

SOCIAL CONSTRAINTS TO FEMALE HIGHER EDUCATION IN PAKHTOON SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

The major objective of the study was to examine social constraints to female Higher education in Pakhtoon society at Batkhela district Malakand. The conceptual frame work comprises of dependent variable higher education and independent variable social constraint. A sum of 390 samples size was purposively selected out of 38222 population from the universe. To test the association between dependent and independent variables (chi square test) was used. The result shows that independent variable is high significantly associated with the phenomena of female education. The findings show that the association between education and the females feel secure himself in going to educational institution is highly significant ($P=0.000$). Similarly the relationship was found a highly significant ($P=0.000$) between education and existing social values as a cause for low female higher education. Furthermore a high significant ($P=0.000$) association between attitude of the community and education was found and show that the attitude of the community is normal towards female education. Furthermore a high significant ($P=0.000$) association between ignorance and education was found which indicate that females are ignored in education by the society. Similarly a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between family and education was found which indicates that in their family the female gets higher education. Moreover a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between opportunities to female and education was found which shows that the lack of opportunities for women causes low female higher education. Furthermore a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between psychological support to female and education was found which shows that the community provides psychological support to female in getting higher education. Likewise a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between gender discrimination and education was found which shows that there is gender discrimination in getting education. Equally, highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between coeducational institutions and education were found which shows that female will not send to coeducational institutions. Furthermore a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between harassment and education was found which shows that no harassment was observed to female from public/outside. Government & civil society should work together on long-term basis to eliminate negative attitude against female education. Media should play his role in promoting importance of female education. Men should be sensitized to support women to take active part in education. Raising awareness campaign regarding female education through involvement of popular religious and political leadership were the major policy recommendations of the study.

Key word: Female higher education in Pakhtoon Society, Social Constraints

INTRODUCTION

Don Berg, (2011) stated that Education has a influential consequence on mind, character, or physical capability of an individual, and hence education is a process by which society share its collective knowledge, information, skill, and values from one generation to another. Educated person had always an access to best state of mind despite of the situation. Thus educated person for getting his goals accurately think, clearly acts. Educational sector is deeply connected with the development of a country. There exist positive linkages among economic growths and education expenditures of the country. Women education, empowerment and participation are essential for public and counties progress and development. women consist of approximately half of the world population, but they are still lagging behind from males in every walk of life. But the nature and as well as the intensity of women educational participation and empowerment varies from country to country and region to region, the main reason is the variation in the socio-cultural and economic setup. The power, authority and politics in the world are in the control of men. The economic and other power resources are within the hand of male that's why female have low representation at all level. Moreover the socialization process and the traditional institutional organization also emphasize male dominancy and patriarchy over female. The socio-cultural values and misinterpretation of traditional and folk wisdom that women being a delicate sex are not in the position to bear the burden of outdoor activities over their shoulders and could not perform the duties. mostly in less developed countries female involvement in the education is mainly related through socio-cultural, economic and religious environment which is male dominant and finally restrained female partaking.

While in Pakistan, females are discriminated socially, culturally, economically and politically. In Pakistani society there is patriarchal and male dominated environment. while Pakhtoon society has granted more social power to male at all level than female. The economy and other wealth are manage by male members where there are rare opportunities for the investment of women capital and they are economically dependent. The status of women are consider inferior and they have no their say in social, financial, political along with family dealings. The employment, political, recreational and educational activities are completely related to sex and gender in which men are given the higher position against women. Women are not interested or do not to take interest in the education and to make any contribution to it. They have no knowledge about the education system and their positive impacts. The primitive structure of Pakistani society treat women as house wives, who are responsible for taking care of household activities. Apart from this, majority of Pakistani and particularly Pakhtoon society further build up restrictions on women's political, economic and educational empowerment. Such beliefs neglect women empowerment because such type of women, who are educationally empowered, not simply ignore the presence of husband but also her children. Negative attitude and opposition of the husband, over domestic responsibilities and social restrictions in certain situations also prevent women from involvement in educational activities. Thus the struggle of female is discourage and they are banned from the social, economic, political, recreational and educational participation in communal activities. also, they face different problems and troubles together with negative mind-set, prejudice, backbiting and unrecognizing status. With regard to their status which adversely affect the exploitation of their ability, skills and working potentiality. In addition to the above mentioned troubles, the religious characters in respect to female rights are often misunderstand regarding women's status and empowerment. Furthermore, the religious scholars prove the dominancy of men over women. While government is also responsible for not providing equal opportunities to both male and female to participate in the public activities and to ensure their contribution in every sphere of life for the sake of national development. (HDR 2007)

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Batkhela district Malakand, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. A sample size of 380 respondents was selected through criterion devised by Sekaran (2003). As the study was designed to establish association between dependent (female education) and independent variable (social constraints), chi-square statistics was used as outlined by Tai (1978: 353).

$$(2) \quad \chi^2 = \sum_{j=1}^j \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{(o_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

Where

(2) = Chi-square for two categorical variables

O_{ij} = the observed frequencies in the cross-classified category at *i*th row and *j*th column

E_{ij} = the expected frequency for the same category, assuming no association between variables under investigation.

The formula simply directs one to take squared summation of the frequencies for each cell, divided by the expected frequency. The resulting frequency is distributed as chi-square with relevant degree of freedom. The degree of freedom is calculated as follows;

$$df = (r-1)(c-1)$$

Where

Df = Degree of freedom

r = the number of rows

c = the number of columns

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents to their Perception about social constraints to Education

Perception of respondents with respect to role of social constraints to female education is given in Table-1. The table shows that 63.7% respondents are of the opinion that female feels secure in going to educational institution, 67.9% percent respondents agreed that the existing social values are the main hurdles for female in getting higher education, 63.7% thought that the attitude of community is normal towards female education, 79.2 % were of the view that females are ignored in education by the society, 52.9% respondents say that females in our family are not getting higher education, moreover, 65.3% respondents thought that the lack of opportunities causes low female higher education, 50.3% percent respondents believed that community is providing psychological support to female in getting education. A high proportion of 80.0% respondents are of the opinion that gender discrimination is a cause for low female education, as outlined by Heneveld (1995) that parental attitude is an important factor in determining the gender inequalities in the higher education. Also Gertler (1989) indicated that gender gap between boys and girls are widest in the poorest countries and narrowest in the high income countries. 65.8% respondents do not agree with the statement to send their female to co-educational institution, while 50.5% respondents don't observe any harassment to female from public.

Table 1 - Frequencies and Percentage Distribution of Respondents According to their Perception about social constraints to Education.

STATEMENTS	YES	NO	Don't know
The female feels secure himself in going to education.	242 (63.7)	103 (27.1)	35 (9.2)
The existing social values are cause for low female higher education.	258 (67.9)	101 (26.6)	21 (5.5)
The attitude of the community is normal towards female education.	242 (63.7)	80 (21.1)	58 (15.3)
The female are ignored in education by society.	301 (79.2)	67 (17.6)	12 (3.2)
Whether in your family the female get higher education.	138 (36.3)	201 (52.9)	41 (10.8)
The lack of opportunities for women causes low female higher education.	248 (65.3)	110 (28.9)	22 (5.8)
The community provides psychological support to the female in getting higher education.	191 (50.3)	145 (38.2)	44 (11.6)
There is gender discrimination in getting education.	304 (80.0)	67 (17.6)	9 (2.4)
You would like to send your female for higher education to coeducational institution.	96 (25.3)	250 (65.8)	34 (8.9)
You observe any harassment to female from Public/ outside.	52 (13.7)	192 (50.5)	136 (35.8)

* Frequencies are represented by number in table and percentage proportions are represented by number in Parenthesis.

Association between Social constraints and female higher Education.

To evaluate the relationship between social constraints and Female Education, variable were presented into few statements, as given in table-2. Findings of the table are discussed below.

To assess the association of social constraints and education, the perception of social constraints were limited to following statement mentioned in Table 12 . The result shows that a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between education and the security was found which shows that the females feel secure himself in going to educational institution. Similarly a high significant ($P=0.000$) association between social value and education was found and shows that the existing social values are cause for low female higher education. UNESCO (1999) survey showed that some societies in Zaire, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Gambia identify female's education as a "shameful" practice. Furthermore a high significant ($P=0.000$) association between attitude of the community and education was found and show that the attitude of the community is normal towards female education. Furthermore a high significant ($P=0.000$) association between ignorance and education was found which indicate that females are ignored in education by the society. A study conducted by FAWE, reveals that most of the parents think that their daughters' education will only benefit their husbands and the husband's family. Similarly a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between family and education was found which indicates that in their family the female gets higher education. Moreover a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between opportunities to female and education was found which shows that the lack of opportunities for women causes low female higher education. Furthermore a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between psychological support to female and education was found which shows that the community provides psychological support to female in getting higher education. Likewise a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between gender discrimination and education was found which shows that there is gender discrimination in getting education. The findings are supported Mfuo (1997) who found that most parents now realize the importance of girls' education. However, when there are inadequate resources, girls are sacrificed for their male counterparts. Similarly Bunwaree (1999) conduct a study on gender disparity in Mauritius the result of the

study showed that in times of financial limitation parents tended to support boys against girls. Equally, highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between coeducational institutions and education were found which shows that female will not send to coeducational institutions. Furthermore a highly significant ($P=0.000$) association between harassment and education was found which shows that no harassment was observed to female from public/outside.

Table -2. Associations between Social constraints and Female higher Education

Social	Perception	Female education				Chi square (P value)
		Yes	No	Don't know	Total	
the female feels secure himself in going to educational institution	Yes	242 (63.7)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	242 (63.7)	2=546.130 (0.000)
	No	45 (11.8)	58 (15.3)	0 (0.0%)	103 (27.1)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3)	34 (8.9)	35 (9.2%)	
the existing social values are causes for low female higher education	Yes	258 (67.9)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	258 (76.9)	2=448.015 (0.000)
	No	29 (7.6)	59 (15.5)	13 (3.4)	101 (26.6)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	21 (5.5)	21 (5.5)	
the attitude of the community is normal towards female education	Yes	242 (63.7)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	242 (63.7)	2=359.277 (0.000)
	No	45 (11.8)	35 (9.2)	0 (0.0%)	80 (21.1)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	24 (6.3)	34 (8.9)	58 (15.3)	
female are ignored in education by society	Yes	287(75.5%)	14 (3.7%)	0 (0.0%)	301 (79.2%)	2=396.037 (0.000)
	No	0 (0.0%)	45 (11.8%)	22 (5.8%)	67(17.6%)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (3.2%)	12 (3.2%)	
in your family the female get higher education	Yes	138 (36.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	138 (36.3%)	2=358.426 (0.000)
	No	149 (39.2%)	52 (13.7%)	0 (0.0%)	201 (52.9%)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	7 (1.8%)	34 (8.9%)	41 (10.8%)	
the lack of opportunities for women causes Low female higher education	Yes	248 (65.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	248 (65.3%)	2=431.002 (0.000)
	No	39 (10.3%)	59 (15.5%)	12 (3.2%)	110 (8.9%)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	22 (5.8%)	22 (5.8%)	
the community provides psychological support to the female in getting higher education	Yes	191 (50.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	191 (50.3%)	2=371.969 (0.000)
	No	96 (25.3%)	49 (12.9%)	0 (0.0%)	145 (38.2%)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	10 (16.9%)	34 (8.9%)	44 (11.6%)	
there is gender discrimination in getting education	Yes	287 (75.5%)	17 (4.5%)	0 (0.0%)	304 (80.0%)	2=359.292 (0.000)
	No	0 (0.0%)	42 (11.1%)	25 (6.6%)	67 (17.6%)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (2.4%)	9 (2.4%)	
You would like to send your female to coeducational institution	Yes	96 (25.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	96 (25.3%)	2=409.997 (0.000)
	No	191 (50.3%)	59 (15.5%)	0 (0.0%)	250 (65.8%)	
	Don't know	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	34 (8.9%)	34 (8.9%)	
You observe any harassment to female from public/outside.	Yes	52 (13.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	52 (13.7%)	2=220.920 (0.000)
	No	192 (50.5%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	192 (50.5%)	
	Don't know	43 (11.3%)	59 (15.5%)	34 (8.9%)	136 (35.8%)	

CONCLUSION

Gender inequality in access to higher education has generally been seen as a major problem that needs to be addressed. The study highlight that social factors are the main reason for the low female higher education in Pakhtoon society. Pakhtoon has unique socio-cultural backgrounds and such practices like gender disparity, negative attitude towards female educational, gender inequality, lack of educational opportunities and coeducational system obstruct women empowerment. These socio-cultural practices have strong influence on female education. The study showed that most parents favor to send their male children to higher education instead of girls because of different explanations. The reason is that giving education to boys is an investment and an asset, also beneficial to the entire family while girls are expected to be dependent housewives and after getting married she become her husband's property. Apart from this other challenges faced by Pakhtoon girls is lack of family motivation and encouragement usually forced the girls away from education.

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