majority of the Meo girl children fail to achieve opportunity in the era of contest mobility. However, the several testimonials suggest that there are

several Meo girls who have broken their cultural boundaries to keep their hope and determination alive by encountering such tangible and intangible marginalization. However, due to inefficient education system in the patriarchal autocratic environment they look up to their teacher for their proper guidance and emancipation. The absence of educational institution catering to the need of entire population of Meo girl children creates one of the biggest hurdles for their upward educational mobility. The meak demand by the community members as well as the Meo girls for better and higher educational facility has not been heard by the educational authority whose intervention is essential to change the educational situation of the Meo girls' population.

4.11 Section II: Concerns, worries and hope: Voices from the teachers

In totality, 18 teachers from three schools of three sample areas were interacted on the basis of referral points. The areas of interaction and investigation emerged by going through both- the secondary sources, as well as, the pilot visits to the schools. Each referral points were categorized according to the objectives of the study and major focus areas of the responses from the teachers were written in points before going in to the details so as to make it easier for analysis. Certain responses had multiple reasons; hence, while analyzing those responses, it has been taken as separate area of concern and presented separately. While elaborating the responses the objectives of the study has been kept in mind and therefore it has been presented in tandem and analyzed according to the emerged areas of concern with regard to Meo girl children.

4.12 The problem of access to educational opportunity

Evaluation of schooling and allied opportunity available to the Meo girl children was also done with the teachers who were interacted upon the matter. The responses suggest that accessibility to schools especially after the secondary classes is a major problem in the entire region of Mewat as its availability is scarce in the region. The principal of a co-ed school located in Nuh said,

'aisa nahi ki school ki dikaten hain... admission me koi problem nahi hoti, sarkar ne sare intezamaat kar rakhe hai... copy, kitaab, dresses sab milta hai inhe...han senior secondary school bahut kam hain jo inhe aage nahi badhne dete...'

(Its not that there is a problem of accessibility of school...there is no problem of admission, government has done all the measures for

copies, books, dresses...they get all...yes... accessibility of senior secondary schools are meager which hinders their education growth).

(Code: T/3/Taoru/C/2017)

The finding also suggests that, good schools, which could provide quality education and opportunity to the Meo girl children to compete with others having quality education are a major problem in the area. Though, primary as well as secondary schools are sufficient to cater to the need of school going Meo girl children. Another teacher said that,

‘Good schools are available in the nearby area of Sohna, but are costly, and do not give admission to all. The gentry coming from maximum Meo families from this area are not able to adjust due to their poor educational and economic background’.

(Code: T/7/Nuh/C/2017)

In spite of the demand as a result of positive consciousness of the Mewati community the demand for better schools which can give them hope of advancing in life is high from the community members, as well as, Meo girl children. The patriarchal autocratic problem that Meo girl children face prevents them to come to achieve education. However, the new generation are changing at a very slow pace and allowing girls to come for study. But the perception of marrying and settling Meo girl child early is also high which create hinderance in the path of educational development of Meo girl children. A teacher in Nuh sample area said,

‘Dekhie madam, is ilaqe me apko acche khaase primary school milenge, secondary school bhi hain lekin senior secondary school shayd hi milenge jisme ki bachhion ka admission ho sake. Aur higher education ki to baat hi mat kijie. Ab bataie ki agar secondary school padh bhi lia to aage kaise padhengi ki unki zindagi me koi badlaao aa sake? Yahi wajah hai ki Mewaati logon ko lagta hai ki padhne se koi faaeda nahi ho pa raha. Islie wo apna waqt, paisa aur taqat bacchion ki padaahi me nahi lagaate.’

(See madam, in this area you would find ample number of primary schools, even secondary schools is available, but rarely would you find senior secondary school where children can be accommodated. And then do not talk of higher education. Now tell, if they even studied till secondary classes then how would they study further so that there may come some change in thir life. This is why the Mewati community thinks that they do not have any benefit of education. Thus, they do not aspire to invest time, money and energy in the education of girls)

(Code: T/9/Nuh/C/2017)

The analysis on the basis of teachers' interaction it was analyzed that in the absence of better and higher education facility which could lead the Meo girl children to higher ladder of educational development and opportunity structure are missing in the area. Thus, the path of their upward mobility through education remains blocked. The teacher informed that this becomes another reason of Meo parents not investing time, resource and energy in the education of Meo girls. Teachers perceive that the community expects that education should provide upward economic mobility and employment which remains missing as a result of absence of qualitative education. Thus, the problem of accessibility of education in terms of Meo girls is more due causal relations. The familial, as well as, reasons related to safety of the Meo girl children add to the worries of the teacher where the girls are stopped anytime in between their education. A teacher from Punhana said that,

'Yahan school tak aane jaane me bahut dikkat hoti hai. Kai baar kai bacchiyan paidal hi aati hain. Safety ka problem to hai hi is ilaqe me. Ghar ke kaamon ko yahan auraten aur bachhiyan hi karti hain to waise bhi waqt par nahi aati. Kai bar beech me hi aana band kar deti hain. Bachhiyan to padhna chahti hain. Lekin kya kare jab ghar wale hi rok den unko'

(Comuting to school here is very difficult. Many times girls come on foot. Safety is already a problem in this area. As female and the girl children accomplish household chores therefore, they become late also. Many times, they dropout in between their studies also. Girls want to study. but do they do if their parents themselves stop them?)

(Code: T/15/Punhana/C/2017)

What is particular about these conversations is that schools, although accessible upto secondary level have failed to instill a positive view with regard to the world view of Meo girl children. The absence of senior secondary schools has shattered the Meo girl children's hope and confidence towards life aspiration. It has also not generated the positive perception among community members as the schools located in the area has not produced role model for children to follow. The analysis also suggests that in absence cultural capital, burden of household chores and role model from within the community members who can give positive hope to the community as well as the Meo girl children in terms of education, majority of Meo girl children lag behind in the competitive opportune structure. The testimonials also suggest that lack of better

quality schools, located in Mewat areas, aggravates the problem relating to educational demands among the Meo girl children with a hope for advancing in life.

Further, the teachers informed that the economic hardship faced by the Meo girl children multiplies to their shattered hope of realizing their educational dream. Several teachers confirmed the prevalence of economic hardship faced by the majority of Meo families, which impacts the schooling of Meo girl children negatively. The conversations with sample teachers reveal that,

‘The Meo girls even if they pass the secondary schools from this region can not further their study in better higher educational institution nearby to the area such as Sohna as better education demands better investment which these Meo girls can not afford. As a result, majority of them fail to compete with others having better educational facility and cultural capital.’

(Code: T/5/Taoru/C/2017)

Thus, the institutional, economic and other related problems leave no choice for Meo community, other than to opt for government schools located in the area, which fail to provide quality education. Further, the absence of better educational environment in Meo populated areas has shattered their hope and opportunity for upward mobility. Interaction with the teachers also suggested that Meo community as well as girls expect that education should provide them upward economic mobility and hope of better employment. However, the hope and efforts of teachers for the education of Meo girls have not died down. The realization of teachers that Meo girls are interested in studying, increased their enrolment with community outreach of the teachers.

4.13 Productive freedom and creative release

The testimonials from the teachers also suggest that problem relating to security in the area especially for the Meo girls become another reason where the community members avoid sending girl child to far off places for better schooling. Many among the community members distrust their girl children as they feel that if their girls are sent to far off places for schooling, they may get involved with boys which will bring bad names to the close knit families. Thus, with regard to girls majority of the community members have failed to come out of traditional male dominated thinking of conservatism and believe that spending on girls’ education is sheer waste.

Further, the prevalence of gender bias is another aspect which shatters the hope among Meo girl children. Testimonials from teachers such as ‘Mewati parents ladkion ki education ko mahatv nahi dete...’ (Mewati Parents do not give value to girls’ education), ‘Cultural background nahi hai...’ (They do not have the cultural background) ‘jaldi shadi kar dete hain...’ (Marry their girl child early) suggest that such bias increases the feeling of mistrust among majority of Meo girls and their parents which in many case lead to develop resistance among the girl children.

Thus, the interaction with teachers confirmed the influence of gender stereotypes towards Meo girls including a dim view of towards the abilities and potential girl children. Further, the absence of girls’ schools and more female teachers reinforces the patriarchal autocratic environment of school as many teachers confirmed about the parents that they often remain reluctant in sending their girl children in male teachers’ populated schools. Apart from these, the dominance of male students within classrooms further marginalizes the interactivity of Meo girl children and reduces their positive hope towards schooling processes.

4.14 Evading worries: The community outreach and the Meo girl children

Conversation with a principal of a co-ed school located in Nuh reflects that the effort of techers in general, and the principal of the sample school in particular, had multiple effects. The community started sending their girl children to school and the enrolment as well as the regularity of Meo girl children increased as a result of such initiatives of the principal. The conversation with the principal in this regard is presented below:

Box 4.11 Rising from the rubble: Positive hope and the success of the principal

The sample school is a co-ed school run by Maulana Azad National Urdu University in Nuh sub-division of Mewat district. The principal of the school joined the school five years back when the decision of running the school in a renated building was taken up. When the principal joined the school, the major problem was to bring the children to school, especially, the Meo girl children as education among them was alarming. He started meeting the influential persons of the community in the area but, the initial response of the community was not good towards education of the Meo girl children and the school started with only eighteen male children who was admitted to school. The principal says that he was well aware of the educational attainment of the Meo in general and Meo girl children in particular, and, thus, he decided to increase the number of children in the school. While he himself accommodated nearby to the

school in a rented building, he started meeting and developing personal relations with the community members so as to encourage them to send their girl children to the school. He informed that he got success in admitting eleven additional girl children in the school after his little effort of meeting and encouraging the community members towards education of girl children. In the second year he decided to visit each house in the locality and increased his frequency of meeting the community members. He says his constant interaction with the community members developed his personal relations and influence among the community which led to increased the number of girl students up to fifty percent of the total enrolment in the school. The number of girl students from eleven in the first year has increased to 250, which he says, is the impact of the positive inclination of the community towards education of girl children.

(Code: P/2/Nuh/C/2017)

Thus, the conversation with the teachers suggests that the perception of Meo community is constantly changing towards education of girl children. Many of the community members have realized the developmental aspect of schooling. It is also because, they are also encountering resistance from within their family as their own girl child are resisting the male dominated attitude and constantly endeavouring to acquire education so as to realize their world view. Such resistance and rebellion are compelling the parents to send their girl children for schooling which is bringing them out of the marginalization.

4.15 Section III: Parents and the community members: Education and educating their girl children

Parents and community members constituted a major part of the present research. Hence, it was necessary to understand their perception with regard to the present research for two major reasons. *Firstly*, it was related to the Meo girl children and *secondly*, because the Meo community primarily was a patriarchal autocratic community. Further, it was also necessary as the researcher had to stay for a longer duration of time in the field and had to visit many families of the sample children. Therefore, the researcher believed that their perception is important to be mapped as it will provide greater inputs with regard to the Meo girl children. In totality, 48 parents and 15 community members were interacted on the basis of focus group discussion. Their perception were mapped on the basis of referral points (see appendix-II) and

recorded manually. The interaction with the parents confirmed that they are sending their girl children for schooling, as they are keen to provide education to their children and want them grow as any other community. However, they also showed their helplessness, because they could not transform their situation of poor economic condition and hence majority of them could not afford to provide quality education. As a result, majority of them said they totally depend upon the government initiatives for schooling of girl children. They also said that the initiatives of the government is not upto the mark for providing education beyond secondary classes therefore, they feel disheartened that they are unable to provide education to their girl children beyond secondary classes in most of the cases.

4.16 Desire for education and fear of safety

Prevalence of fear for security, freedom and equality emerged as contributory factors for negative attitude of parents towards education of Meo girl children. The analysis suggests that parent and community members from Taoru sample areas were more exposed to the value of girls' education as compared to other two sample areas. When the researcher asked them their views of education of girl children, a parent remarked,

'Madam hum bhi chahte hain ki mere bachhe achha padhen aur zindagi me achha karen. Aaj ke daur me kaun se maa-baap apne bachhe ko achhi talim dene ki khahish nahi rakhta... lekin agar padhai ke naam par wo sirf school aaen aur kuch achha na kare to behtar hai ki wo ghar ka kaam dekhent...'

(Madam, we do want to provide education to our children. In today's time which parent doesn't desire to provide quality education to their children. But if our child go to school just for the sake of roaming freely, then it is better that they should learn the household chores.)

Another parent remarked that,

'Aap dekhie ki yahan se nazdeek me gurgaaon hai aur wahan kitni saari ladkiyan kaam karti hain...ye to tabhi ho sakta hai jab yahan ache se bachhon ko padhaen. Lekin aap hi bataie ki ache school agar itna paisa lenge to hum umda talim kaise den?'

(You see that near to this place is Gurgaon where several girls work. This is possible only if the children here are taught well. But if the quality school will charge so much money then how will we able to provide quality education?)

The testimonial '*lekin agar padhai ke naam par wo sirf school aaen aur kuch achha na kare*' and '*ye to tabhi ho sakta hai jab yahan ache se bachhon ko padhaen*' suggests that parents were worried about the prevalence of poor affairs of education in majority of the schools located in the areas. It also suggests that they desire their children excel in life by attaining quality education which reflects from their concern from '*Madam hum bhi chahte hain ki mere bachhe achha padhen aur zindagi me achha karen*'. However, some of the parents were also showed their worry concerning the safety and cited instance of a boy being murdered in nearby high profile school. They said,

'aapne dekha hoga ki bade school me bachhe ke saath kya hua hai. Abhi kuch dino pahle bachhe ko maar dia kisi ne school me. Aise me hum kaise bhej sakte hain aise school me. Marne se to behtar hai ki yahin ke school me padh le. Kam se kam yahan ke school me hum nigrani rakhte to hain. Wahan to school ke andar bhi nahi jaane dete, to pata kaise chale ki bachhi ke saath kya ho raha hai'.

'(you may have noticed the incident in such big school. Somedays earlier a child was murdered by someone in the school. in such situation how could we send the girl child in such school. it is better to study in schools located in the area than to die in such school. at least we keep vigil in schools located in our area. The big school do not even permit to enter school, then how will we get to know what is happening with our girl child)'

Such concerns also reflect from the parents in the other two sample areas where majority of parents showed their inability to send their girl children for higher education to far off places for study out of fear of safety. Since fear of safety of girl children in the region have a deep impact upon the consciousness of Meo parents. Therefore, they remain deeply wary for the girls coming out in such unsafe environment and habitat. They feared more for the safety of their girl children as compared to boys. The testimonial '*pata kaise chale ki bachhi ke saath kya ho raha hai*' also suggests the existence of mistrust between parents and children. It indicates of the fear that girls would get involved with boys and bring a bad name to the family. Such fear, either, hypothetical or real, compels many parents to stop sending their girl children, to school. further, constant goading by parents to enquire about the whereabouts of the girl children, curbs the Meo girl children's freedom, shatters their self respect and develop negative attitude of resistance towards their parents as they

feel that parents think traditionally and are conservative. Thus, the safety concerns are considered by many Meo girl children as restrictions upon them in comparison to boys which reflected in the testimonials of the girl children.

4.17 Generation gap in the world of perception

Further, the social practices of marrying Meo girl children early in their life is seen by majority of Meo parents and community members as pious responsibility. The entire male community members equivocally favour early marriage of their girl children. Such social practices creates situation of conflict between the girl child and the parents as the Meo girl children perceives it as a hinderance between their aspiration, worldview and development. Further, they sence it as a loss of their promising hope towards their education and upward mobility. The dichotomy between parental desire and that of Meo girl children have led the parents think education in terms of development of misbehavior and resitance among their children. A parent said, that

‘Ye kaisi talim dete hain ki bachhian apne baap se ladti hain...kahna nahi maanti..aur baghawat pe utar aati hain. Aisi padhai ka kya faaeda jisme bade aur choton ka lihaz hi na ho. Ye to kai baar aisi aamaada ho jati hain ki majbooran unki shadi kar deni padti hai. Talim lihaz aur saleeqa sikhati hai. Lekin yahan to mamool hi ghair hai. Jitna padti hain utna baghawat pe utarti jaati hain’

‘What type of education do they provide that the (girl) child fights with their father. They do not consent to their parents and rebel. What is the benefit of such education which do not teach the respect for elder and younger. Many times they resisit so much that compel us to marry her. Education teaches moulding of positive behavior and respect. But the situation here is different. The more they study, the more they resist and rebel.’

The analysis revel that their exist generation gap in the world of perception of parents and the girl children. Actually, education has led to develop in children rational thinking. As a result, education has developed awareness among the Meo girl children towards their own rights as well as realizing their hope of excellence in life. They have developed the taste of education in spite of familial hinderance. Thus, the stereotype on the part of their parents is resisited by the girl children, which the parents perceive as misbehavior on the part of their children. This puts Meo girl children at a disadvantag and develops a negative attitude towards their family, environment and habitat.

4.18 Section IV: Analysis on the basis of observation

Observations provided me a sense of penetrating deeper into the issues of Meo girl children and provided me a chance to understand the shaping of their daily life experiences, through their participation in school activities. The researcher tried to capture their conversations among their peers, gestures, interaction with their teachers and so on in context of their breaking their traditional cultural boundaries, resistance and schooling. The purpose of observation was to understand comprehensively the ongoing activities of Meo girl children. It helped the researcher to comprehend the experience of the Meo girl children, the role of the social structure of schooling and in generating conformity in institutional environments. This section is based on those observations where analysis has been presented in sub-headings.

4.19 *General environment of schools, self worth and the Meo girl children*

It was observed that the general environment of the schools is poor and unsafe for the students in general and the Meo girl children in particular. Most of the schools lacked protective mechanism and therefore, access of any stranger to school is quite easy which make Meo girl children quite unsafe. Essential infrastructural facility among the entire sample schools, such as, proper arrangement for seating of children, appropriate writing board, water, proper sanitation, proper ground and so on were either missing or found to be inappropriate. Majority of the schools have poor infrastructure and lacked proper lighting arrangements in the classrooms. While in summer, the Meo girls have to sit in very hot classroom which was observed to be without even arrangement for fan. The proper drinking water facility was missing. Some of the schools have made arrangement for water from outside. The water supplier supply cans of drinking water. The staffroom do not have proper arrangement for sitting and working for teachers. The lavatory for the use of staffs as well as students were quite filthy. For menstruating girls, the lavatory do not had proper dustbin which questions the caring for the hygiene. As regarding teaching methods, the teachers stick to redundant methods of promoting rote learning and reproducing the written material in the notebook which do not enthuse the Meo girl children. However, majority of the teachers were observed to be caring towards Meo girl children and encourage them towards learning. There were some other teachers who leaving aside their primary

work of teaching, mostly remain involved in personal or administrative work which hampers the learning of children. The feelings among Meo girl children that only secondary classes will not suffice their world view and development have shaped their experiences in a negative manner. Majority of children, parents and community members conceive it to be a deliberate attempt on the part of the government agencies, to block their development. They perceive the existence of such stepmotherly treatment of the region as a result of political reasons of successive government. This is because the community has been projected as a resisting community for long.

As regarding educational under-development, the researcher observed that the absence of spatial educational growth for the Meo children diminishes their self-esteem and self-worth and hence it demotivates them towards their schooling and life journey which also reflects from several of testimonials mentioned above. However, the regularity of the classes in the sample schools was able to incite interest in the Meo girls towards education for three major reasons. Firstly, by breaking their cultural and traditional boundaries, the Meo girls get the chances to come out of their traditional work schedule which provide them relief from household chores. Secondly, regularity of schooling has moulded and shaped the educational desire among Meo girls more positively than negatively, which reflects from their demand for further education. And lastly, majority of the Meo girls have developed their positive world views towards their life and have realized that they can excel on the basis of their educational attainment in spite of the fact that the culture of silence and poor pedagogical intervention dominate the classroom in most of the sample schools which routinely manifests itself in majority of pedagogical processes within classroom. This is why, many of the Meo girls have been able to develop their courage to challenge and resist the patriarchal autocratic decisions in contexts of education of girl children within the family and among the community.

4.20 Learning and the classroom deliberation

It was observed that the active interactive learning environment which can promote the expression of ideas of Meo girl children is missing. The orthodox and non-dynamic behavior of teachers with regard to their teaching style does not let the teachers adopt new methods of teaching for active learning and better outcome. In most of the schools located in

the area, teachers teach with traditional ritualistic teaching style which promotes reproduction of material rather than promoting the girl's active involvement. It was observed that lecturing by the teacher, reading from books by the students along with questions and answers solving, dominate as favourable method of teaching by teachers without using any supplementary aids or creating sufficient inquisitiveness among the children through active learning. Thus, the teachers were observed to be teaching in a unilateral negotiating process mode, which reduce the students to remain passive listeners. This is one of the major reasons for having dull classroom activity where learning almost becomes insignificant. Another issue that emerged from the observation was not having space for any remedial assistance to the students which often make them struggling for comprehending the textbook matters. Further, in most of the response management instances, teacher remark to 'sit silently' provides no space to the students to quench their thirst of comprehension. Such action of teachers is usually done for the sake of maintaining discipline within the classroom which often thwarts the inquisitiveness of the Meo girl children. The observation also suggests systematic neglect of Meo girl children who are often left dependent on their own learning, which, in majority of the cases of Meo girl children, found to be missing, both at home and school. In such non-supportive environment learning for the Meo girl children become meaningless, although their desire to excel and learn more remains high. Also with the blockage of following higher education dream the Meo girl children often find themselves at the cross roads. Thus, due to such causal relations schooling itself become an obstacle in thwarting the educational desire, worldview, aspiration and so on of Meo girl children.

4.21. Insecure campus and prental worries

The unsafe campus environment and its surroundings, often develops the imagined fear among the parents especially towards their girl children. It was observed, on the basis of withdrawl of some of the girl children that parents fear the unsafe school environment due to lack of security of girls in the school campus as most of the schools are unfortified and provide unhindered access to any stranger without having any check in entry. Thus, the experiences of parents pertaining to education of their girl children are also shaped due to unsafe environment and habitat and whether hypothetical or actual, it leads to the belief that their girl children may become target

at any point of time. The oversensitivity towards their girl children is a result of discrimination and prejudice according to Allport (1954) which affects the entire school life.

4.22. Absence of cultural capital, conflict and dissonance

The lack of cultural capital, in contexts of education and socio-cultural background of the Meos, contributes to the educational plight of Meo girl children students. The teachers' sensitization towards the Meo community engenders a feeling of being 'others'. In one of the observations at a sample school in Punhana, it was found that parents were called to communicate with the teacher for irregularity if their girl child. The response of the parent for the irregularity shows that they do not take education of their girl child seriously due to missing cultural capital in context of education and also due to their socio-cultural background. This is reflected from the conversation between the teacher and the parent. The conversation was observed at a sample school in Punhan between the parents and teachers:

Teacher: *Fauzia ki attendance kam hai... school kabhi aati hai kabhi nahi aati hai... ap use rozana school kun nahi behejti hain.*

(The attendance of fauzia is quite less. She sometimes comes and sometime remains absent. Why don't you send her school regularly?)

Parent: *Master ji... kitna to padh lia... ghar me bhi to kaam raho hai... waise aati to hai*

(Master ji. She has studied so much... there remains household work as well. Otherwise she comes)

Teacher: *Kabhi kabhi aati hai...aise kaise chalega*

(She is irregular. How will it work like this)

Parent: *Ji itna padh lia... itna to ghar me koi na padha... ke karogi itna padh ke Master ji*

(She studied so much...No one in the house has studied so much. What will she do after so much study?)

Teacher: *Leking jab naam likhaya hai to padhna to padega na*

(But when she has taken admission then she has to study)

Parent: *Mewation me kahan itta padhaawe hain...yo to phir bhi padhne aao hai*

(In Mewatis no one teaches their girls child so much... she inspite comes for study)

This conversation between the teacher and parent above suggests that due to lack of cultural capital in terms of education the parents do not take education of the Meo girl children seriously. This become one of the other reasons for drawing two parallels between parents and girl children whose educational desires get thwarted, in spite of their desire to study. Such missing cultural capital due to socio-cultural background makes the children stubborn who resist for their own educational rights. This also puts them in a situation of conflict and dissonance as a result of conflicting situation between personal desire and parental concern where they start comparing their parental concern for them with 'others' excelling through education, and thus, draw different parallels from their parents. The restricting environment of the parents develops a feeling of hopelessness among the Meo girl children.