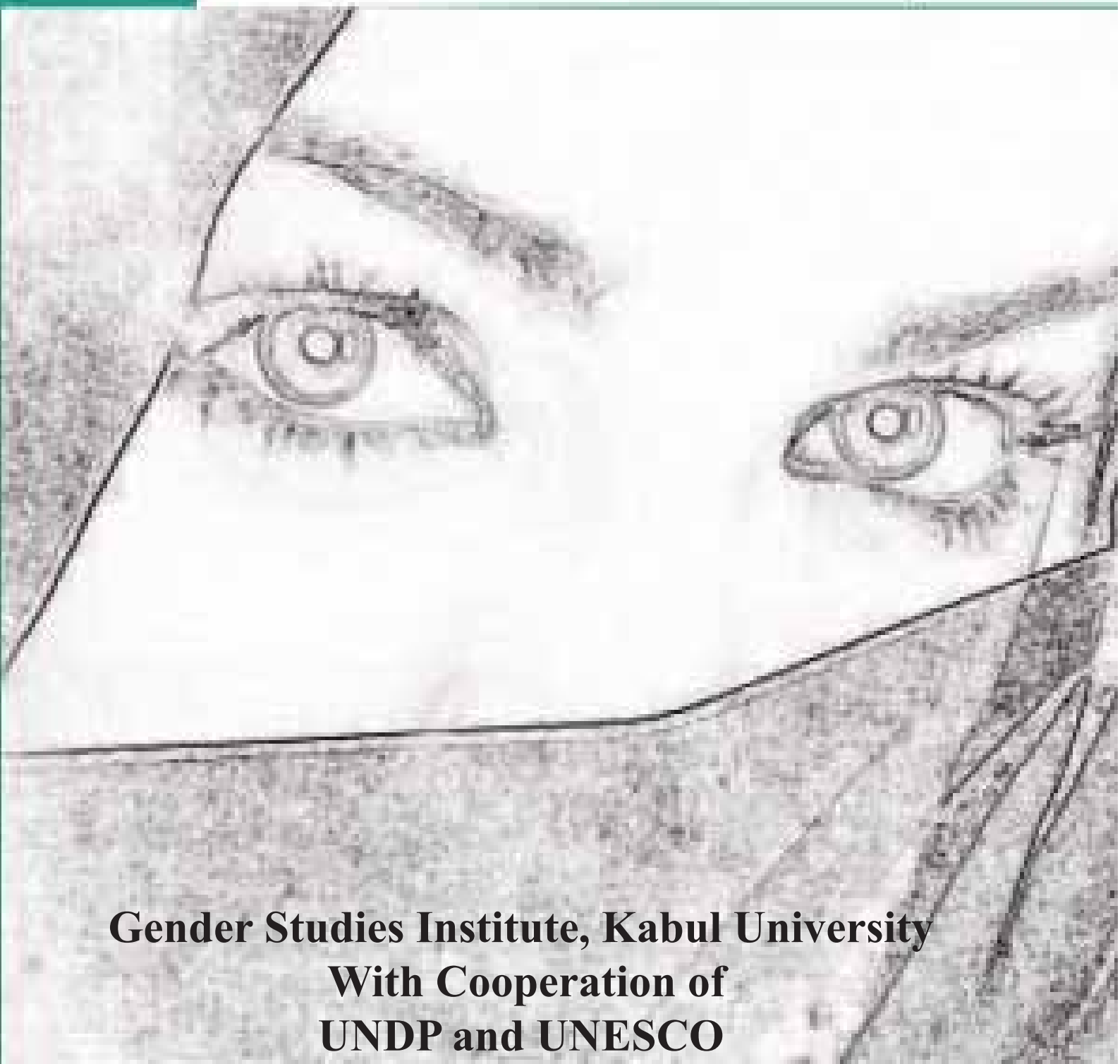


# Gender Based Violence

A Study of Three Universities  
in Afghanistan



**Gender Studies Institute, Kabul University**  
**With Cooperation of**  
**UNDP and UNESCO**

**March 2010**

## Foreword

The commitments of Afghan Government to gender equality are embodied in the Constitution, the Afghanistan Millennium Development Goal, the Afghanistan Compact, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), and international treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA). Gender equality is one of the cross-cutting issues in the ANDS with the objective of building “an Afghanistan where women and men enjoy security, equal right and equal opportunities in all spheres of life”. The ANDS also supports the implementation of the National Action Plan for Women (NAPWA).

As Chancellor of Kabul University, I would like to take this opportunity to kindly reiterate my profound appreciation to the UNESCO and UNDP for the numerous efforts that have been made towards gender equality in Afghanistan and particularly for their support in developing this report, ‘Gender Based Violence: A Study of three Universities in Afghanistan’. Both UNESCO and UNDP have been providing technical support to the Government of Afghanistan and to educational institutions, such as Kabul University, in order to strengthen the capacity of educational institutions for the advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment in Afghanistan. By seeking to achieve the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), both organisations in close collaboration with Kabul University have sought to develop effective gender mainstreaming models to strengthen the capacity of educational institutions at the national and sub-national levels.

In 2006, with the support of UNESCO and UNDP, the Gender Studies Institute (GSI) was established at Kabul University. The GSI was established as an integral unit of the university to contribute to the knowledge and functioning of the university by facilitating a learning environment conducive to gender justice. Institutes such as the GSI are highly important to address issues such as gender based violence (GBV).

GBV is a pervasive problem in educational institutions, and can have a devastating impact on those affected, ranging from absenteeism, severe mental and physical health issues, drop outs, and in the most severe cases can also result in suicide. Great strides have been taken to address the prevalence of gender based violence in educational institutions in Afghanistan - a step forwards to promoting gender equality in Afghanistan. In order to determine the prevalence of GBV occurring at universities in Afghanistan, UNESCO and UNDP supported the GSI in undertaking research in 2009.

The findings of the study of the three universities show that GBV exists in educational institutions in Afghanistan. By conducting and contextualising such research, Kabul University as well as other universities in Afghanistan will be able to develop comprehensive approaches, including adequate policies, legislations and programmes to address the prevalence of GBV.

Chancellor  
Kabul University  
Pro. Hamidullah Amin

## Foreword

It is with my greatest pleasure to introduce herewith the 'Gender Based Violence: A Study of three Universities in Afghanistan' Report. The report highlights the presence of gender based violence (GBV) in three of Afghanistan's educational institutes (Universities of Kabul, Balkh and Herat), giving a succinct overview of the prevalence of GBV as well as recommendations to reduce and prevent its occurrence. Gender based violence, and in particular sexual violence, is a serious, life-threatening protection issue, primarily affecting women and children. Like in many other countries worldwide, gender based violence is prevalent in Afghanistan, and often stems from power inequalities and asymmetries in society at large. The prevention of GBV, therefore, requires the identification, reduction and elimination of the causes and contributing factors of GBV.

UNESCO, guided by the three fundamental principles of Universality, Diversity and Dignity is working to promote gender equality in Afghanistan. In order to pave the way toward sustainable development, UNESCO seeks to address current social and environment problems, and envisions the sustainability of development as one that encompasses all populations and walks of life by integrating such concerns as the reduction of poverty, human rights, education for all, and gender equality. The broader goal of gender equality is a societal one in which education and all other social institutions, must contribute. In the framework of the ANDS, the NAPWA, the Constitutional guarantee to equality, the MDGs, the EFA goals as well as the CEDAW, UNESCO is supporting the Government of Afghanistan to mainstream gender issues throughout educational planning and reform. The full and equal engagement of women in all aspects of society is crucial to ensuring the sustainable development of Afghanistan.

UNESCO is supporting research to contribute to the development of evidence based policies to promote gender equality in the post-conflict context of Afghanistan. With support of UNESCO, in 2006 and 2007 the GSI carried out gender-based research involving a wide range of actors at the university level. The present research conducted at the three Universities provided additional support to the GSI with the main objective of enhancing research-policy linkages on women's rights and gender equality in Afghanistan through policy-oriented research.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who have worked to contribute to the successful implementation of the research that went into the drafting and finalisation of this report, notably Prof. Amin, Prof. Rahman, Mr. Jimmy Dabhi, the Research Teams in the three universities, Fatima Hussaini at the GSI, the colleagues at UNDP and the colleagues at UNESCO.

The UNESCO office in Kabul also gratefully acknowledges the continuous support and collaboration from the University of Kabul in its educational endeavours. By working together and through the commitment of all actors engaged in the promotion of gender equality, progress will be achieved towards reaching the goal of sustainable development in Afghanistan. The UNESCO office in Kabul commits itself to further collaboration with the University of Kabul and other relevant partners in the coming years.

Shigeru Aoyagi

UNESCO Representative in Afghanistan

# Preface

Education is both a cornerstone for building Afghan women's human capital and a sine qua non for their equal enjoyment of rights and participation in national development. However, their access to a safe academic environment which can guarantee this is often beset with numerous constraints.

I am delighted to present this very timely research study entitled "Gender-Based Violence: A Study of Three Universities in Afghanistan" jointly undertaken by UNESCO and the UNDP in conjunction with the universities of Kabul, Herat and Balkh. It is timely because it addresses two inter-related issues significantly affecting Afghan women today: their human capital development and their security which can ensure their living free from intimidation, fear, threats and violence in both the public and private spheres of life and pursue activities that will develop their capacity and help to lead a full and satisfying life.

Moreover, the findings of this empirical Study which have encapsulated the views of stakeholders studying or working in the academic institutions reinforce UNDP's view of gender equality grounded in the premise that it is absolutely indivisible from the UNDP human development goal of achieving real improvements in people's lives resulting in inclusive, democratic, violence-free and sustainable development. They also reflect one of the major aims of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) to "eliminate discrimination against women, develop their human capital and promote their leadership in order to guarantee their full and equal participation in all aspects of life."

Against this background, this Study provides a rare and nuanced account of the prevalence of Gender Based Violence (GBV) in three premier academic institutions due to the social and cultural prism through which this issue is viewed. This has serious implications for achieving gender equality in Afghanistan. Equally striking are the bold recommendations listed in the Study to address this issue on a long-term basis through a multi-faceted approach by tackling the structural causes and establishing an academic environment based on trust, transparency, confidence and accountability.

I sincerely hope this Study is the beginning of a long list of other initiatives which will take on pertinent issues influencing Afghan women's equal access to opportunities and provide decision-makers with substantive factual information to usher in appropriate reforms for integrating gender equality in all walks of life in Afghan society. I am grateful to the partners of this research Study, UNESCO and Kabul University for their tireless efforts in making this ground-breaking research become a reality and look forward to similar collaborations in the future.

David Akopyan  
Deputy Country Director (Programme), UNDP, Kabul.

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## **Abbreviation:**

<b>ANDS</b>	<b>Afghanistan National Development Strategy</b>
<b>BPFA</b>	<b>Beijing Platform for Action</b>
<b>CEDAW</b>	<b>Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women</b>
<b>EDAW</b>	<b>Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</b>
<b>EFA</b>	<b>Education for All</b>
<b>FF</b>	<b>Female Faculty</b>
<b>FS</b>	<b>Female Students</b>
<b>GBV</b>	<b>Gender based violence</b>
<b>GD</b>	<b>Gender Development Index</b>
<b>GEP</b>	<b>Gender Equality Project</b>
<b>HD</b>	<b>Human Development</b>
<b>HDI</b>	<b>Human Development Index</b>
<b>HU</b>	<b>Herat University</b>
<b>KU</b>	<b>Kabul University</b>
<b>MDG</b>	<b>Millennium Development Goals</b>
<b>MF</b>	<b>Male Faculty</b>
<b>MoWA</b>	<b>Ministry of Women's Affairs</b>
<b>MS</b>	<b>Male Students</b>
<b>NAPWA</b>	<b>National Action Plan for Women</b>
<b>NHDR</b>	<b>National Human Development Report</b>
<b>OHCHR</b>	<b>Office of the United High Commissioner for Human Rights</b>
<b>RT</b>	<b>Research Team</b>
<b>SIDA</b>	<b>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</b>
<b>UNAMA</b>	<b>United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nations Development Programme</b>
<b>UNESCO</b>	<b>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</b>
<b>UNHCR</b>	<b>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</b>
<b>UNIFEM</b>	<b>United Nations Development Fund for Women</b>
<b>VAW</b>	<b>Violence Against Women</b>
<b>CF</b>	<b>Current Faculty</b>
<b>CS</b>	<b>Current Student</b>
<b>PF</b>	<b>Past Faculty</b>
<b>PS</b>	<b>Past Student</b>

# Section I

## Introduction

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Gender based violence (GBV), and in particular sexual violence, is a serious, life-threatening protection issue, primarily affecting women and children. The term GBV is an umbrella term for any physical, sexual, or psychological harm that is committed against a person as a result of power inequities that are based on gender roles. The prevention of GBV requires the identification, reduction and elimination of the causes and contributing factors of GBV. As such, the GBV study of three universities in Afghanistan sought to identify the causes and contributing factors of GBV at universities in Afghanistan so that greater prevention mechanisms within universities can be put in place.

GBV is a serious human rights violation and a complex problem all over the world. It is not specific to a particular country or region, and women and men of all regions, ethnicity or religion can face gender discrimination and GBV. While it can affect both men and women, women are the group that is most often affected.

The term GBV itself can take several forms, ranging from sexual harassment, sexual assault, verbal and physical abuse, and psychological and economic violence. Women are specifically vulnerable to these forms of violence, given the lack of power they possess within many societies, as well as in their communities and families. The root causes of gender-based violence most often lie within the attitudes of a society towards practices of gender discrimination, which often place women in a subordinate position in relation to men. Unfortunately, however, there are rarely effective and appropriate mechanisms available to address the problem of GBV. In addition, the lack of recourse and the socialisation process that can prevent women from breaking their silence on the experience of GBV ensures prevalence of the problem and compounds the experience of it.

One way that GBV can manifest itself is in the victimisation of college students, especially females. As a result, it was important to determine the extent of gender-based violence that is occurring in universities across Afghanistan. To determine this objective, researchers approached female and male students and staff at the universities of Kabul, Balkh and Herat. Contextualising such research will help to critically examine GBV in educational institutions in Afghanistan.

### **Context of Afghanistan**

Gender based violence is prevalent throughout Afghanistan, and often stems from power inequalities and asymmetries in Afghan society. While the Afghan Constitution maintains that men and women are equal before the law (Constitution Articles: 22 also see Articles 44, 53, 54, 83 and 84), there is a large gap between what is pronounced in writing and the reality. The Afghanistan Gender Development Index (GDI) is 0.310, the second lowest in the entire world and the MDG report for 2005 shows that Afghanistan is far behind in meeting the national targets for gender equality.

Perhaps more than in other countries in south Asia, women in Afghanistan face difficulty obtaining positions in public office and in pursuing educational and professional endeavours. In spite of the improved representation of women in public life, particularly in government institutions (women account for 25 percent of the national assembly and approximately 9 percent of the civil service), inequities in society remain inherent.

The high level of discrimination against Afghan women is reflected in the country's formal and informal legal institutions. Female victims and defendants are often denied equal and fair access to judicial proceedings because, traditionally, they have been prohibited from registering legal cases

themselves. In addition, gender inequality in the judicial system also prevails due to the under-representation of women in the judicial system, which further prohibits them from being given fair and equal treatment in judicial proceedings. This inequality can be reflected in the low representation of female judges (3 percent), and can most probably explain the low reporting rates for GBV and the low prosecution rate of sexual violence, especially rape.

The strong gender stereotypes prevalent in Afghan society are detrimental to the physical and emotional well-being of Afghan women and girls. In addition to the prevalent gender stereotypes, strict social codes invoked in the name of tradition and religion are often used to justify the denial of women's most basic human rights. As a result of the gender disparity, many Afghan women engage in self censorship, restrict their movements, or discontinue their work outside the home.

Gender disparities in Afghanistan are also reflected in the education system. While impressive progress has been made since 2001 with 6.2 million students enrolled in general education in 2008 in comparison to 2.3 million enrolled in 2002 much still needs to be done to increase the enrolment rate of female students. Of the 6.2 million children enrolled in general education, 36 percent were female. A major obstacle to the increased enrolment rate of girls, however, is the shortage of female teachers. In 2008, only 29 percent of all teachers were female. Similarly, the higher education system also faces disparities between male and female student enrolment rates. In 2009, for instance, 62,000 students were enrolled in higher education institutes in Afghanistan, 21 percent of which were women. While this percentage has risen considerably in comparison to the end of the Taliban period when no women were enrolled in higher education, enrolment rates of male and female students are still far from equal. In technical and vocational education, only 16 percent of all students were female in 2008. The Ministry of Higher Education, however, aims to address this disparity by setting a goal of having at least 30 percent female students in higher education by the end of 2014.

### **GBV in Afghanistan – problems and initiatives**

The data on GBV that is available in Afghanistan is limited. To be able to create effective legislation that acknowledges and addresses the problem of GBV, and how men and women experience it within the country, it is important to carry out reliable research. It is hoped that this study will aid the process of advocacy on various GBV concerns and subsequently, create the evidence necessary to facilitate the process of legislative advocacy.

GBV is a pervasive problem in educational institutions, and can have a devastating impact on those affected. The problem is compounded by the fact that there are no existing mechanisms to address the issue. Sexual harassment, a form of GBV, is a common experience for female students and occasionally male students. The impact can range from absenteeism, severe mental and

physical health issues, drop outs, and in the most severe cases can also result in suicide. Gender-based violence and gender power dynamics are closely associated and thus gender equality will help reduce GBV. Gender sensitivity and equality will therefore enhance the safety of women and men on university campuses.

Afghanistan is on the road to reconstruction and development. Given the various commitments made to gender equality that are outlined in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), the National Advancement Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), the Constitutional guarantee to equality, the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) and the Education for All (EFA) goals to promote gender equality, there is an acknowledged need to create legislation that addresses equality rights, complementary to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), signed 5 March 2003 by the Government of Afghanistan.

The UNDP Gender Equality Project (UNDP/GEP) and UNESCO have supported the Gender Studies Institute (GSI) at Kabul University to undertake a multi-province research project aimed at documenting the experience, nature and forms of GBV within educational institutions in Afghanistan. An initial research on the issue of sexual harassment in Kabul University has already been conducted by the GSI at Kabul University. The present research is the second phase of the research study, and is aimed at expanding the scope of the research to the provinces of Kabul, Mazar and Herat, the research locations.

- 1- UNDP and UNESCO (2009)
- 2- ANHDR (2007)
- 3- Dabhi (2009)
- 4- ANHDR (2007: 58)
- 5- UNIFEM (2006); SIDA (2009)
- 6- UNAMA, OHCHR (2009)
- 7- Ministry of Education, 'National Education Strategic Plan' (2010), pg. 6
- 8- Ibid
- 9- Ministry of Higher Education, 'National Education Strategic Plan' (2010), pg. 3
- 10- Ministry of Education, NESP (2010), pg. 7
- 11- Ibid, pg. 19



## Section II

# Research Methodology

### Research Objectives

- 1) To understand the nature, forms and prevalence of GBV within educational institutions in Afghanistan.
- 2) To record the evidence required to advocate for legislation and policies addressing GBV in educational institutions by documenting experiences of female and male respondents.
- 3) To encourage a culture of awareness of GBV and its impact.
- 4) To prevent the occurrence of GBV.

### Sample

Male and female students and staff members at Kabul, Herat, and Balkh universities. Focus Group Discussions were separated into groups of male and female students, and staff FGDs were mixed.

### Sample Procedure

Both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies were used for the research. The sampling procedures included 3 methods of data collection – personal interviews, focus group discussions and survey questionnaires. Research teams were identified by the UNDP provincial coordinators in the provinces of Mazar and Herat with the help of the Chancellor of the universities. At Kabul University, the research team was identified by the Head of the Research Department.

The teams comprised of students and staff from the three universities. The teams were trained in research methodologies and received training on various issues relating to GBV. They were also trained on report writing. Questionnaires were developed on the issue of GBV through a consultative process, and the participants were invited to participate in the research through a formal letter from the Chancellor. The consent of the participants was taken verbally.

Convenience sampling was used during the interviewing process. The Chancellor from each of the universities posted a notice of the study and asked for volunteers to come who wanted to partake in the study.

### Data Management and Analysis

The quantitative data was collected through survey questionnaires and was tabulated using Microsoft Excel. The quantitative data generated through the tables was then analysed.

### Limitations of Study

- Determining correct wording and formulation of questions proved difficult due to the sensitivity of some questions, most specifically at Kabul University.

- Delay due to bureaucratic procedures at various levels and stages.
- Difficulty in coordination with various agencies and individuals engaged in the research.
- Turnover of staff resulting in delays.
- The research instruments, especially the survey questionnaire, were considered inappropriate by the research team of Kabul University and others engaged in the research, which caused delays.
- Research questions were found to be long and complex by some respondents.
- Data filled in the survey forms was poorly done, especially in Kabul. The survey data of Balkh University had many respondents leaving many questions blank, which made data analysis difficult.
- One of the criteria for selection of RT members was knowledge of English. Members of the Kabul and Herat teams however had difficulty with English, which influenced the research process.
- Data collection was further delayed because of the difficulty in conducting the survey during Ramadan, and the closure of universities due to the outbreak of swine flu.
- There was a lack of conviction among a few individuals at the universities about the appropriateness of the research subject. They were afraid that the research may have a countering effect and actually introduce GBV on the campuses.
- Reluctance to provide necessary data despite authorisation of the research study by the respective authorities.
- Adequate privacy to maintain confidentiality of the respondent was compromised due to the lack of availability of a separate room for interviews.
- Difficulty with translation of questions and responses.

## Section III

# Background to Universities and Research Findings

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### **Kabul University**

Kabul University is located in the city of Kabul in Kabul province in Afghanistan. It is the oldest university in the country, established in 1932 and has a current population of approximately 13,000 students and 600 staff (teaching and non-teaching). Presently, Kabul University has almost 23 faculties and departments, and also has the largest library in the country.

Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected through the survey questionnaire, personal interviews and focus group discussions. The data collection was carried out during the months of September and October 2009. The total number of respondents covered by the survey was 200 (including 120 female and 40 male students, 30 female and 10 male staff).

There were 3 staff members in the research team (two females and one male staff). The students and staff were notified through a letter from the Chancellor about the research and verbal consent was received from all the respondents.

### **Balkh University**

Balkh University is located in the province of Mazar. The University was established in 1989, and at the time of establishment it only consisted of a Geology Faculty, and progressively became larger. At present, Balkh University has 6 faculties, including Theology, Engineering, Economics, Agriculture, Literature and Humanities.

There are 177 staff members, 32 women and 145 men and a further 262 teachers of which 60 are women. Balkh University is comprised of approximately 6,000 students, 2,100 of which are female and 3,900 who are male.

Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected through a survey questionnaire, personal interviews and focus-group discussions. The data was collected during the month of October 2009. There were 3 researchers who carried out the research and collected the data, all of which were women. The students and staff were notified through a letter from the Chancellor about the research and verbal consent was received from all the respondents.

### **Herat University**

Herat University is located in city of Herat in Herat province, Afghanistan. It has a large new campus with new buildings. The university caters to the Western region and attracts a wide range of students. The university was established in 1988 with the educational Faculty of Humanities. At present, there are 11 operational faculties and 32 departments in the University. Nearly 4,500 students have graduated from various faculties since 2008. Currently, there are approximately 7,000 students,

40 percent of which are females. There are 263 professors and lecturers, 48 of which are female.

Similar to the other two universities both qualitative and quantitative data was collected through the use of a survey questionnaire, personal interviews and focus-group discussions.

The research was conducted by three Theology students (2 female and 1 male) who were introduced by the Chancellor of the university and included the participation of all respondents from all of the faculties. UNDP provincial coordinators accompanied the RT during the research, ensuring a participatory process.

The research at Herat University faced a number of obstacles that were not faced by the other two universities. The announcement of an emergency situation in the country due to the H1N1 virus by the Ministry of Public Health in November resulted in the closure of the university. Students were thereby difficult to reach and researchers had to conduct the interviews and focus group discussions in libraries, private homes, and private institutes.

## **Research Findings**

### **1) Safety on the University campus with specific regards to violence and harassment**

#### **Kabul University**

Data from the focus group at Kabul University indicated contrary views regarding the issue of safety on campus. Some of the FGD participants denied the existence of GBV on campus, while others believed that GBV is prevalent on campus. A lower number of males (both staff and students) believed GBV to be prevalent on campus than females. This finding is most likely due to the fact that females often experience GBV more often than males. It was also found that students who come to Kabul from remote villages believed GBV to be more prevalent than those students who are native to Kabul. Overall, there were more men than women were of the opinion that women and girls did not face restrictions or problems at universities or other educational institutions. However, findings show that more girls are harassed than boys with considerable more female respondents claiming that they had experienced some form of GBV while at university, while a lower number of male respondents claimed the same. In addition, more females reported having experienced some form of GBV by teaching staff of the university than male respondents.

In addition, more women felt that their academic progress had at one point or another been blocked by other male or female staff or students, and felt that they had been polarised. One respondent claimed that competent female teaching staff were often marginalised, stating that 'the personalities of female lecturers were often put down and their

future prospects were often jeopardised'. Nepotism, favouritism, lack of transparency and accountability were highlighted by a few of the respondents in the recruitment of staff during interviews.

Some female students also reported feeling that their private space was violated by male students who photographed them with their mobiles without their permission.

Overall, data suggests that the Kabul University campus is not fully GBV free, though some of the students and staff stated that there was both freedom and safety on the campus.

#### **Balkh University**

Some of the respondents at Balkh University stated that they had experienced various kinds of GBV, such as verbal abuse, sexual harassment, and humiliation of a sexual nature. Similar to Kabul University, female students reported feeling unsafe on the campus and comparatively faced more GBV than male students. Some of the students believed that the prevalence of GBV was attributed to the patriarchal and conservative culture of the university. For instance, some students felt that female students should behave differently than male students, stating that male students had more power than female students.

It was found that there was a lack of rules and regulations addressing GBV at the university, and perpetrators of GBV were not normally disciplined for their actions. In addition, freedom of movement of the female students on campus was perceived by them to be limited, which is possibly a result of the GBV occurring on campus and the lack of prevention or discipline of GBV cases. It is possible that the female students did not feel safe to walk around the campus freely, such as the University Park due to feelings of unsafety. Some of the students believed that it was the responsibility of the student body to ensure that GBV is not prevalent on the campus.

Staff members of the university were reported by a number of students to have resorted to verbal abuse and physical violence against students, thereby affecting the performance of students and their ability to learn. Similarly, some of the female staff members reported receiving verbal abuse from male students.

#### **Herat University**

Similar to the universities of Kabul and Balkh, researchers found that female staff and students experienced higher rates of GBV than the male staff and students. GBV took the form of verbal abuse, gender-biased statements, and harassment. However, a few students reported feeling safer on the campus than outside of the campus despite the experience some students and staff had with GBV. One female student stated that 'at least the campus is

better and safer than on the street. There is freedom of movement for all, but of course the boys still enjoy more freedom than women'. Another student mentioned that the campus environment 'is safe and comfortable, but also conservative'. Some of the female students were often accompanied by a guardian or family member on their way to and from the university.

Overall, the three campuses were prone to acts of gender based violence, mainly against female students. This finding can be a result of the GBV prevalent in society at large which has reflected itself on the university campuses.

## **2) University response to GBV**

### **Kabul University**

Researchers found that responsiveness to GBV and prevention mechanisms at Kabul University were limited with the majority of staff unaware of how to respond to incidents of GBV. One respondent claimed that 'the university is neither capable of tackling GBV nor can it respond to the needs of students who have experienced GBV'. A close look at the responses highlights the need for stronger management and commitment at the university level to improve the response to GBV incidents at the university.

### **Balkh University**

Staff and students at Balkh University had different perceptions regarding the sensitiveness and responsiveness of the university in regards to GBV. The need to address GBV was understood in general terms and therefore the specific needs of females and males were not clearly reflected in the data.

Taking into consideration that security and freedom are considered to be important factors for learning, a few of the female students stated that they could not walk freely on the campus because they did not feel safe. In addition, other female staff members claimed they felt that the university did not adequately respond to their needs, although these needs were not specified.

### **Herat University**

While the Herat University campus is new and offers good facilities, many of female staff and students were not satisfied with the ability of the university to respond to and address their needs as women. Overall, the researchers reported that the female staff and students who were interviewed did not share the enthusiasm their male counterparts had in regards

to the existence of facilities and opportunities for female staff and students. One female member of staff stated that 'what is lacking at the university is a climate of freedom'. A few others stated that the needs of female students on campus often came after men. For instance, referring to a class situation, a female student narrated that it was generally the boys who exited the classroom first. So, if a girl wanted to see the teacher immediately after class it was not possible because by the time she came out of the class the teacher had already gone. She claimed that the teachers do not seem to notice this problem so when female students want to interact with their teachers following the class, they are often not able to.

## **3) Needs of Teaching staff**

### **Kabul University**

The data suggests that the respondents perceived the question to relate to the needs of staff in regards to academic requirements as opposed to the specific needs of male and female staff members. Subsequently, the data does not specifically reflect issues related to gender based violence.

The data also suggests that there is a lack of gender sensitiveness toward female teaching staff. For instance, some respondents stated that while the relationships between male and female staff members were good, female lecturers had less of a role to play at the university as a whole. The finding, however, poses the question of whether the minimal role of female teaching staff in the university is due to their own choice or because it is more difficult for them to play a greater role in university-related activities.

### **Balkh University**

The research data show that at Balkh University views varied in regards to teaching needs. A number of female staff reported that the staff were well provided for in terms of teaching facilities. However, some female staff reported that some of the male students did not respect them and received verbal abuse from them. Non-teaching female staff also felt that they were not listened to by the management of the university, reporting that the male members of staff did not respect them and did not behave in an appropriate manner towards them. Some female teachers reported that they did not feel comfortable interacting with male teachers and students like they did with fellow female staff and students. Overall, the staff and students did not think that the university had been responsive in addressing the needs of students and staff.

### **Herat University**

At Herat University minimal data was collected in response to this question. However, examining the overall data, it appears that the staff, especially female staff, were not satisfied with the responsiveness of the university to address their needs.

## **4) Understanding of GBV**

### **Kabul University**

Researchers found that the extent of knowledge regarding GBV was limited, with a number of respondents stating that they did not know what GBV was. Other respondents who offered definitions of GBV often were limited in their definition and knowledge of what GBV entails. Respondents gave inadequate definitions of GBV and some put the responsibility of GBV on women.

A few respondents perceived GBV to be an imposition of sexual and relationship demands from one person to another and highlighted GBV as being the domination of one sex over the opposite sex.

GBV was often blamed on poverty and a lack of education by the perpetrators. However, blaming the prevalence of GBV on poverty not only indicated a lack of knowledge of GBV, but also the tendency to blame others, such as the poor or uneducated as opposed to addressing it as a problem at the university and in society as a whole. Overall, there was a lack of a clear understanding of GBV amongst the staff and students at the university.

### **Balkh University**

At Balkh University researchers found there to be a reluctance amongst respondents, especially female respondents, to provide information on GBV. In addition, a number of female students and staff did not fully understand what GBV was. When asked what was meant by the term GBV, there were no clear or precise statements, showing the lack of understanding of what GBV entails. However, the report of GBV-related incidents, such as verbal abuse and physical harassment, on campus showed that it is prevalent on campus despite a lack of full understanding of the actual concept. Interestingly, some of the respondents did not associate these actions as being related to GBV. Similar to the other two universities, female students experienced GBV from teachers or fellow male students more so than male students. One female student also reported being sexually assaulted by a fellow male student.

In personal interviews a number of incidents of

GBV were cited, including verbal abuse, sexual harassment, as well as a marriage proposal which was accompanied with a threat if the girl did not agree to the marriage. The data show that a majority of respondents (74 percent) believed that women were more emotional than men and 64 percent believed that women are less aggressive than men by their nature, and 61 percent believed that the behaviour of men and women is socially learned. Overall, the data show that in depth understanding of GBV was lacking.

### **Herat University**

At Herat University researchers found respondents to have little or no knowledge or understanding of GBV, and there was not found to be any discussion of GBV, including sexual violence, at the university. Data suggested that there was a lack of clarity in the understanding of GBV, and distinction between GBV, sexual violence and gender discrimination, though they were closely associated with one another.

An incident was narrated by female students in which a female classmate of theirs did not attend class for one year because of the demands and threats from a male student. His father was a warlord and he kept demanding that this girl build a relationship with him. The harassed girl eventually left the university. She did not complain to management for fear that it would be an issue for her family, as the perpetrator was perceived as a dangerous person.

With regards to GBV, an incident was shared by a female staff. She said that a few years earlier a staff member had killed his wife who was also a staff member, because he suspected her of having an extra-marital relationship.

## **5) Access and opportunities to male and female staff and students**

### **Kabul University**

Diverse views existed on the issue of equality. Some of the respondents believed women and men did not share equal access to opportunities at the university, while others believed they did. Generally, it was the male respondents who viewed the opportunities as being equal. Other respondents claimed that opportunities in the way of positions of authority, interactions between students and faculty, and choice of subjects to study were available but that women were not taking up these opportunities. However, others believed female students and staff were discriminated against because of their gender. For instance, one respondent stated that “female

lecturers and students have restricted access to opportunities. The men even sometimes interfere in female lecturers' and students' affairs." In addition, it was found that women were seldom in positions of authority. One respondent claimed this was because "women were considered more inefficient and incompetent" than men.

Data suggested that comparatively males have more access and opportunities than females, and women are more at a disadvantage at the university. The notion of gender equality was not widespread, and lack of access and opportunity were taken for granted, thus limiting the scope of proactively addressing inequality in the university.

### **Balkh University**

Personal interviews of respondents revealed that there was lack of equality between women and men in the choice of subjects and in positions of authority at Balkh University. Respondents reported a perceived gender inequality in terms of opportunities and access to facilities and scholarships available at the university. In addition, some of respondents reported that there were no opportunities for interactions between male and female staff and students at the university, and that interactions between male and female students outside the classroom were seen as inappropriate.

Many of the female respondents stated that female students did not have equal access to facilities at the university. It was also reported by some of students that bias and favouritism by teachers existed as not all students had equal opportunities to attend special classes, such as management courses, internet courses, and computer courses. In addition, it was mentioned by some respondents that the people in positions of authority did not seem to accept that women could occupy high positions at the university. The overall data indicated that inequality was an issue in the university; and women and men within the student and staff body did not enjoy equal opportunities and access to facilities, scholarships, and positions of authority.

### **Herat University**

At Herat University gender discrimination was cited by both staff and students. Researchers found that a disparity in access and opportunities to male and female staff and students in terms of scholarships, training programmes, and field visits to the provinces existed. However, it was also mentioned by a few respondents that women were

unwilling to travel to the provinces due to family obligations or because they were not comfortable to travel. Overall, it appeared that there was more freedom of movement, accessibility, and opportunity for attainment of positions of authority, choice of subjects, and interactions between men and women on Herat University campus than at the universities of Kabul and Balkh. Men and women reported for the most part positively regarding these matters.

The freedom of interaction between women and men was reported to vary from faculty to faculty. For example, at the Faculty of Political Science interaction researchers found that male and female staff and students interacted with each other regularly, whereas the Sharia Faculty was considerably more rigid compared to other faculties in terms of women's movement and the choice of subjects offered by the Faculty.

## **6) GBV of a sexual nature on the University campuses**

### **Kabul University**

The majority of staff and students at Kabul University did not acknowledge and some even denied the existence of GBV of a sexual nature on the university campus. Some respondents who had experienced GBV of a sexual nature were afraid to talk about their experiences. Researchers got the impression from many of the female respondents that they felt that they were second class citizens and that it was the fate of every girl to experience verbal abuse or harassment from men. Some respondents also experienced concern that discussing experiences of GBV with researchers would actually promote GBV on campus. This view highlights the reluctance of some students and staff to discuss GBV as a whole.

The research shows that females experienced GBV of a sexual nature more often than men. Interestingly, the male faculty denied the existence of GBV on campus, while female faculty admitted its existence. Looking at the spectrum of opinions, it could be said that gender-based sexual violence and harassment are not new to Kabul University. Though GBV and harassment at the university may not be on a large scale, they do exist all the same. The women are more aware of it than men in general, and are more vulnerable to it in comparison to men.

### **Balkh University**

Similar to Kabul University, it was found that GBV of a sexual nature existed; however, respondents who

had experienced GBV were reluctant to discuss their experiences. The respondents who had experienced GBV did not report it to the authorities or even to their friends or family members due to fear of how their family members would react or because they feared that the university would discontinue their education. For instance, one female student narrated an incident of a family friend. She mentioned that a male teacher asked her friend to marry him and when the offer was refused he failed her in the course. Incidents such as the previous example can prevent other female students or staff to report incidents of GBV.

#### **Herat University**

The majority of respondents at Herat University had never experienced GBV of a sexual nature occurring on campus. While not a single case of GBV of a sexual nature was reported, it does not mean that this form of GBV had never occurred. It could be suggested that respondents did not feel comfortable reporting experiences of GBV of a sexual nature to researchers who were unknown to them.

### **7) Discussion of Gender based violence**

#### **Kabul University**

Researchers found that GBV was not greatly discussed at the university, and if it was discussed that discussion was confined to a small group of friends or informal circles. The majority of respondents stated that GBV was not extensively discussed. The question was posed to respondents to determine whether or not individuals who experienced GBV opened up to friends or other staff members, and also to determine whether or not students and staff discussed the issue of GBV in general. It was assumed that if GBV is openly discussed, further discussion and prevention or disciplinary mechanisms would be easier to put in place.

Some respondents mentioned that there had been a seminar organised by the Faculty of Law which openly discussed ‘Violence against Women’, which highlights that some members of the university have taken steps to bring awareness of violence against women and GBV to the university campus.

It is possible that GBV was not discussed openly due to fear of stigmatisation or for fear of losing face. Women might also not discuss such experiences openly for fear of being blamed themselves for encouraging men to harass them or discriminate against them.

#### **Balkh University**

The majority of respondents claimed that they did not openly discuss the issue of GBV and did not recount experiences of GBV to friends or faculty members. A few female respondents said that there was no point in confiding in faculty members at the university about their experiences of GBV because there were no response mechanisms in place to adequately address the issue. A number of female staff stated that they did not talk about the GBV because such problems were not important. On the other hand, some male students said that issues regarding GBV were personal and they did not want to mention them openly. Some female students mentioned that such problems are discussed in private, not openly, due to the fact that they were afraid of being badly treated.

In conservative cultures, such as Afghanistan’s, experiencing GBV, especially of a sexual nature, can result in the dishonouring of one’s reputation and therefore entire family. As such, it is likely that women or men who have experienced GBV, specifically sexual harassment, abuse, or rape do not discuss their experiences openly with friends, family or the authorities.

#### **Herat University**

Similar to Kabul and Balkh universities, the staff and students overwhelmingly stated that they did not discuss incidents of GBV in open circles, but rather in private circles with close friends. In addition, those who had experienced GBV did not openly discuss their experiences or report them to university authorities. Respondents mentioned fear of being disgraced, family finding about their experience and being penalised for their experiences as opposed to being helped were cited most frequently as the reasons behind not reporting cases of GBV.

### **8) Factors that encourage and discourage reporting of GBV**

#### **Kabul University**

A number of respondents answered that they had reported an experience of GBV to the authorities or had reported that one of their friend’s had experienced GBV. More women had reported incidents of GBV than men, which is most likely because comparatively more women had experienced GBV than men.

Of the cases of GBV that were reported, action was not taken in most of them. This finding could be another reason why experiences of GBV are not readily reported to authorities. Victims of GBV

may feel that there will be no consequences to the perpetrators of GBV if they do report an incident of GBV. It was found that corruption was one of the main obstacles in not reporting cases of GBV as influential connections were at times involved, favouring the offenders.

### **Balkh University**

The majority of respondents explicitly stated that the key factors discouraging people from reporting their experiences of GBV included sensitivity to the issue, fear of adverse consequences, and fear that they would be blamed by people of higher positions on the campus. One respondent reported that ‘if a powerful person was responsible for GBV nobody would have the courage to raise her/his voice because s/he would be afraid of the particular individual and their position’. Similar to Kabul University, a lack of or inadequate action was also cited as a deterring factor in reporting cases of GBV.

Data also indicated that there was no adequate forum for reporting GBV. The students reported verbal abuse of a sexual nature to university authorities more than other kinds of violence, such as harassment, intimidation, sexual abuse and rape. Over the course of data collection a gender unit inclusive of women and men to address the GBV was suggested.

### **Herat University**

Herat University has a general committee whose aim it is to address the difficulties and concerns of students, which could thereby act as a forum to discuss incidents of GBV. The data, however, show that students have not openly used the committee to discuss experiences of GBV. Instead, students reported speaking about experiences of GBV to the head of department or the dean of the faculty as opposed to approaching the committee. It was also found, however, that the committee was made up mostly of men, which could serve as the reason why individuals, especially women, who had experienced GBV did not report their experiences to the committee. One female respondent stated that she was being harassed by a fellow male student and she informed the dean who issued the boy a warning, saying that he would be expelled from the university if such behaviour continued. It was found that not many of those who had experienced GBV had reported their experiences. As such, if action to address cases of GBV were taken by the university authorities, it is most likely that more cases would be reported.

One of the staff mentioned that there were traditional and legal laws to address GBV. In addition, the task of the committee was to maintain discipline and order in the university by addressing the needs of students who had experienced GBV. It was also suggested by some of the respondents that the committee served as a forum to protect women. Unlike the universities of Kabul and Balkh, Herat University had a system in place to address the overall education and management issues, but also concerns and complaints of students. Reports of violence or harassment were to be addressed in two stages: Stage I - the case was reported or identified and the both parties were called to discuss the complaint; and Stage II - appropriate measures were taken to address the complaint. For example, if the complaint was not serious and was a simple dispute between the parties, an effort was made to bring about reconciliation. If the case was serious, the accused was given a verbal and written warning. In some cases, he/she was suspended from the university for a few days. However, in serious cases, the accused would be prosecuted and handed over to law enforcement agencies. This system, however, was for all types of violence, not only GBV.

Despite this system, the data shows that in the majority of reported cases of GBV no action was taken. Again, this could be a reason for the lack of reporting of GBV cases. Some of the respondents at Herat University suggested that a specific GBV grievance mechanism be put in place in the form of either a gender unit where people could place reports, another location at the university where reports could be placed, or the Chancellor’s office.

## **9) The issue of clothing and its association with GBV**

### **Kabul University**

What students and staff wore and how they wore their clothes were perceived as important at the university. Sixty-nine percent of male respondents claimed that what and how women wore their clothes had an impact on GBV and whether they experienced GBV. Similarly, 56 percent of women held the same view. Many respondents felt that they should dress modestly, and by doing so they would not be inviting GBV. One respondent reported that the way women dress “attracts men to them, so girls should refrain from wearing tight, short, and thin clothes”.

Data show that the majority of respondents believe a woman’s dress can invite GBV and can be used as an excuse by perpetrators of GBV. These views are



societal and are not unique to the university campus. Many of the respondents believed that the style of dress worn by the female students in particular, but also the female staff paved the way for GBV if it was seen to be inappropriate or ‘un-Islamic’. The internalisation of cultural values and reasoning emerged strongly during the reporting period as women and men both seemed to ‘blame the victims’ and the victim herself.

#### **Balkh University**

There were differing views regarding the dress worn by men and women on the campus. Some female students (53 percent) claimed that clothes were one of the factors of encouraging GBV. Similarly, 52 percent of men believed the same. Some male and female respondents and staff believed that if women did not dress suitably they might face GBV. Evidently, both women and men seemed to be victims of internalised gender biased thinking and beliefs. Overall, data suggested that the stereotype of blaming the women prevailed at the university, and there was no critical thinking on generally accepted belief about gender stereotypes including dress.

#### **Herat University**

The students and staff believed that there was a relationship between GBV and the clothes people (specifically women) wore and how they wore them. Some respondents referred to women specifically and stated that the way women covered their heads, exposed their hair, or if they wore a loose collar shirt or short or tight dresses could invite unwanted attention and comments from men. The university did not have a specific dress code; however, if a student or staff member was considered to be inappropriately dressed in accordance to Islamic values and culture, they would be cautioned by the senior members of staff.

One of the female students from the Medical Faculty recounted a comment that was made by the dean of the university, saying that he told girls to be careful in the way they dressed so as to not attract the attention of boys. The respondent considered this comment to be offensive because women at the university know what to wear and how to wear it, and stated that female students are aware of their religious and cultural values.

### **10) Perpetrators of Gender based violence**

#### **Kabul University**

The perpetrators of GBV were categorised both as

both students and staff. However, outsiders who entered the campus unofficially were also identified as perpetrators. Based on the data, the perpetrators may be put into the following categories: a) students, b) staff/teaching faculty, people in authority in the university, and c) people who come to the campus, but are not part of the University. The other factor identifying the perpetrators was those who were wealthy and powerful, having political links. Overwhelming, what emerged from the responses was that males who had wealth or who were in positions of authority were held more responsible for GBV on the campus.

#### **Balkh University**

Similar to Kabul University, data from Balkh University shows that the majority of perpetrators were male students and male staff who were most responsible for GBV. Perpetrators of GBV were put in three categories by female respondents: students who had political connections; students and teachers who were financially well off; and individuals who were in positions of authority at the university.

#### **Herat University**

No data was available on this question.

## Section IV

# Summary of Findings

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- GBV does exist on the University campus. It is difficult to assess its scale, but data suggested that it is an issue that needs to be addressed. Compared to other public places, the University was found to be safe. However, it is not free of GBV and thus not considered entirely safe for students and staff, particularly for women.
- Verbal abuse, harassment, and sexual abuse were cited as GBV. This included photographing women against their consent, and making abusive or degrading remarks.
- Gender discrimination is prevalent, and some women feel that they treated as second class citizens of the university. Comparatively, women have less engagement in university activities and are given fewer roles to play. Compared to men, women (students and staff) have less access and opportunities at the universities.
- Though there is some understanding of gender disparities and GBV, overall awareness, information and knowledge about gender differences and GBV was lacking.
- There was a tendency to deny that GBV existed, and thereby to proactively address it so as to make the university a more conducive place for learning.
- What and how people dress was considered to be a major factor in inviting GBV. Women were largely held responsible for inviting GBV by what they wear and how they present themselves, including by the other women.
- The perpetrators of GBV were identified as students, staff, and men in particular.
- There is reluctance to report incidents of GBV to the authorities concerned for various reasons. Such incidents remain a matter of discussion in friends' circles. Some of the reasons for not reporting GBV incidents were as follows: lack of trust in the authorities that action would be taken; fear on the part of the victim of being blamed and prevented from continuing education by the authorities in the university; fear on the part of the victim of being prevented from continuing education by family members; fear of unwanted consequences of reporting, such as being ostracized; threat from perpetrators.
- Absence of a well-structured, inclusive, gender-sensitive system of grievance addressal for GBV.
- Incidents of GBV have, in some instances, been brought to the notice of authorities, and a couple of cases were addressed and resolved. But, to a large extent, no action was followed.
- Overall, there is cynicism and lack of trust in the authorities that any action would be taken. There is a strong belief that the persons in positions of authority are under the influence of the socio-politically powerful, and hence were afraid to take any action.
- Some people in positions of power and authority were seen as dominating and insulting, rather than empowering students.
- There was fear especially among students and more so among the female students to freely participate in the research. Respondents were willing to take part in the research if they were interviewed out of the campus.

## Section V

# Recommendations

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I. Ongoing awareness to promote gender sensitivity and prevention of gender based violence (GBV) GBV at universities

a) The Gender Studies Institute (GSI) at Kabul University is highly important to address issues of GBV. Therefore, the GSI as an integral unit of the university should take an active role in contributing to the knowledge and functioning of the university by facilitating a learning environment that is conducive to gender justice.

b) Gender sensitivity and gender equality need to be made pervasive in all the departments, faculties and committees of the universities. Gender equality must be reflected in all the structures, policies, procedures, programmes, activities and functions within the university.

c) The various policies within the universities must reflect gender sensitivity and justice including policies on recruitment, training, promotions, rewards and sanctions in the universities.

d) A healthy interaction between women and men in class rooms, seminars, group work and at various fora in the university must be encouraged. It will help promote gender sensitivity and remove gender stereotypes and prejudices.

e) The universities must promote a culture and values which foster gender sensitiveness and gender equality. In this regard an orientation programme may be introduced every year to familiarise staff and students to gender-just policies, structures and guidelines of conduct in the university.

f) Management, staff and students bodies must collaboratively create dialogue-discussion platforms for open discussions and debate on safety and gender related issues, including GBV. Experts may be invited to provide inputs and facilitate such forums. Special sessions, inputs, workshops and seminars on gender and GBV need to be organised at regular intervals. These efforts and processes will create an environment of gender sensitiveness and will encourage people to address the issues of GBV with greater knowledge, and more openly and effectively. As a concrete step, a document on gender equality and gender based violence should be made available to all the staff and students across all the universities.

g) The issue of dress people wear, especially women, needs to be openly discussed and dialogued without fear or prejudice. The tendency of blaming the victims needs to be examined and a more comprehensive

understanding of cause and effect of GBV, their consequences and perpetrators needs to be taken into consideration.

## II System to promote gender justice and address GBV – action and follow up

a) A multi-facet and multi-sector approach to address GBV is needed. The fear and apprehension in reporting GBV must be discussed and examined in faculties at university at large through a process of dialogue in forums such as workshops. A follow up plan must be set up and monitored.

b) It is recommended that a greater political will and commitment is shown by the university management in having a gender policy at the university level, providing guidelines for various aspects of university life and functions, including recruitment, admission, promotion and appointments to leadership roles. The policy also must provide direction for dealing with GBV on the campus.

c) A monitoring system is recommended to ensure that gender policy becomes all pervasive in all the aspects and functioning of the university.

d) A specific Committee is recommended: the university management to promote a secure and GBV free environment must promote and establish a Committee which specifically fosters gender sensitiveness and deals with problems and complaints of GBV on the campus at all levels. This will help foster an environment for learning and knowledge acquisition in the universities.

e) It is recommended that the above mentioned committee be multi-sectoral, representing women and men across staff, students and management to address the complaints of people in regards to GBV. The committee must take a pro-active role in both promoting gender equality and prevention of GBV on the university campus. This committee must also examine the gender specific needs of students and staff and help management address these needs so that university and the environment becomes gender sensitive and gender just for all students and staff.

f) Students and vulnerable categories of people such as female students and staff and people from remote areas studying in the universities must be included in the committee dealing with GBV and attention should be paid to their views and opinions.

g) A written gender policy should be made mandatory for all the universities.

## III Trust and confidence building measures

a) To build confidence among people, credible members need to be included in the committee and political will needs to be exhibited in taking adequate and effective action on complaints received.

b) New committees responsible for GBV must be empowered to look into the complaints of equal access and opportunities to women and men (both students and staff) about movement, choice

of subjects, positions of authority, interactions with and among students and faculty in the university. The committee must be empowered to submit their findings to the Chancellor/Management to facilitate action.

## IV Accountability, transparency and follow up

a) It is recommended that a system be set up specifically to address GBV which can be under the overall authority of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE).

b) The MoHE should clearly lay down guidelines and standards of conduct (if not existing already), which all universities in Afghanistan should adhere to. The guidelines will foster responsible freedom by putting a stop to GBV and helping to make the university a safer place for all for learning.

c) Academic Committees for scholarship and other opportunities provided by the universities must be made more transparent of its criteria and selection. The committees should come under the overall authority of the MoHE.

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## Questions:

# Personal interview

The following questions were asked to individuals from staff and students including both the sexes.

1. Please tell us about the safety of women and men on the university campus especially with regards to violence and harassment?
2. Is the environment in the university sensitive and responsive to different needs of girls/women and boys/men studying?
3. Do you think that the environment in the university is sensitive to needs of women and men faculty and workers and conducive for teaching?
4. What do you understand by sexual violence and gender based violence? Please give some examples.
5. What do you think about movement, choice of subjects, positions of authority, interactions with students and faculty with regards to students and staff from the perspective of equal access and opportunities to women and men in the university?
6. Do you think gender based sexual violence is prevalent on the university campus? Have you observed or/and experienced sexual harassment or violence on the university campus?
7. Are the issues and incidents of gender based violence if any, discussed, talked about in friend circles or more openly?
8. Are the gender based violence reported to people concerned? If yes, which factors encouraged reporting? If no, why not? What has stopped people from reporting?
9. Do you think that what people wear and how they wear invites gender based sexual violence?
10. Please tell us about those who perpetrate such gender based violence (e.g. students, staff, people in authority, and people with economic and political power/connections).

## Questions:

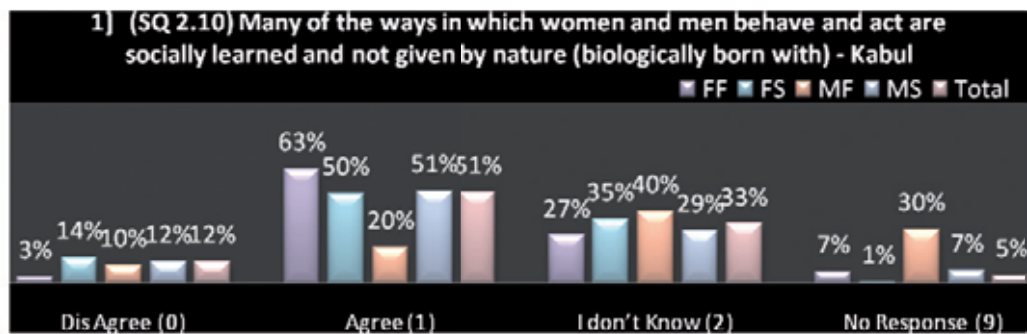
# for Focus Group Discussion

The following questions were asked to individuals from staff and students including both the sexes.

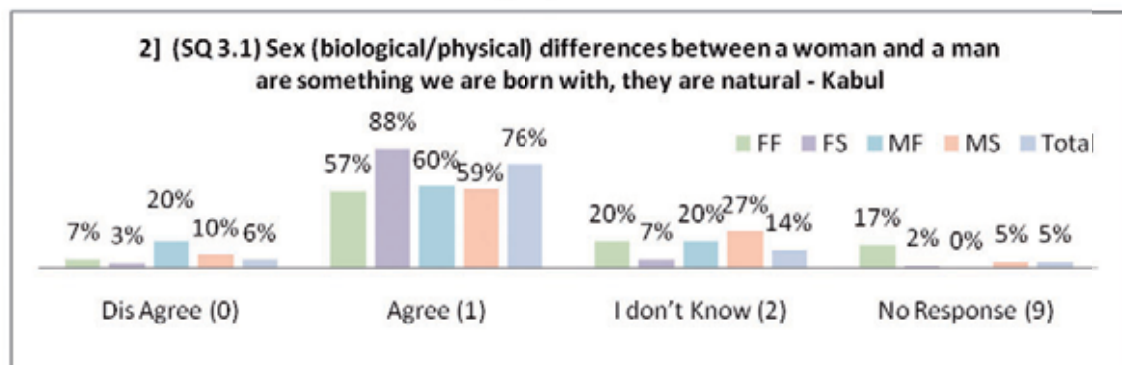
1. Do you think that women and men are safe on the university campus with regards to violence and harassment?
2. Is the environment in the university sensitive and responsive to different needs of girls/women and boys/men studying?
3. Do you think that the environment in the university is sensitive to needs of women and men faculty and workers and conducive for teaching?
4. What do you understand by sexual violence and gender based violence? Please give some examples.
5. Is there equal access and opportunity for women and men (both students and staff) about movement, choice of subjects, positions of authority, interactions with and among students and faculty in the university?
6. Do you think gender based sexual violence is prevalent on the university campus? Have you observed or/and experienced sexual harassment or violence on the university campus?
7. Are the issues and incidents of gender based violence if any, discussed, talked about in friend circles or more openly?
8. Are the gender based violence reported to people concerned? If yes, which factors encouraged reporting? If no, why not? What has stopped people from reporting?
9. Do you think that what people wear and how they wear invites gender based sexual violence?
10. Who are the people who perpetrate such gender based violence (e.g. students, staff, people in authority, and people with economic and political power/connections)?

### Annex: Tables of Kabul University

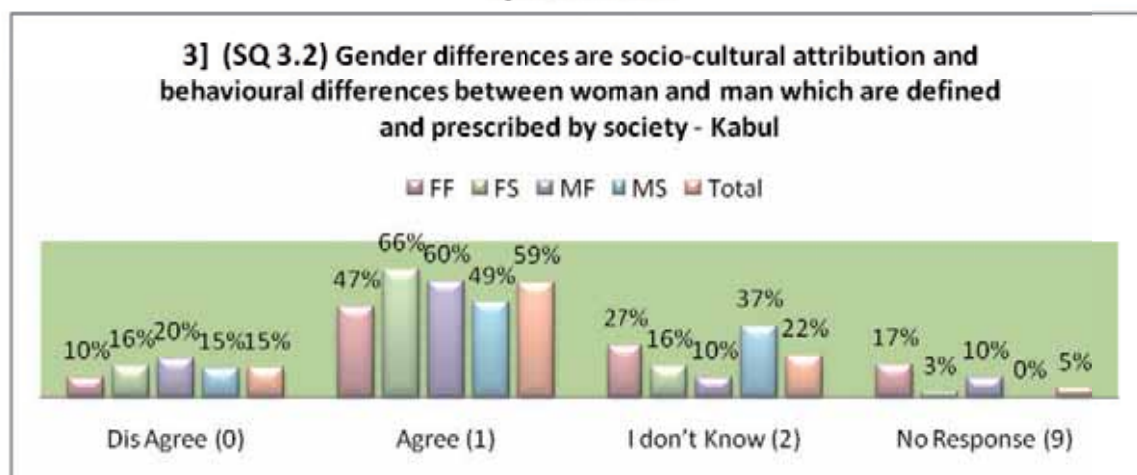
#### 1) SQ 2.10: Kabul



#### 2) SQ 3.1: Kabul

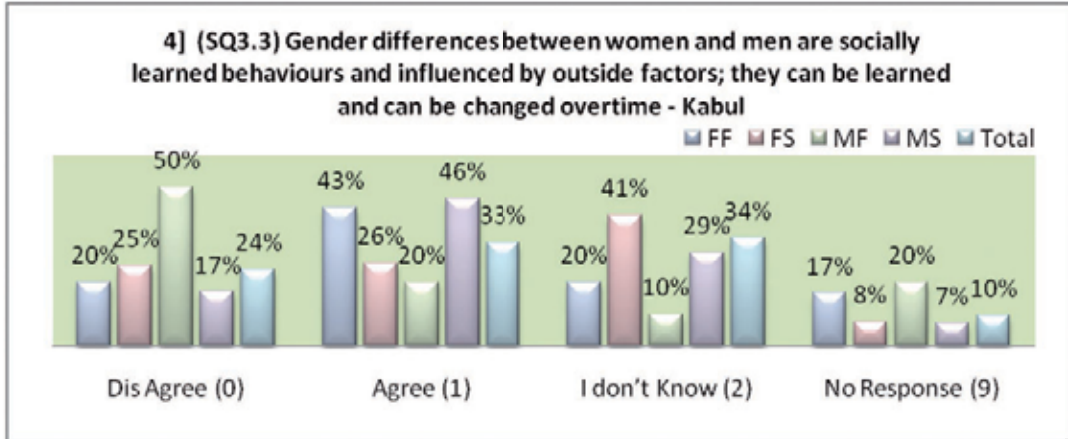


#### 3) SQ 3.2: Kabul

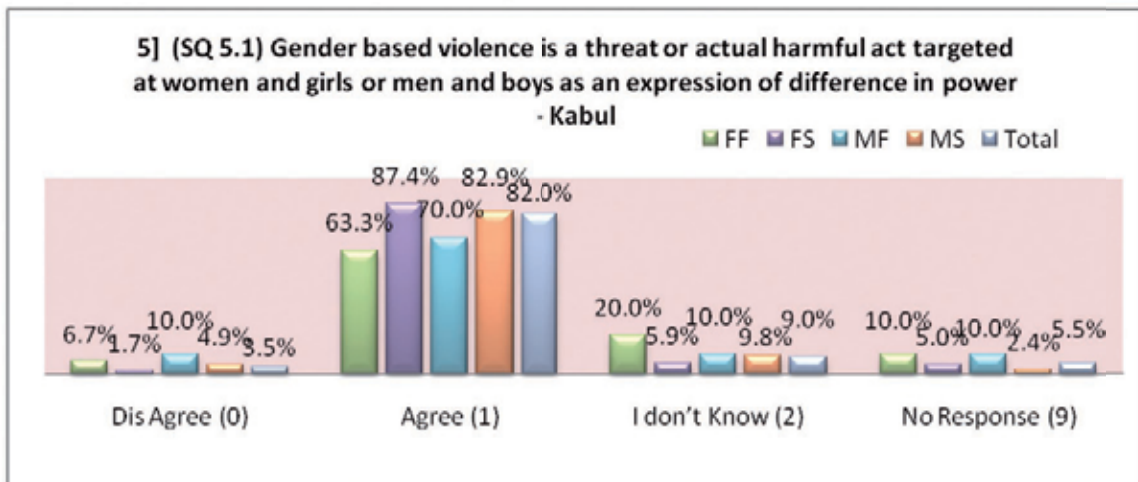




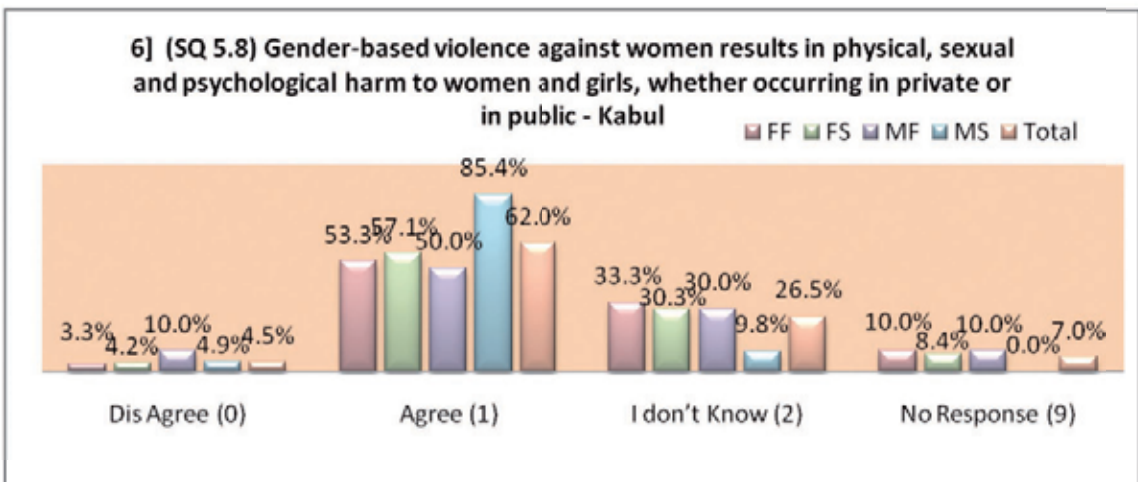
4) SQ 3.3: Kabul



5) SQ 5.1 Kabul

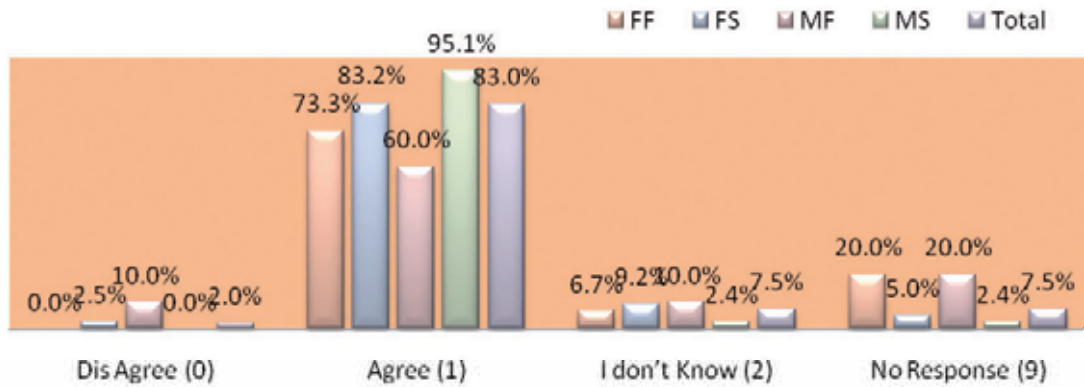


6) SQ 5.8: Kabul



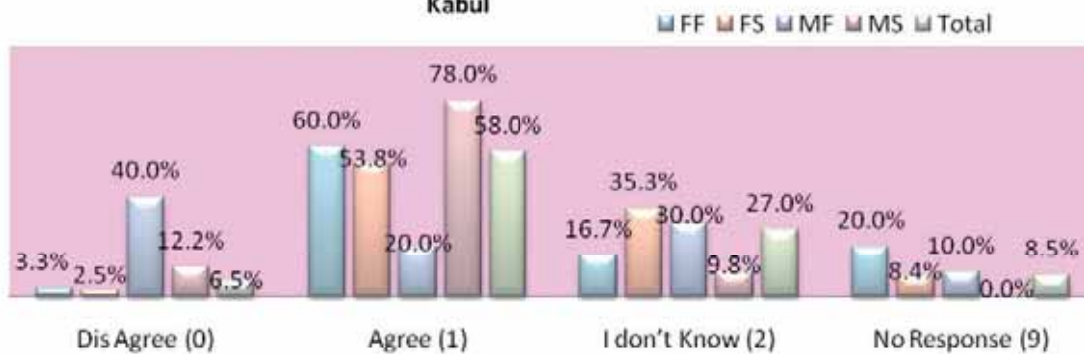
7] SQ 6.1: Kabul

7] (SQ 6.1) Sexual abuse: Threat or actual physical intrusion that is of a sexual nature committed by force or under unequal power relations or coercive conditions - Kabul



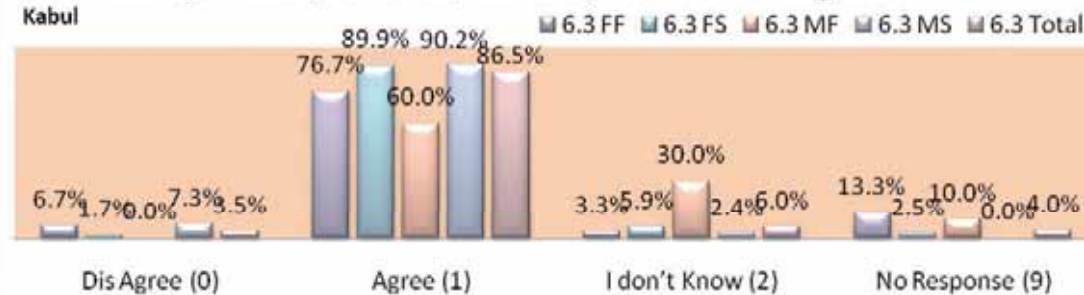
8] SQ 6.2: Kabul

8] (SQ 6.2) Sexual exploitation: Any abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or political from the sexual exploitation of another - Kabul



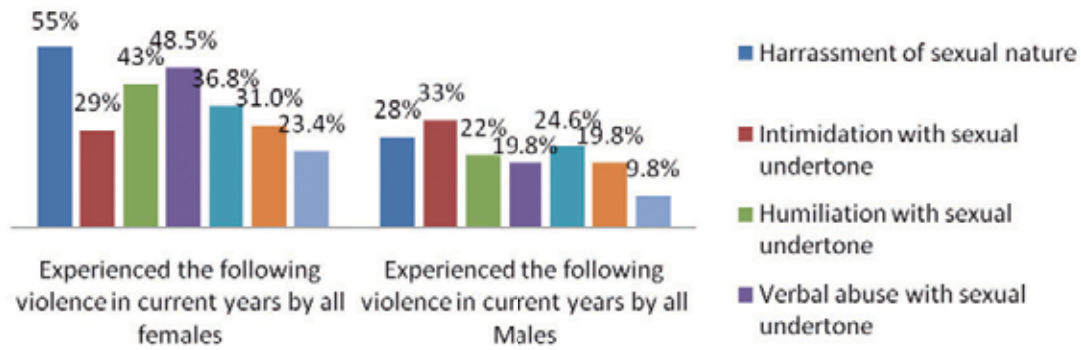
9] SQ 6.3 Kabul

9] (SQ 6.3) Sexual harassment: Any act which is of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, uninvited and unrequited and which makes its target uncomfortable, offended, demeaned, humiliated, coerced and undignified - Kabul



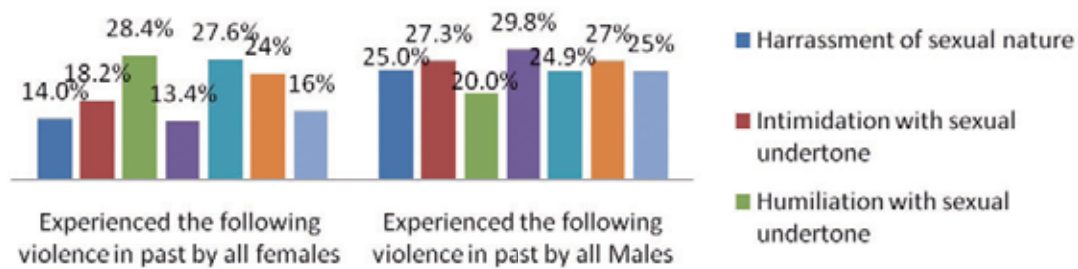
10] SQ 7 A: Kabul

10] (SQ 7 A) Have you experienced the following violence done to you in the university campus during the time you have been here (current years) - Kabul



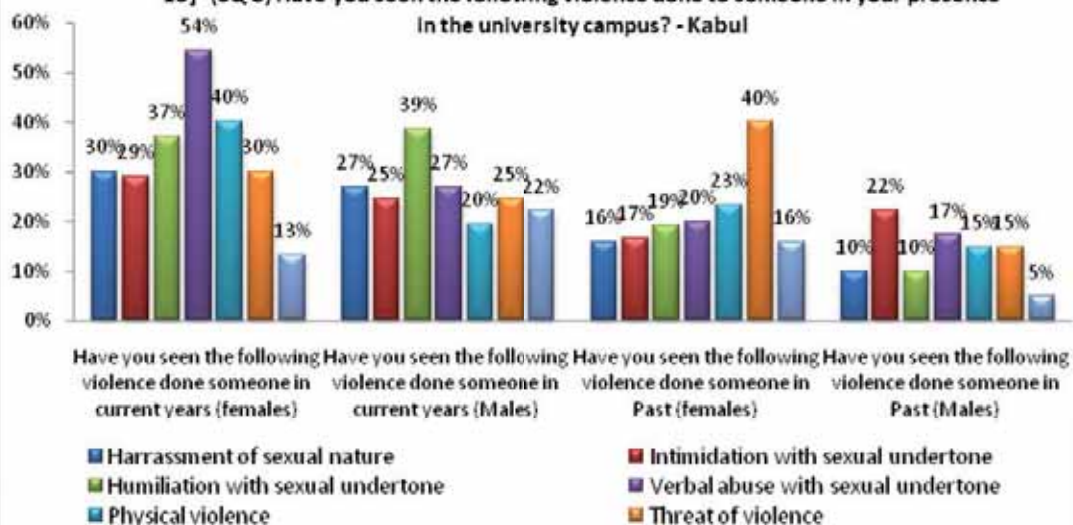
11] SQ 7 B: Kabul

11] (S. 7 B) have you experienced the following violence done to you in the univesity campus during the time ou have been here in the past - Kabul

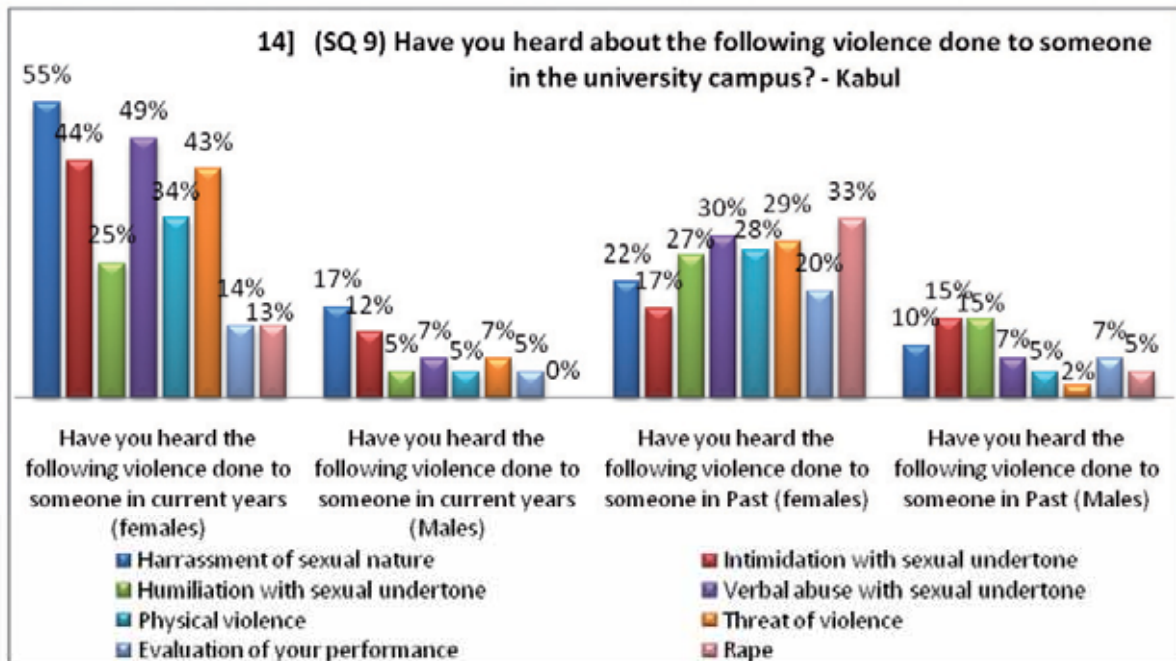


13] Q 8: Kabul

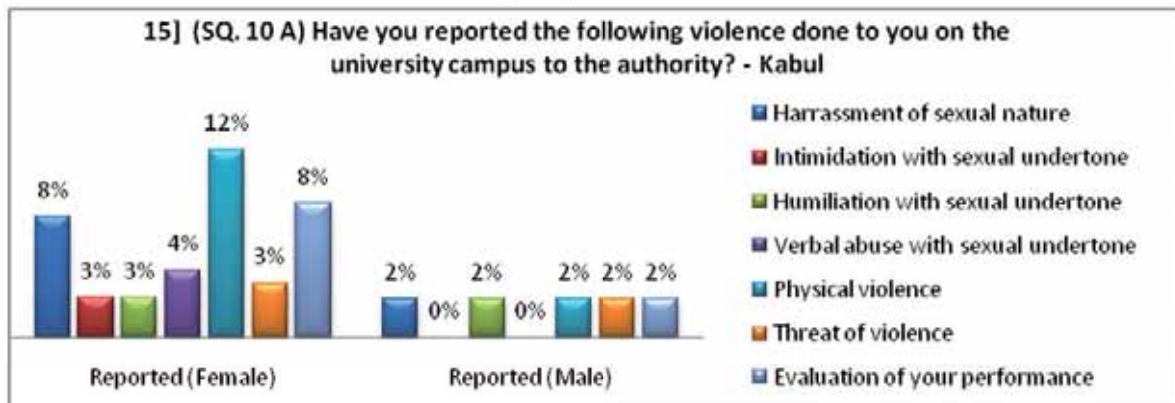
13] (SQ 8) Have you seen the following violence done to someone in your presence in the university campus? - Kabul



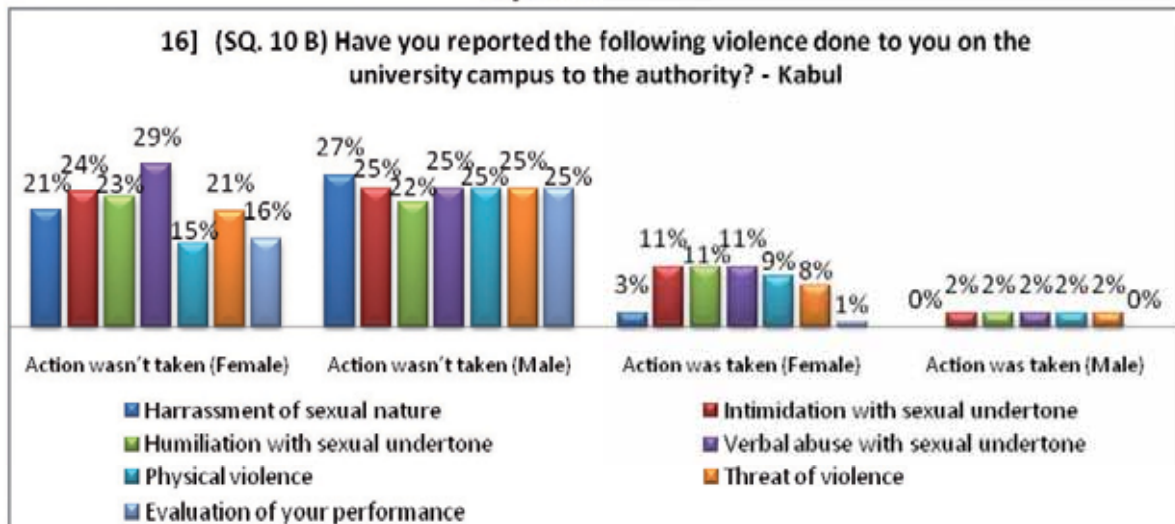
14] SQ 9: Kabul



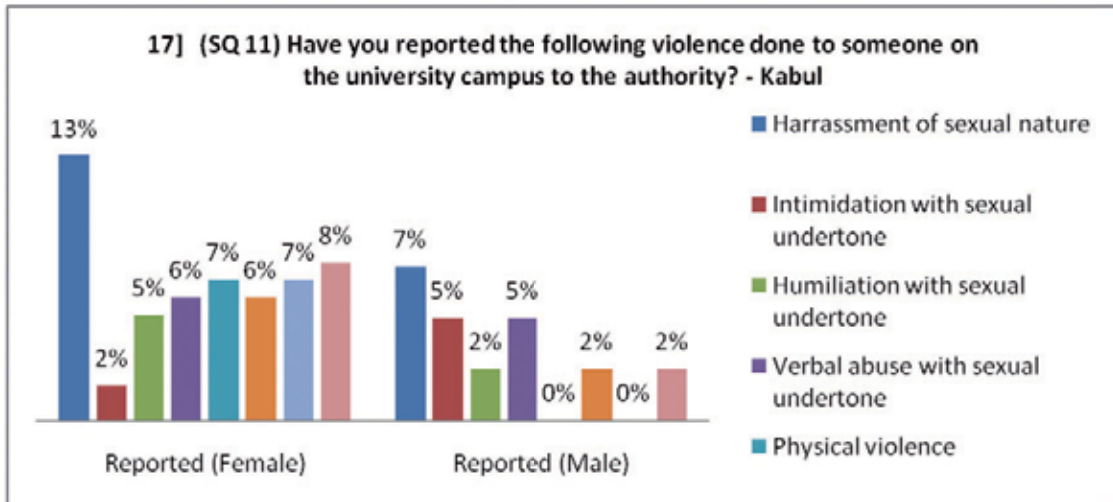
15] SQ 10 A: Kabul



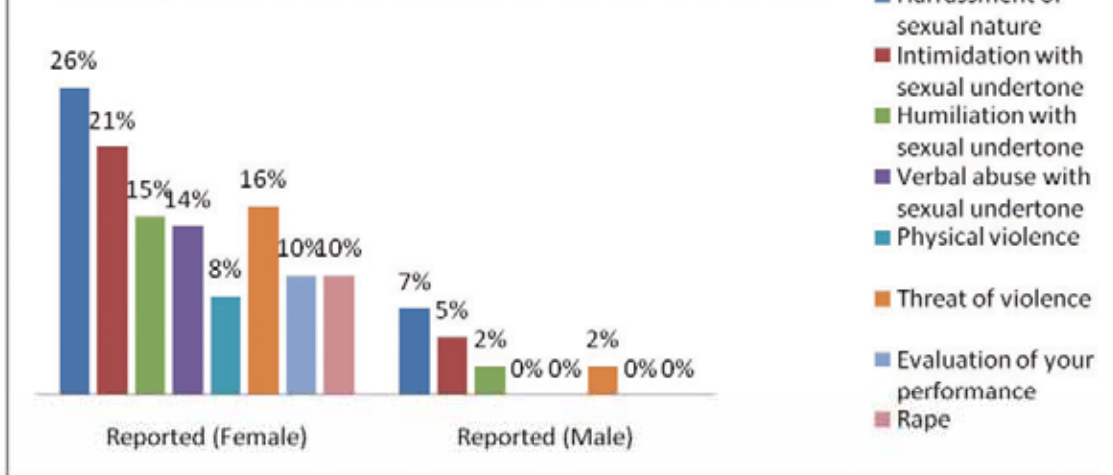
16] SQ 10 B: Kabul



17] SQ 11: Kabul

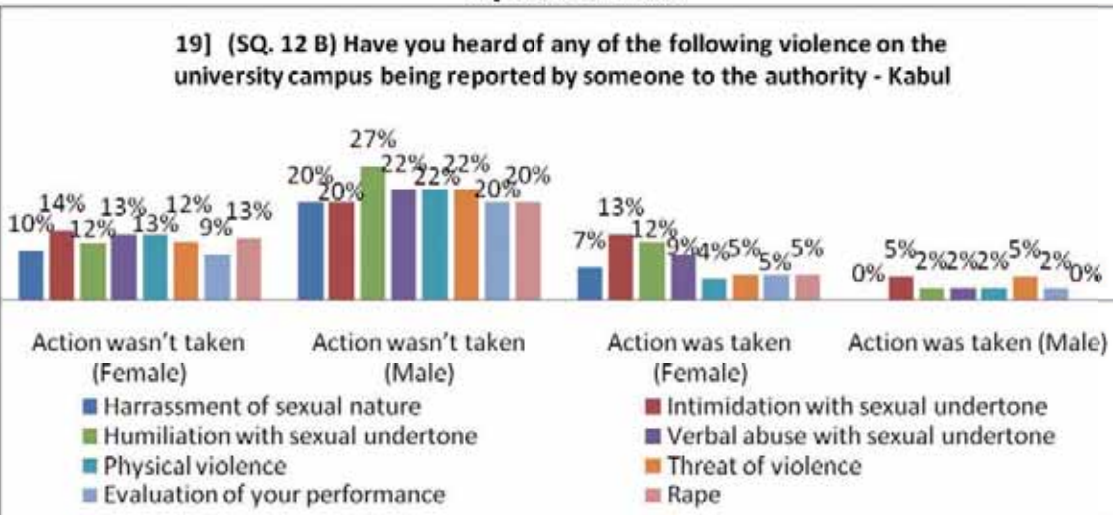


**18] (SQ 12 A) Have you heard of any of the following violence on the university campus being reported by someone to the authority - Kabul**



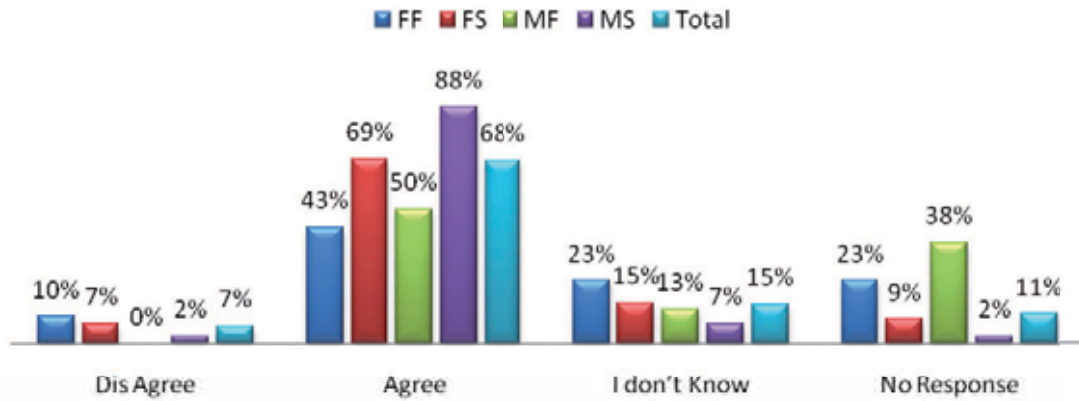
18] SQ 12 A: Kabul

19] SQ 12 B: Kabul



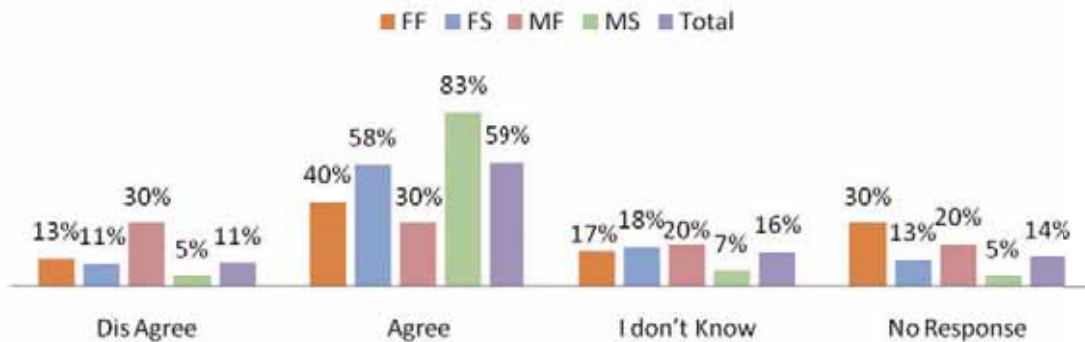
22] SQ 15.1: Kabul

22] (SQ 15.1) The type of dress girls and women wear invite gender based sexual violence on them - Kabul



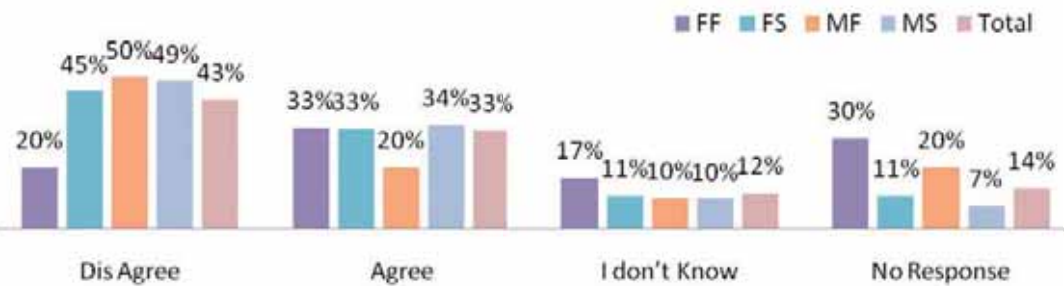
23] SQ 15.2: Kabul

23] (SQ 15.2) The way girls and women dress up invites gender based sexual violence on them - Kabul

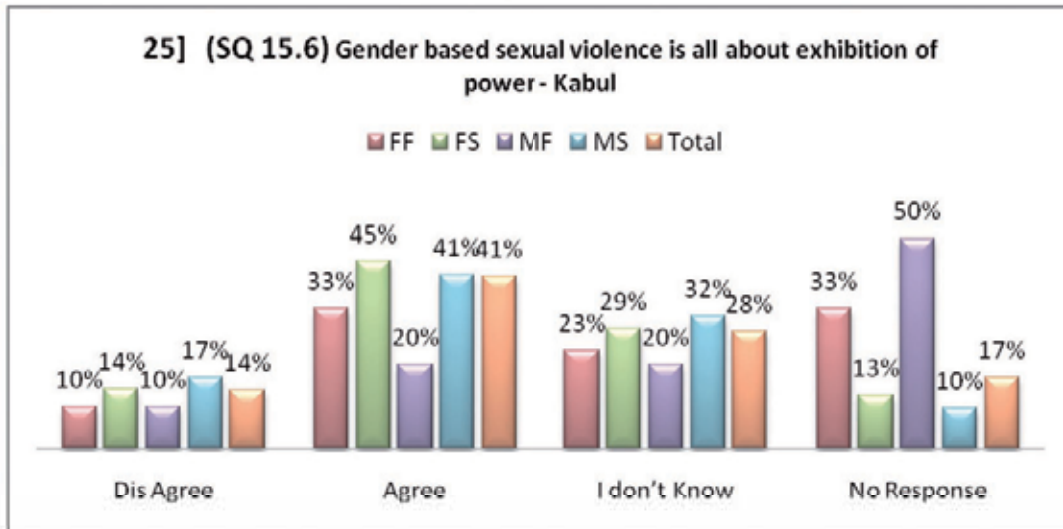


24] SQ 15.4: Kabul

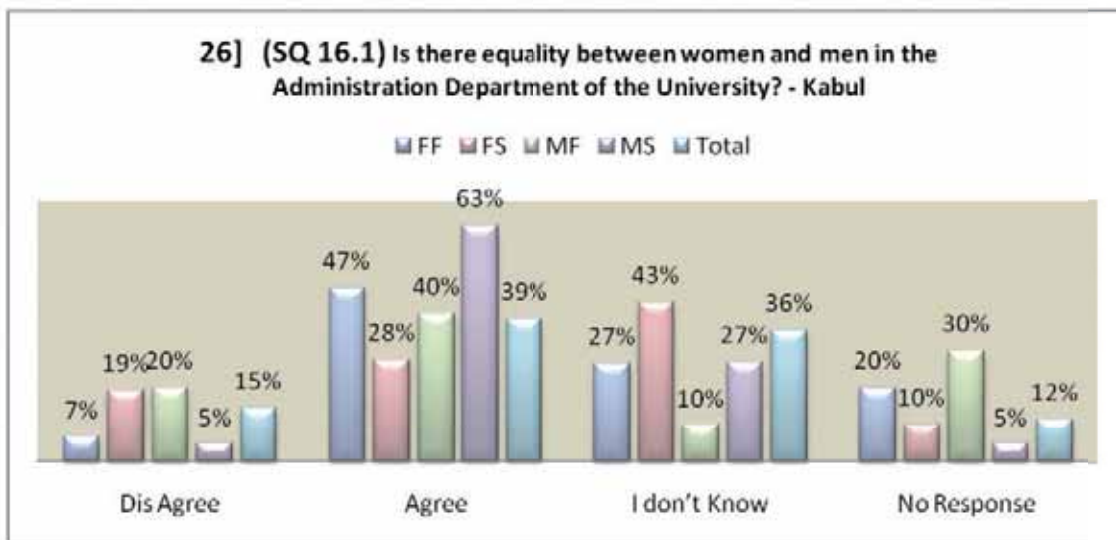
24] (SQ 15.4) Gender based sexual violence has nothing to do with the kind of dress and the way women and girls dress - Kabul



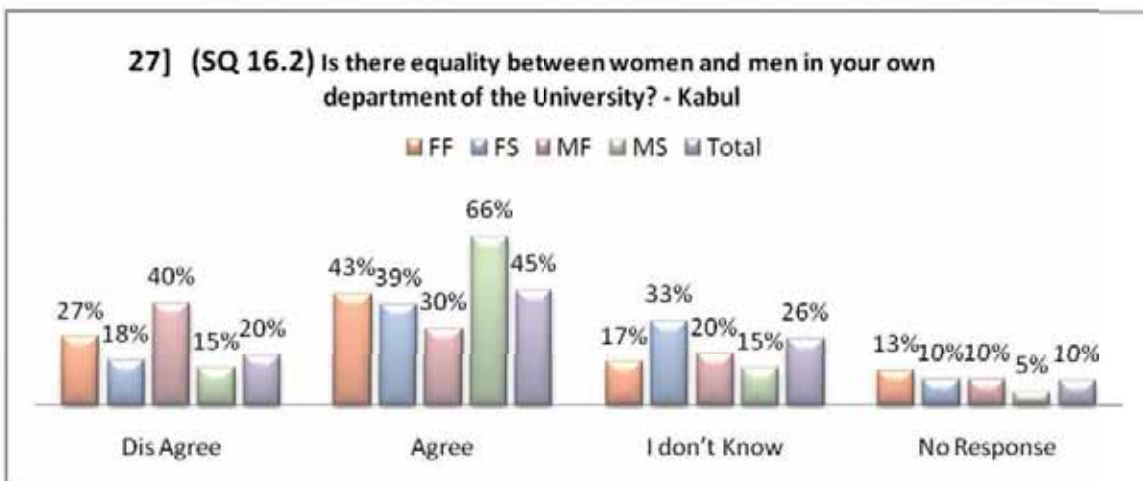
25] SQ 15.6 Kabul



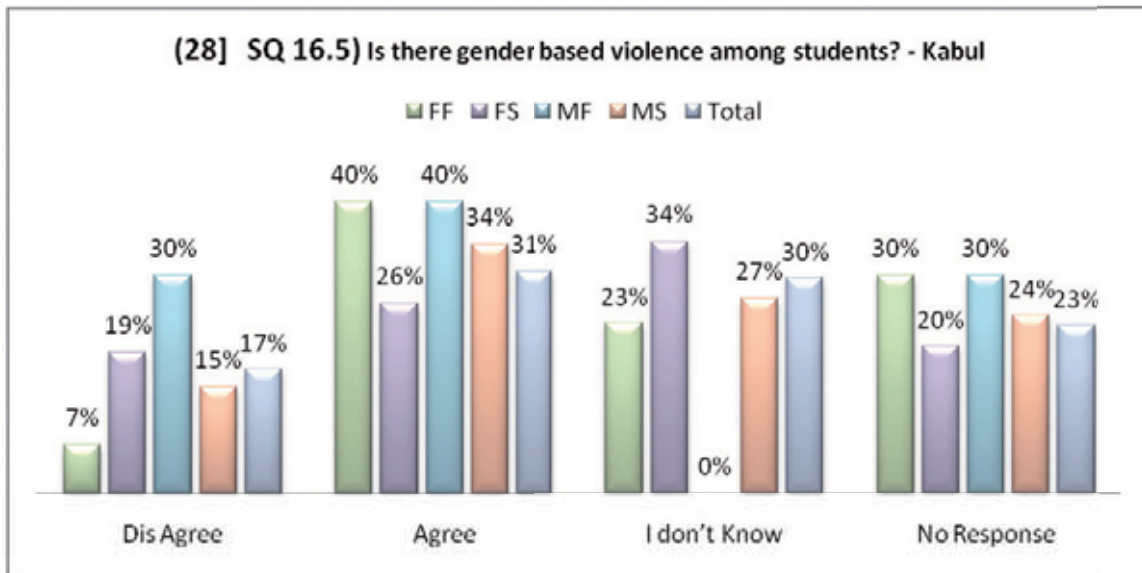
26] SQ 16.1: Kabul



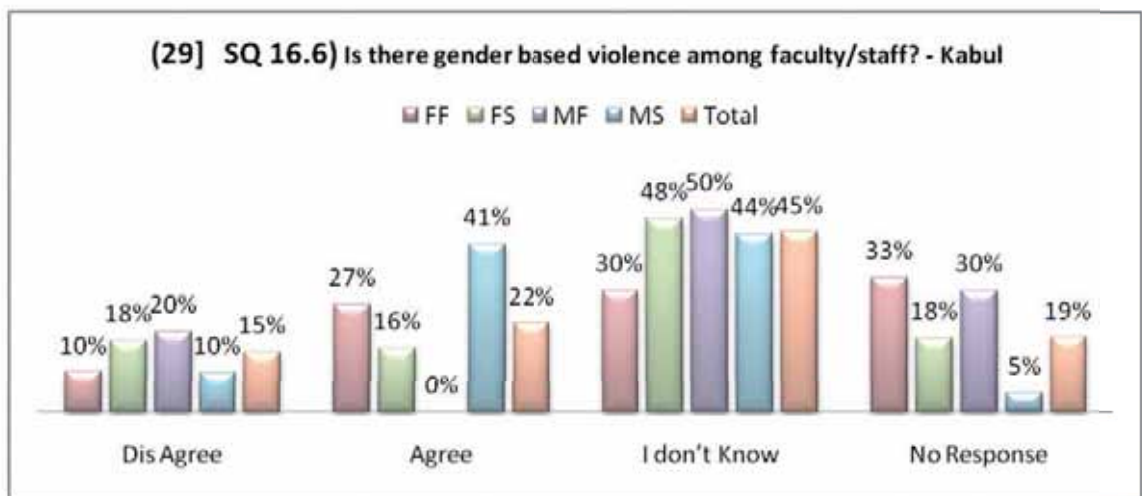
27] SQ 16.2: Kabul



28] SQ 16.5: Kabul



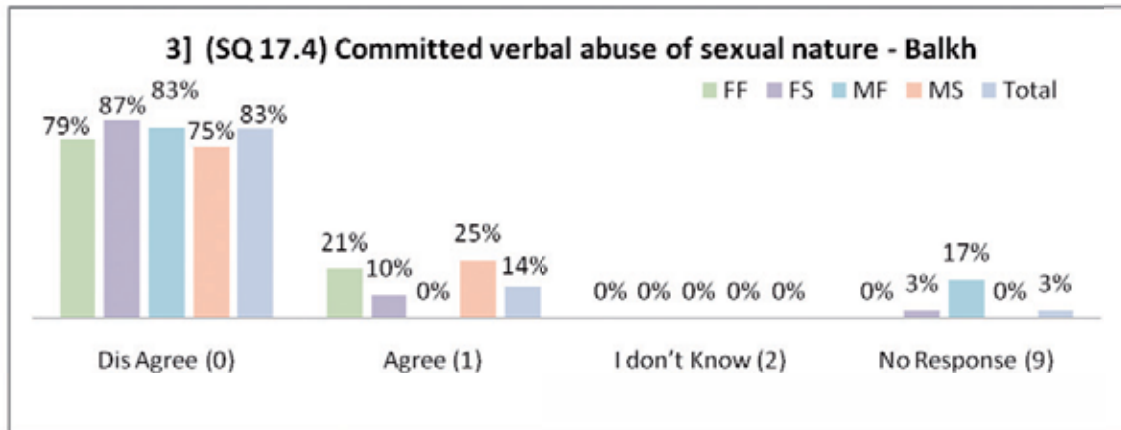
29] SQ 16.6: Kabul



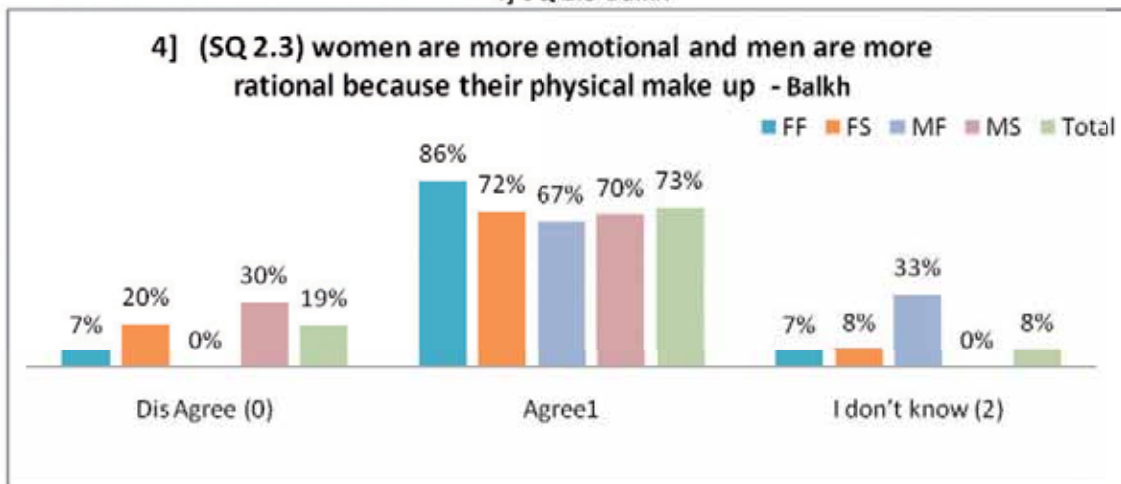


Tables from Balkh University

3) SQ 17.4 Balkh

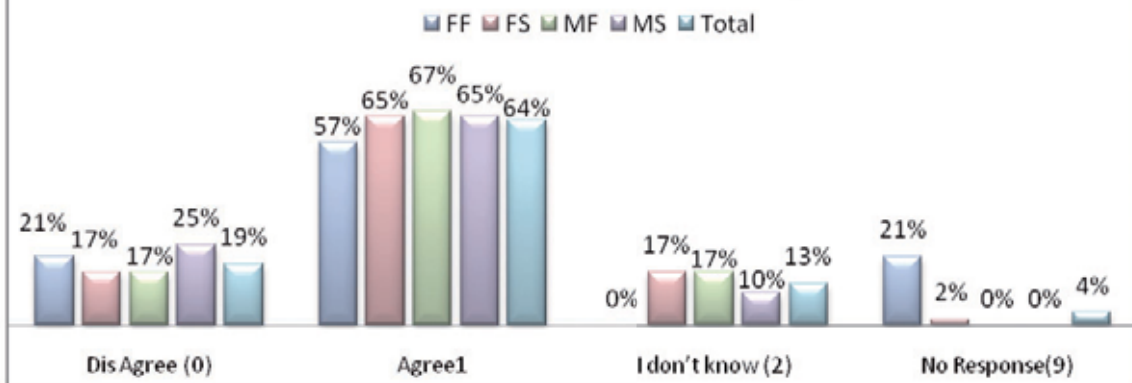


4) SQ 2.3 Balkh



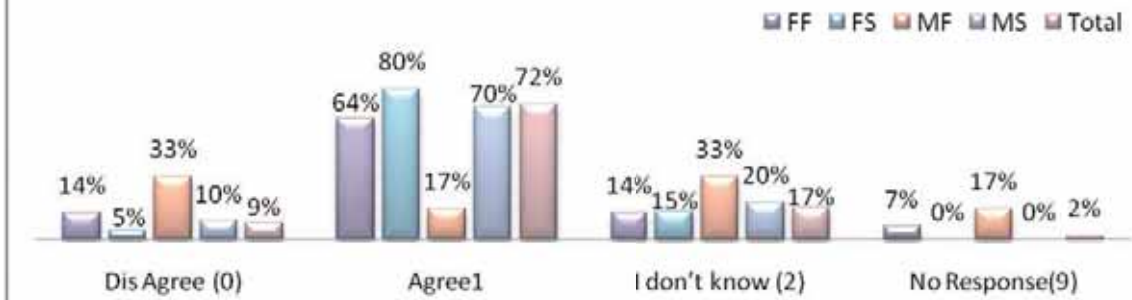
5] SQ 2.7

5] (SQ 2.7) It is true that women are less aggressive than men because they have been naturally created that way - Balkh



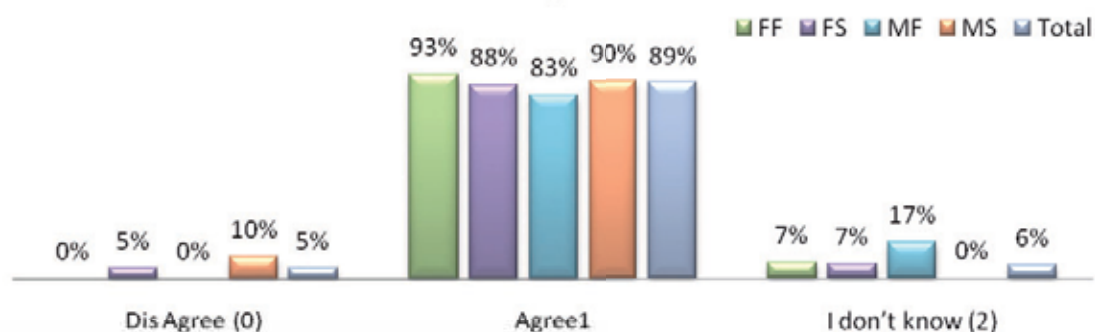
6] SQ 2.10 Balkh

6] (SQ 2.10) Many of the ways in which women and men behave and act are socially learned and not given by nature (biologically born with) - Balkh



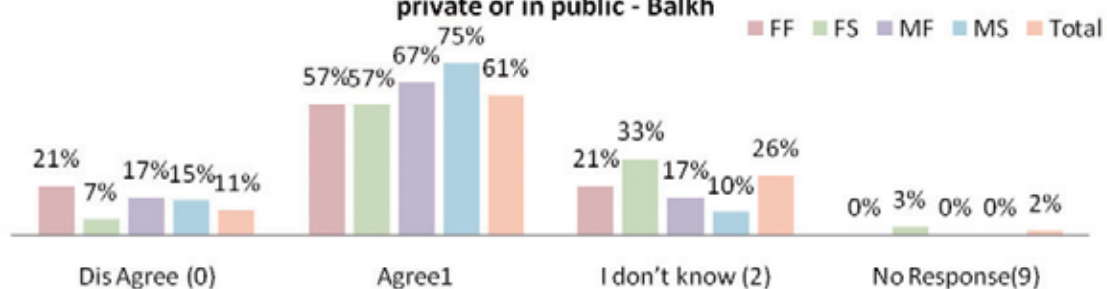
7] SQ 5.1 Balkh

7] (SQ 5.1) Gender based violence is a threat or actual harmful act targeted at women and girls or men and boys as an expression of difference in power - Balkh



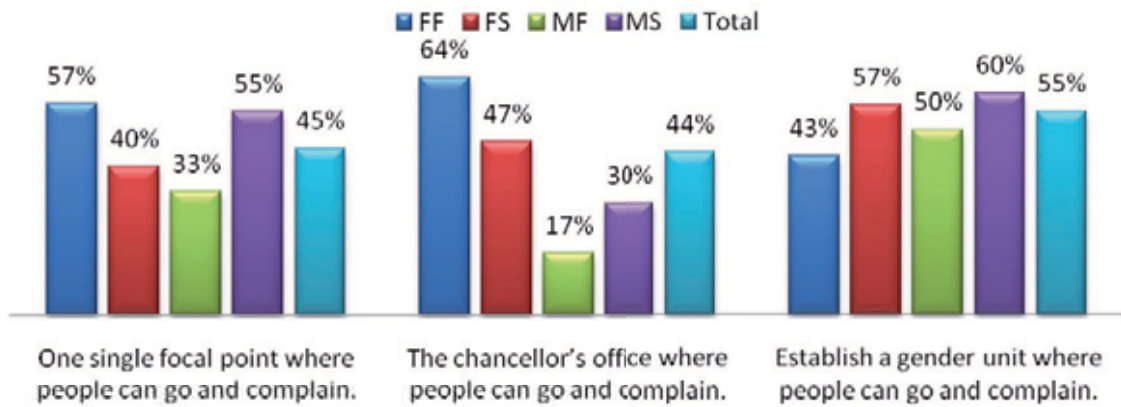
8] SQS 5.8 Balkh

8] (SQ 5.8) Gender-based violence against women results in physical, sexual and psychological harm to women and girls, whether occurring in private or in public - Balkh



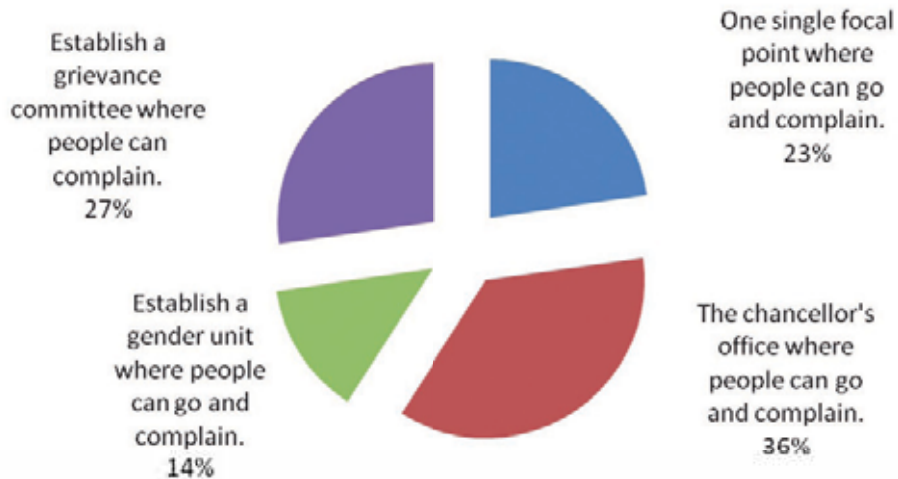
9] SQ 16.1 to 3 Balkh

9] (SQ 16.1, 16.2, 16.3) Grievance Mechanism suggested - Balkh

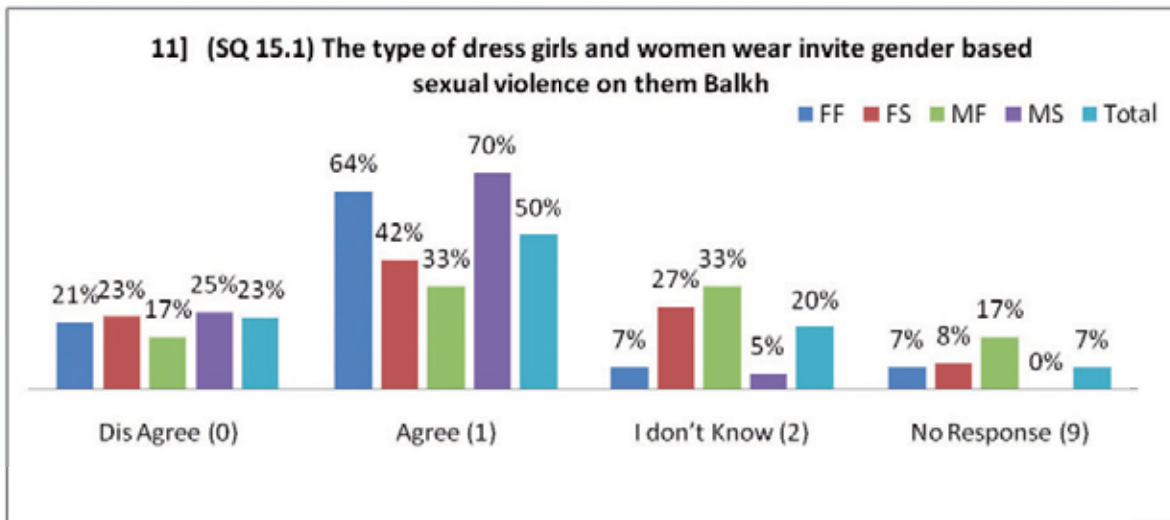


10] SQ16.1 to 16.4 Balkh

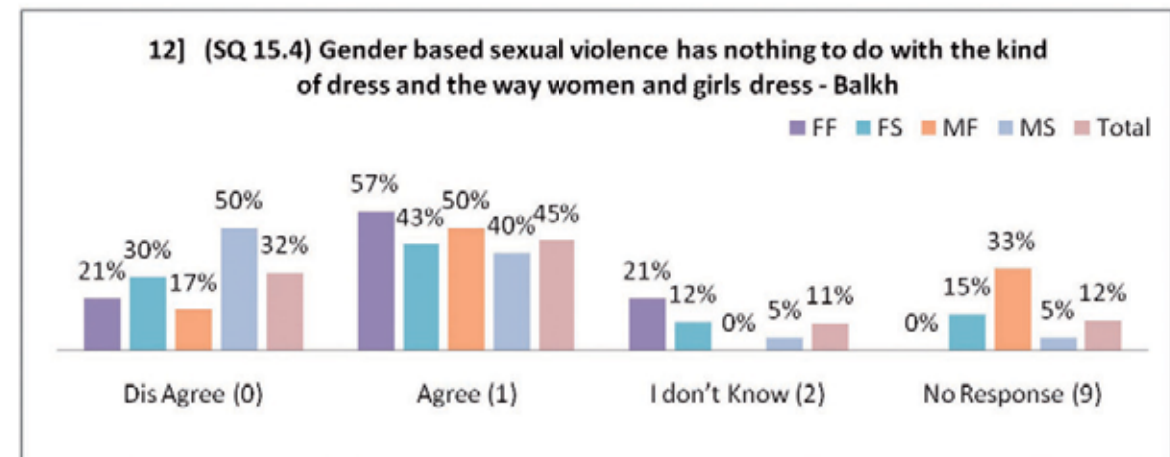
10] (SQ 16.1 to 16.4) Grievance mechanism suggested - Balkh



11] SQ 15.1 Balkh

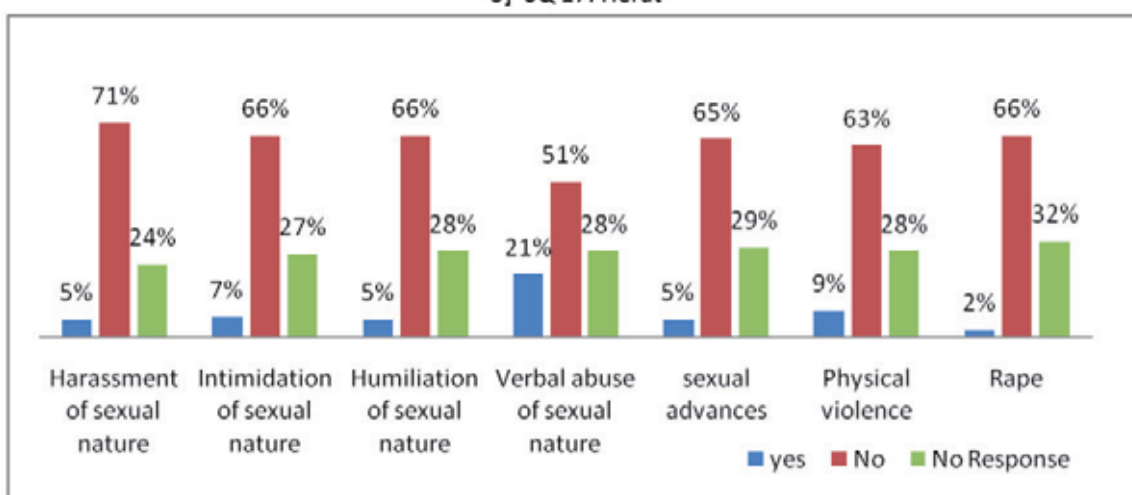


12] SQ 15.4 Balkh



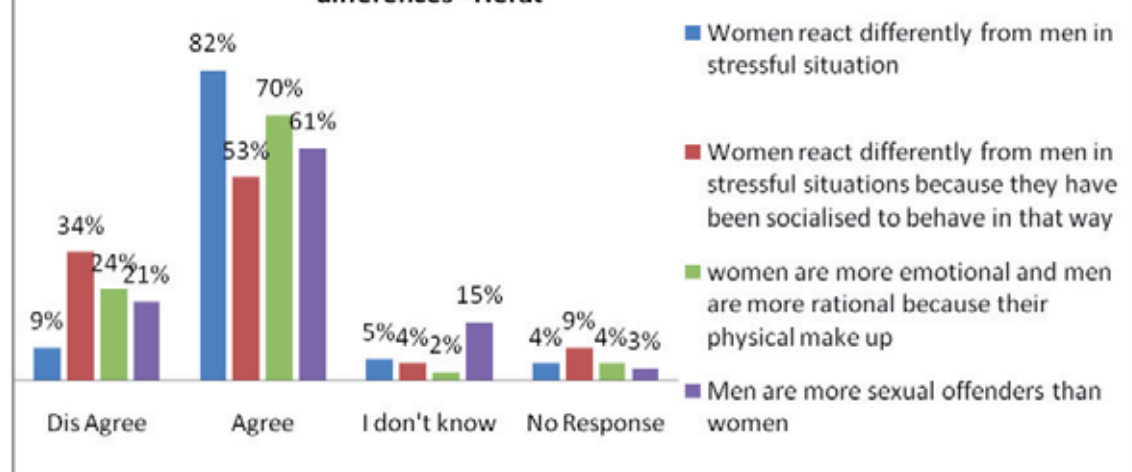
### Tables from Herat University

3] SQ 17: Herat



4] SQ 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4: Herat

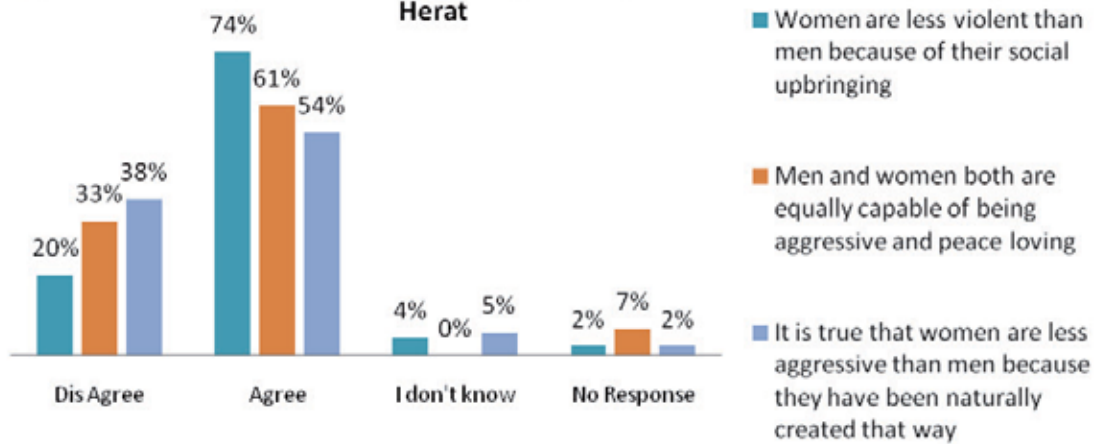
#### 4] (SQ 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4) Understandind of biological and gender differences - Herat



5] SQ 2.5, 2.6, 2.7: Herat

5] (SQ 2.5, 2.6, 2.7) Understanding of biological and gender differences -

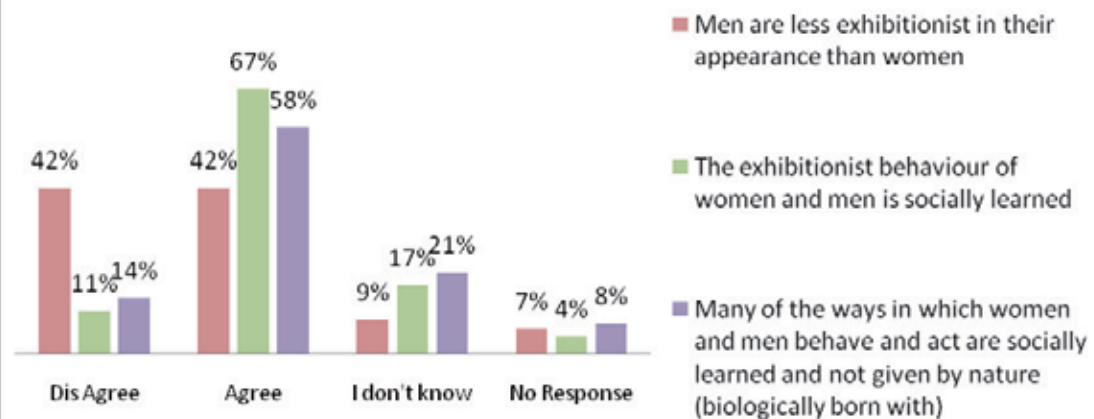
Herat



6] SQ 2.8, 2.9, 2.10: Herat

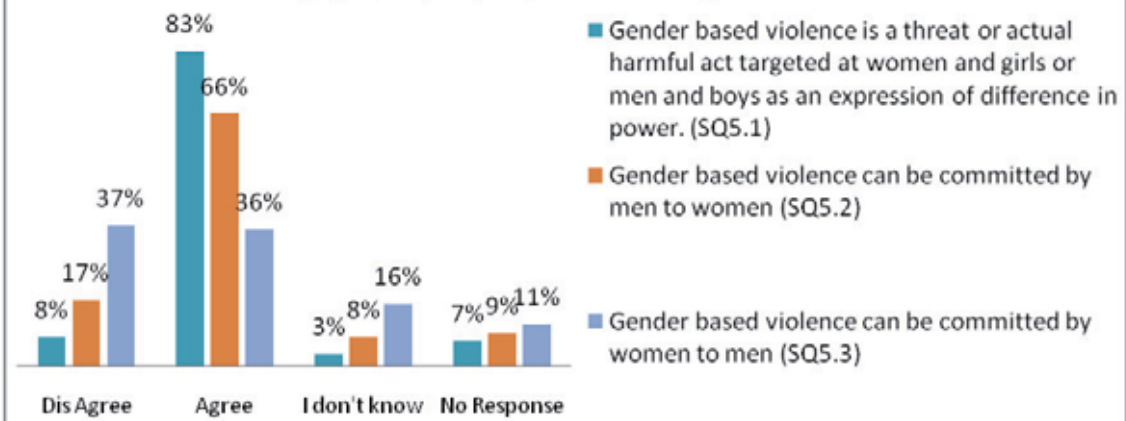
6] (SQ 2.8, 2.9, 2.10) Understanding biological and gender differences -

Herat



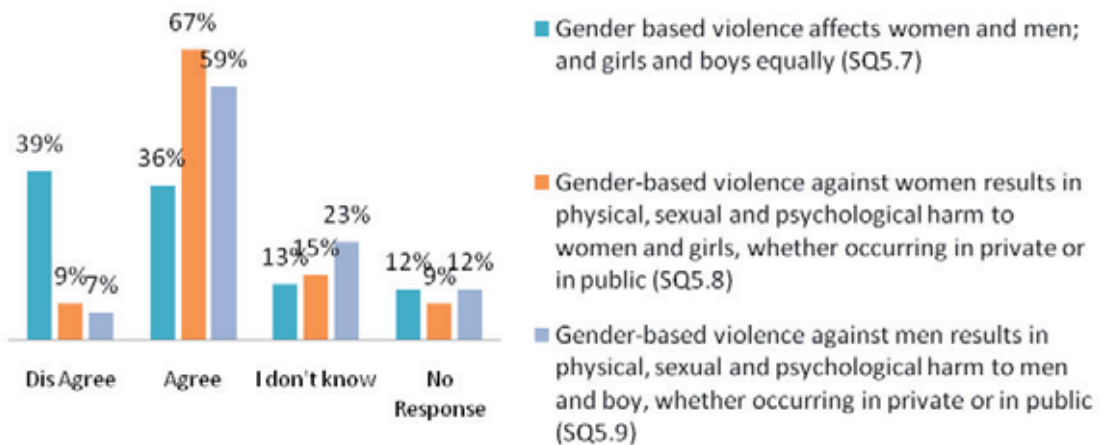
7] SQ 5.1, 5.2, 5.3: Herat

7] (SQ 5.1, 5.2, 5.3) Understanding of GBV - Herat

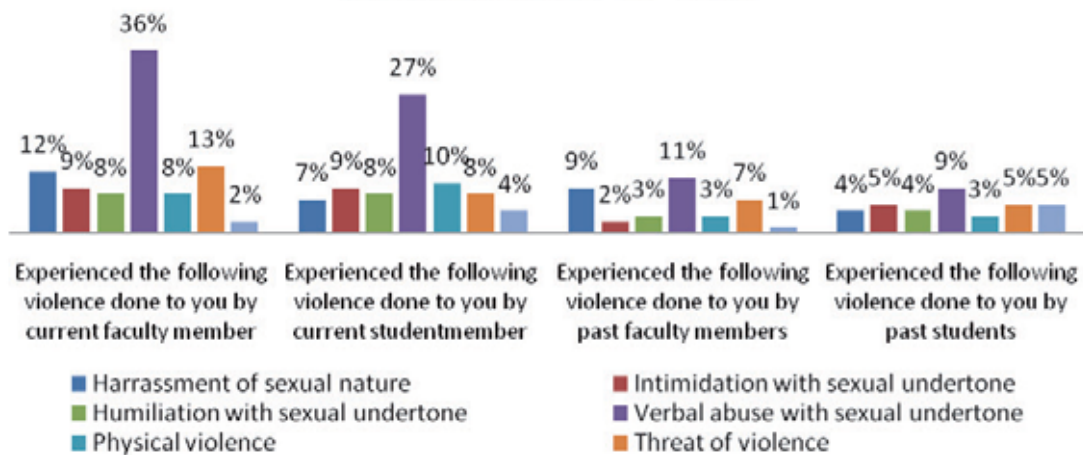


8] SQ 5.7, 5.8, 5.9: Herat

8] (SQ 5.7, 5.8, 5.9) Understanding of GBV - Herat



9] (SQ 7) Experienced GBV - Herat





## Survey Questionnaire

Survey Questionnaire for respondents (staff and students) of Universities – Gender Research									
UNDP-UNESCO and Kabul University 2009									
1	Sex	Status	Age	Major Subject	(If faculty)	(If student)	Which ethnic/tribe do you belong to?	Province of permanent residence	
	Female/ male	Faculty/ student		(Faculty/Dept)	Year of joining the University	Which year of Study in University			
2	<b>Besides biological (physical) differences between a man and a woman there are other differences among them for example see the following in the context of Afghan society - (kindly tick <math>\surd</math> one of the options given in the columns against each of the following item).</b>						agree	do not know	do not agree
2.1	Women react differently from men in stressful situation								
2.2	Women react differently from men in stressful situations because they have been socialised to behave in that way								
2.3	women are more emotional and men are more rational because their physical make up								
2.4	Men are more sexual offenders than women								
2.5	Women are less violent than men because of their social upbringing								
2.6	Men and women both are equally capable of being aggressive and peace loving								
2.7	It is true that women are less aggressive than men because they have been naturally created that way								
2.8	Men are less exhibitionist in their appearance than women								
2.9	The exhibitionist behaviour of women and men is socially learned								
2.10	Many of the ways in which women and men behave and act are socially learned and not given by nature (biologically born with),								

3	<b>Understanding of Difference of behaviour between women and men (kindly tick <math>\checkmark</math> one of the options given in the columns against each of the item in the following).</b>	agree	do not know	do not agree
3.1	Sex (biological/physical) differences between a woman and a man are something we are born with, they are natural.			
3.2	Gender differences are socio-cultural attribution and behavioural differences between woman and man which are defined and prescribed by society.			
3.3	Gender differences between women and men are socially learned behaviours and influenced by outside factors; they can be learned and can be changed overtime.			
3.4	Gender bias is a perception and way of perceiving and dealing with reality which stresses the difference between women and men based on gender differences (not sex differences) and functions defined by society.			
3.5	Gender biased is a perception of women and men that defines what women and men should be, how they should act, what they should do and what they are entitled to.			

4	<b>Understanding of Violence (kindly tick <math>\checkmark</math> one of the options given in the columns against each of the following item)</b>	agree	do not know	do not agree
4.1	Violence is the use of actual or threatened force or power against an individual or group.			
4.2	Violence results in physical injury, death, psychological (emotional) harm, social maladjustment, deprivation or other suffering.			
4.3	Violence can be committed (occur) only in public domain.			
4.4	Violence can be committed (occur) in private domain (e.g. at home, between family members) as well.			

5	<b>Understanding of Gender based violence (kindly tick <math>\checkmark</math> one of the options given in the columns against each of the following item)</b>	agree	do not know	do not agree
5.1	Gender based violence is a threat or actual harmful act targeted at women and girls or men and boys as an expression of difference in power.			
5.2	Gender based violence can be committed by men to women.			
5.3	Gender based violence can be committed by women to men.			
5.4	Gender based violence can be committed by women to women and men to men.			
5.5	Gender based violence affects boys and men and they also face and suffer from gender based violence.			
5.6	Gender based violence affects women and girls more than men and boys.			
5.7	Gender based violence affects women and men; and girls and boys equally.			
5.8	Gender-based violence against women results in physical, sexual and psychological harm to women and girls, whether occurring in private or in public.			
5.9	Gender-based violence against men results in physical, sexual and psychological harm to men and boy, whether occurring in private or in public.			
6	<b>Gender based sexual violence can take the following forms (kindly tick <math>\checkmark</math> one of the options given in the columns against each of the following):</b>	Agree	Do not know	Do not Agree
6.1	Sexual abuse: Threat or actual physical intrusion that is of a sexual nature committed by force or under unequal power relations or coercive conditions.			
6.2	Sexual exploitation: Any abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.			
6.3	Sexual harassment: Any act which is of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, uninvited and unrequited and which makes its target uncomfortable, offended, demeaned, humiliated, coerced and undignified.			

7	<b>Have you experienced the following violence done to you in the university campus during the time you have been here? (kindly tick <math>\checkmark</math> the appropriate options given in the columns against each if the following item and write number of times if you remember)</b>				
S = Student F = Faculty		During the current academic year by		Sometime in the past	
		F	S	F	S
7.1	Harassment with sexual undertone				
7.2	Intimidation with sexual undertone				
7.3	Humiliation with sexual undertone				
7.4	Verbal abuse with sexual undertone				
7.5	Physical violence				
7.6	Threat of violence				
7.7	Evaluation of your performance (with intention of taking sexual advantage)				
8	<b>Have you seen the following violence done to someone in your presence in the university campus? (kindly tick <math>\checkmark</math> the appropriate options given in the columns against each of the following item and write number of times if you remember)</b>				
S = Student F = Faculty		During the current academic year by		Sometime in the past	
				By	
		F	S	F	S
8.1	Harassment with sexual undertone				
8.2	Intimidation with sexual undertone				
8.3	Humiliation with sexual undertone				
8.4	Verbal abuse with sexual undertone				
8.5	Physical violence				
8.6	Threat of violence				
8.7	Evaluation of your performance (with intention of taking sexual advantage)				

9	Have you heard about the following violence done to someone in the university campus? (kindly tick $\checkmark$ the appropriate options given in the columns against each of the following item and write number of times if you remember):				
	S = Student  F = Faculty	During the current academic year		Sometime in the past by	
		by			
		F	S	F	S
9.1	Harassment with sexual undertone				
9.2	Intimidation with sexual undertone				
9.3	Humiliation with sexual undertone				
9.4	Verbal abuse with sexual undertone				
9.5	Physical violence				
9.6	Threat of violence				
9.7	Evaluation of your performance (with intention of taking sexual advantage)				
9.8	Rape				

10	Have you reported the following violence done to you on the university campus to the authority? (kindly tick $\checkmark$ the appropriate options given in the columns against each of the following item and write number of times if you remember)	Reported to authority	Action was taken	Action was not taken	I do not know if action was taken
10.1	Harassment with sexual undertone				
10.2	Intimidation with sexual undertone				
10.3	Humiliation with sexual undertone				
10.4	Verbal abuse with sexual undertone				
10.5	Physical violence				
10.6	Threat of violence				
10.7	Evaluation of your performance (with intention of taking sexual advantage)				

11	Have you reported the following violence done to someone on the university campus to the authority? (kindly tick ✓ the appropriate options given in the columns against each of the following item and write number of times if you remember):	Reported to authority	Action was taken	Action was not taken	I do not know if action was taken
11.1.	Harassment with sexual undertone				
11.2.	Intimidation with sexual undertone				
11.3.	Humiliation with sexual undertone				
11.4.	Verbal abuse with sexual undertone				
11.5.	Physical violence				
11.6.	Threat of violence				
11.7.	Evaluation of your performance (with intention of taking sexual advantage)				
11.8.	Rape				
12	Have you heard of any of the following violence on the university campus being reported by someone to the authority? (kindly tick ✓ the appropriate options given in the columns against each of the following item and write number of times if you remember)	Reported to authority	Action was taken	Action was not taken	I do not know if action was taken
12.1	Harassment with sexual undertone				
12.2	Intimidation with sexual undertone				
12.3	Humiliation with sexual undertone				
12.4	Verbal abuse with sexual undertone				
12.5	Physical violence				
12.6	Threat of violence				
12.7	Evaluation of your performance (with intention of taking sexual advantage)				
12.8	Rape				

13	Ragging in the University (kindly tick <input type="checkbox"/> the appropriate options given in the columns against each of the following item)	I do not know	I have heard it exists on the campus	I have witnessed someone being ragged	I have been victim of it myself
13.1	Ragging of students exists on the campus (kindly tick wherever appropriate).				

14	Nature of ragging on the university campus (kindly tick <input type="checkbox"/> the appropriate options given in the columns against each of the following item)	Was just for fun	was intimidating	Was humiliating	Was sexual violence
14.1	The ragging i had witnessed				
14.2	The ragging i have experienced				
14.3	The ragging i have heard people talk about				

15	People's perception dress and its relation to sexual violence (kindly tick <input type="checkbox"/> one of the options given in the columns against each of the following item):	agree	do not know	do not agree
15.1	The type of dress girls and women wear invite gender based sexual violence on them.			
15.2	The way girls and women dress up invites gender based sexual violence on them.			
15.3	If girls and women wore 'châdar' or 'burkha' they would not face sexual violence.			
15.4	Gender based sexual violence has nothing to do with the kind of dress and the way women and girls dress.			
15.5	The way boys and men behave invite gender based sexual violence on them.			
15.6	Gender based sexual violence is all about exhibition of power.			

16 New	<b>Please give you opinion about the following (kindly tick <math>\checkmark</math> one of the options given in the columns against each of the following item):</b>	Agree	Do not know	Disagree
16.1	Is there equality between women and men in the Administration Department of the University?			
16.2	Is there equality between women and men in your own department of the University?			
16.3	Is there harassment with sexual undertone by security staff of the university?			
16.4	Is there verbal abuse with sexual undertone by security staff of the university?			
16.5	Is there gender based violence among students?			
16.6	Is there gender based violence among faculty/staff?			
17	<b>Kind of grievance mechanism Suggested (kindly tick <math>\checkmark</math> one of the options given in the columns against each of the following item)</b>	Agree	Do not know	Disagree
17.1	One single focal point where people can go and complain.			
17.2	The chancellor's office where people can go and complain.			
17.3	Establish a gender unit where people can go and complain.			
17.4	Establish a grievance committee where people can complain.			