



The Effects of Pashtun Culture on Girls Higher Education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Abstract- The present paper focused to identify the factors affecting parents' attitude towards their daughters' education at higher level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The objective of the study was to find out the attitude of parents towards their daughters education at higher level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study was delimited to male parents of three districts namely Dir Lower, Dir Upper and Swat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to lack of resources and cultural constraints. The target population was 4872 male parents. A sample of 360 male parents was selected according to L.R Gay sample selection table and questionnaires were distributed among them. The data was collected through a self-developed questionnaire of five Likert scale from the randomly selected male parents. The collected data was fed into SPSS version 16 and analyzed through percentage and chi-square. The study found that positive attitude of parents had good effects on their daughters' higher education. The study recommends that government should increase the number of female higher institutes, induct qualified teachers, provide facilities at female higher education institutes, involve community and encourage the parents to make their attitudes positive together their daughters' higher education.

Key Words: Effect, Culture, parents, higher education and daughter

I. INTRODUCTION

Education means to develop the faculty of human, especially his thoughts. Relax mind is the outcome of good education system. Education enhances the mental faculty of human beings men and makes their minds sharp to adjust themselves with the changing environment of the modern world (Mingat, 2007). Pakistan is a less developed country and has various difficulties in education sectors including high illiteracy rate and the illiteracy ratio of female is more than male. Feminine gender in Pakistan incorporates almost 54% of the total populace, (Govt. of Pakistan, 2008).

The parents' attitudes had a direct impact on children academic performance in schools and institutes of higher studies. The positive attitude of parents helps children in their personality development and become an active member of society. The higher education of parents and positive attitude of parents towards their children education or higher education keep the children motivated and inspired to go for higher education like their parents. There are a number studies and a lot of literature available in education which show that parents positive attitude has positive effects on children education.

Halai et al. (2007) noticed that the opinions of parents are different about science and arts education. The parents are more reluctant in searching educational institutes for girls' higher education. The environment of colleges and universities are important due to cultural and social pressure from society because the society wants that the girls joined those institutes for higher education which are more secure environmentally. In Pakistan women spend the major part of their life in home because this role of household is preferred for them in society. Females are less educated because parents are more interested in the education of sons than daughters. The parents focused to provide guidance of female to learn the domestic works and make these skills perfect because the parents in general and parents in particular thought that for girls learning of household duties are more important and for sons the education and professional skills. This is because the sons will earn money in their future life and daughters will do the household duties.

The present study focused to find out the factors affecting parents' attitude towards their daughter higher education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Aristotle says, Education means to develop the faculty of men, especially his thoughts and mind. Education is described; an overall improvement of an individual, Thus education means the bringing out and the improvement of all innate abilities of an individual. Government of Pakistan (2011) stated that No doubt, it is a mixture of belief, ideas, traditions, facts, proved theories and the philosophies of one's life. The basic purpose of education is to illuminate the behavior and skills of a person, doesn't matter the education is formal, informal or non-formal, more probably no one can ignore the importance of education and specifically the guardian, either educated or uneducated. They have the passion to educate their kids, especially their daughters in Pakistan consist almost 54% of total population. But unluckily they do not get equal chance just like the masculine gender of the society.

A study conducted by Alam (2010) on the study of attitude and academic achievement at secondary level found that the attitude of students towards studies and their achievement are closely related with each other. The study showed that students with positive get good marks and their results are better than others students with negative or lower positive attitude.

Islam urged society to provide education to both the genders and did not divide the male and female on the bases of their genders. Pakistan is an Islamic country therefore it should not do any discrimination in education. But there are areas like the tribal areas in the North of Pakistan where girls are not allowed to get education in general and higher education of particular (Latif, 2007).

According to Khalid and Mukhtar (2002) stated that the big cause of low ratio of female in colleges and universities is lack of resources like schools' fee and other requirements for schooling of girls. The female is considered fit for household duties only and this type of mindset make their education second priority.

Sen (2001) observed that the social norms and cultural values of Pakistani society is cause of gender discrimination in Pakistan. There different regions in Pakistan has its own different values and traditions for women. This diversity in Pakistani society makes it difficult and even impossible to upgrade the status of women in Pakistan. The different rural and urban settings, feudal and tribal cultures, religious and social values affect the life women directly. The women remain as subordinate to the man dominated society in Pakistan. The different regional and class settings looked to women differently. Man has the upper hand in the society over women and he is not willing to lose the grip over the situations which give him the superior status for a very long time.

Khan (2007) observed that if the history of Pakistan was studied in detail, it showed many hurdles and reasons which kept the educational ratio of female low than the male. The discrimination starts with funds distribution for education. Male education was given more funds than female. The man role is to lead the society and the women will play the role of subordinate inside home and outside in the society. The boys in family are provided with the best education and they are prepared to earn more resources and compete effectively for quality life. In contrast, the girls are often not considered for fit for good education and they are advised and trained to take care kids and learnt the art of household duties. The women are considered as mothers and wives and therefore education is not given importance and low income of fathers is also cause of low enrolment of female in schools and colleges.

Afzal (2000) has initiated that transport was one of the big challenges the girls opposed in provincial borders while going to school. It is suggested that the means of transportation supposed to be provided especially to the girls to go to class. At adjacent level this mean may be masterminded by the common population on supportive proposition or through the level union council. The maximum part (93.0%) of respondents was not ready to send the girls out of the limited local territories just only 7.0% were ready to allow them.

Yasmeen (2005) stated that education in general and higher education in particular had an integral position in changing the standard of living in a country. The education had everlasting effects on the personal, social, financial and cultural life of a nation and creates a society which maintains their values. Similarly, education improves the chances of human beings to enjoy their lives if the best possible way.

Kramarae (2000) observed that merit based and open civil society is a pre-requisite of Higher education. Education improves the knowledge of person about his duties and rights in a society. It brings improvement in the character of person and did not believe in discrimination among people of the same society. Therefore, the differences of gender, beliefs, religion and caste vanished from the society.

According to Khalid and Mukhtar (2002) stated that the big cause of low ratio of female in colleges and universities is lack of resources like schools' fee and other requirements for schooling of girls. The female is considered fit for household duties only and this type of mindset make their education second priority (Maqsood et al., 2012). Similarly, the report of UNESCO (2010) observed that the early marriages of girls forced the parents to prepare the girls for the household duties and arrange their dowry instead of investing in their education. This was also observed that the sons' education is given preference because

the parents think that if we invested more in their education they will earn more in future to support the family.

Sathar and Haque (2000) observed that in many cases it is seen that female institutes were not found near homes or in villages and close cities. The thought that their daughters would travel long distance to get higher education made the parents reluctant to send their daughters for higher education because the worries of safety of their girls come first for the parents. This is the main issue in female higher education because it is observed that if the transport is available for them to pick and drop there is always the threat that their daughters might be abused and harassed by the evil doers (World Bank, 2007; UNESCO, 2010). In Pakistan, an increasing trend is observed in female education in colleges and universities in recent past. Although, there are many problems and hurdles in the way but an upward flow is seen. This upward move in higher education is seen in the less developed areas which show the rise of society. The girls' number in schools and colleges is bigger than the boys in some areas. This upward trend in female education is good for the Pakistani society because it will make the girls able to provide the goods for the development of their country in every field. Many studies stated that once the ban is imposed on girls than it is hard for other girls of the same family or area to remove that. But the increased number of female institutes of higher education are increased with the time which shows that the institutes are far away from homes and it would be difficult for them to travel (Maqsood et al., 2012).

The status of female is the lowest in Pakistan and there are very few countries in the world which have a lower status of women than Pakistan. The history of Pakistan shows that girls' higher education ratio is very low because there are various reasons and hurdles for women to get higher education in Pakistan. Similarly, the situation of girls' education varies around the world but the one common fact about female education is that the ratio of female education is lower as compared to boys' education in the world.

Objective of the Study

1. To identify the factors affecting parents' attitude towards their daughters' education at higher level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Hypothesis of the Study

1. H⁰. There is no significant relationship between the cultural norms and female higher education.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population

The study was descriptive in nature. The male parents of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who were sending their daughters to universities and colleges were the population of study. The target population of the study was all the male parents of districts Dir Lower, Dir Upper and Swat. The total enrolled female students in the universities and colleges of these three districts are **4872**.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sampled population of the study is **360** male parents of district Dir Lower, Dir Upper and Swat. The sampled population after equal division the researcher collected data from **120** male parents of each district. Cluster Random sampling techniques was selected to collect data from the male parents.

Data Collection Tool and Procedure

The researcher made a questionnaire following the five Likert Scale format ranging from strongly agreed to disagree to explore the attitude of male parents towards their daughters' higher educations. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire among male parents of districts Dir Lower, Dir Upper and Swat and data was collected from them.

Data Analysis Technique

The data of the questionnaire was first combined and summarized and then it was entered in SPSS version 16. The entered data was analyzed through chi-square test and percentage.

IV. RESULTS

1) **Joint family system is hurdle in female higher education.**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent	Chi-Square value (χ^2)	
SA	108	30.0	30.0	9.49	362.58
A	198	55.0	85.0		

UD	14	3.9	88.9
SDA	29	8.1	96.9
DA	11	3.1	100.0
Total	360	100.0	

The cumulative percent of 85.0 showed that the parents in majority agreed that joint family system is a hurdle in female higher education. The parents who disagreed are less in number and their cumulative percent is 11.2. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 362.58 is more than 9.49 table value with $\alpha=0.05$.

2) Parent's low income is a barrier in female higher education.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value (χ^2)
SA	131	36.4	36.4	9.49	438.13
A	200	55.6	91.9		
UD	13	3.6	95.6		
SDA	10	2.8	98.3		
DA	6	1.7	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 91.9 showed that the parents in majority agreed that parents' low income is a barrier in female higher education. The parents who disagreed are less in number and their cumulative percent is 4.5. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 438.13 is more than 9.49 table value with $\alpha=0.05$.

3) Co-education restricts female higher education.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value (χ^2)
SA	96	26.7	26.7	9.49	389.30
A	209	58.1	84.7		
UD	22	6.1	90.8		
SDA	20	5.6	96.4		
DA	13	3.6	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 84.7 showed that the parents in majority agreed that co-education restricts female higher education. The parents who disagreed are less in number and their cumulative percent is 9.2. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 389.30 is more than 9.49 table value with $\alpha=0.05$.

4) Institutes for higher education are not available in the vicinity.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value (χ^2)
SA	104	28.9	28.9	9.49	366.19
A	201	55.8	84.7		
UD	13	3.6	88.3		
SDA	18	5.0	93.3		
DA	24	6.7	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 84.7 showed that the parents in majority agreed that institutes for higher education are not available in the vicinity. The parents who disagreed are less in number and their cumulative percent is 11.7. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 366.19 is more than 9.49 table value with $\alpha=0.05$.

5) **Living in rural areas restricts female to go for higher education.**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value (χ^2)
SA	93	25.8	25.8	9.49	382.55
A	209	58.1	83.9		
UD	17	4.7	88.6		
SDA	19	5.3	93.9		
DA	22	6.1	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 83.9 showed that the parents in majority agreed that living in rural areas restricts female from higher education. The parents who disagreed are less in number and their cumulative percent is 11.4. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 382.55 is more than 9.49 table value with $\alpha=0.05$.

6) **Facilities at female higher institutes are not up to the mark.**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value (χ^2)
SA	99	27.5	27.5	9.49	395.58
A	209	58.1	85.6		
UD	20	5.6	91.1		
SDA	18	5.0	96.1		
DA	14	3.9	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 85.6 showed that the parents in majority agreed that facilities at female higher institutes are not up to the mark. The parents who disagreed are less in number and their cumulative percent is 9.9. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 395.58 is more than 9.49 table value with $\alpha=0.05$.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The female higher education is affected by many factors like joint family system in our village in particular and in our society in general. The low income of parents is also a barrier in female higher education and coeducation restricts female from higher education in our society. The colleges and universities for female education are less in number or not available in the areas close to female homes which restricts female from higher education. The lack of facilities and living in rural areas is cause of female low higher education.

The study recommends to increase the number of female higher education institutes in all the backwards areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa because co-education is not liked by majority of parents. The parents must be encouraged by society to educate their daughters. Scholarships should be given on merit to increase the literacy ratio in the poor families.

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