

Changing Attitude Towards Women Education: An Outcome of Benefits of Women Education in Rural Area

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Female constitute half of country population but still facing problem in almost all sectors of life in the male dominating Pakistani society. The major aim of the present study was to find out the benefits of female education as factor affecting their parent's attitude towards education. Data for the study were collected from two hundred and fourteen (N=214) respondents belonging to two selected villages of district Bannu. A significant association was found among attitude about female education and by getting education females would become good housewives, good mothers, would be able to get better life partners, would bring up their children in a better way and could help their children in educational and social problems. Furthermore they would have job opportunities, would be socio-economically empowered, would make sensible decisions in important matters and they would be less likely to marry early. On the basis of encouraging findings of the study about expected benefits of female educations it is recommended that

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government and non-government organizations should keep people aware by highlighting these benefits which will ultimately motivate parents to provide education to their female children.

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Education is a fundamental right of each individual. Providing educational facilities to all its individuals is the obligation of society. From social perspective, education is directly connected to the development of the society. Females comprise half of Pakistan's population. If we do not educate this youth portion of our population, our country cannot make progress on sound basis (Rafi et al., 2012). No society has ever freed itself socially, economically or politically without a sound basis of educated women. In this case, education can play a vital role in boosting women's status and putting them on the same footing as their male counterparts and it also enhances women's ability to get jobs in the formal sector (Noureen and Awan, 2011).

Female education has been recognized as more critical for the development of nations than just education as a whole. It is now broadly acknowledged that the social benefits to female education are greatly increasing than male education because development cannot take place without women's participation in society. Education empowers women to take part in the implementation of necessary social changes, for example raising smaller and healthier families; while uneducated women generally bear more children. Educated girls are having more capability to make their own decisions rather than depending only on their parents or families, which allow them to be more self-contained. This shows that education is a crucial factor in the advancement of any society.

A country can't achieve development without the involvement of women in society and government. Women's participation in government is not only an essential solution, but government's decisions can also be positively affected by their participation (Mareng, 2010). If educated girls become mothers, it's much more probable that they would send their children to school, thus they transmit and increase benefits both for themselves and society in a form of positive intergenerational

effect (Mishra, 2005). All over the world, education is considered as the key factor to surmount the obstacles that women face in life.

Education familiarizes women with issues of home management (Goel, 2004). Furthermore Education is considered as a critical factor in getting over the hurdles, that women face and an essential instrument for empowering women and involving them into the mainstream of development. Education not only provides awareness and skills to improve health and means of earning, but it also empowers women to get their right position in the society and development process. Education also gives status and confidence in making decisions. Women education is the key to reduce poverty (Bukhsh, 2007). The literacy rate of Pakistan among the Asian countries is ranked 10th, while Pakistan is ranked 6th among the SAARC countries. All these facts cause disappointment. The number of illiterate persons in Pakistan in 1951, was about 20 million while according to the census of 1998, 48 million people were illiterate in Pakistan and now in 2010-11 this number is 75.6 million (Mustafa, 2012).

Method

Sample

The study was based on primary data, conducted in 2014. All the parents or household heads residing in the two selected villages (Azim Kala and Abdullah Jan Kala) District Bannu and had at least one female child at school going age were the potential respondents of the study. A sample size of 214 out of the total 850 households (1998 Census Report of District Bannu) was randomly picked as per criteria devised by Sekaran (2003).

Tool

Tool comprising of items related to the research problem were constructed after pilot study and review by the expert in the field.

Procedure

Formal data collection was initiated with formal permission and brief introduction of the aims of the study to the participants. Data was collected through interview method individually. Participants were requested for their honest responses and were assured about the confidentiality of their opinions. All the participants cooperated and completed the survey questionnaires. At the end of every interview all the participants were thanked for their participation in the study.

Conceptual Framework

The following were the dependent and independent variables of the study.

Table 1

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables
Female Education's Benefits	Attitude about Female Education

After the collection of data, it were first coded and then entered in computer by using SPSS software for analysis. The analysis of the data was made at uni and bivariate levels. The univariate analysis comprised of frequency distribution and percentages of the sampled respondents. Bivariate analysis was carried out to measure the association between dependent and independents variables. Chi-square and Fisher Exact tests were used to measure the association. The Chi-squared test statistics for the test of independence summarizes how close the expected frequencies fall to the observed frequencies. It is represented by the symbol χ^2 . Karl Pearson introduced the statistics in 1900 and used in sociological studies to test the degree of independence (Tai, 1978). The formula used to compute Chi-square is given in the following:

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$$

Where χ^2 is chi-square, o_{ij} is observed frequencies in i^{th} row and j^{th} column. E_{ij} is expected frequencies in i^{th} row and j^{th} column whereas r is number of rows and n is number of column. The large summation sign, Σ (capital sigma), tells us to compute the fractions for each cell and then sum over all cells to get χ^2 .

Fisher exact test was used when the frequencies in the table was less than 5. Following was the formula of the test.

$$Fisher\ Exact\ Test = \frac{(a+b)!(c+d)!(a+c)!(b+d)!}{N!a!b!c!d!}$$

Where a, b, c and d were the observed numbers in contingency table while “n” were the total number of observations.

Results

This section first describes the univariate and bivariate results. At univariate level it states the results regarding dependent variable i-e attitude towards female education and independent variable i-e Female Education’s Benefits. It is followed by the association between the two variables.

Table 2

Parents’ Attitude towards Female Education			
Statements	Yes	No	Do not know
Female education is necessary	188(87.9)	21(9.8)	5(2.3)
Female education is need of the day	181(84.6)	28(13.1)	5(2.3)
There is no need of female education	14(6.5)	195(91.1)	5(2.3)
Educated females are more successful	173(80.8)	33(15.4)	8(3.7)
Educated females are better mothers	177(82.7)	32(15.0)	5(2.3)

Female education is a wastage of time and money	15(7.0)	191(89.3)	8(3.7)
Females should stay at home	52(24.3)	157(73.4)	5(2.3)
Females should be given limited schooling	60(28.0)	148(69.2)	6(2.8)
Females should be given higher education	148(69.2)	61(28.5)	5(2.3)
Females should admit in better schools	168(78.5)	41(19.2)	5(2.3)
Females should admit in less better schools	33(15.4)	168(78.5)	13(6.1)

Source: Survey * Frequencies are represented by figures in the table while percentages of the respondents are presented in parenthesis.

Table 3

Expected Benefits of Female Education

Statements	Yes	No	Do not know
Females will become good housewives	186(86.9)	23(10.7)	5(2.3)
Females will become good mothers	183(85.5)	26(12.1)	5(2.3)
Females will be able to get better life partners	177(82.7)	30(14.0)	7(3.3)
Educated females can bring up their children in a better way	172(80.4)	37(17.3)	5(2.3)
Educated females can help their children in educational problems	192(89.7)	17(7.9)	5(2.3)
Educated females can help their children in social problems	186(86.9)	23(10.7)	5(2.3)
Educated females have job opportunities	200(93.5)	6(2.8)	8(3.7)
Educated females are socio-economically empowered	174(81.3)	32(15.0)	8(3.7)
Educated females make sensible	177(82.7)	32(15.0)	5(2.3)

decisions in important matters

Educated females are less likely 152(71.0) 52(24.3) 10(4.7)
to marry early

Source: Survey * Frequencies are represented by figures in the table while percentages of the respondents are presented in parenthesis.

Table 4

Expected Benefits of Female Education and Attitude about Female Education

Statement	Female Education			Chi square p= value
	Yes	No	Do not know	
Females will become good housewives				
Yes	162(97.0)	23(76.7)	1(5.9)	$x^2=148.879$ (p=.001)
No	0(0.0)	7(23.3)	16(94.1)	
Do not know	5(3.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	
Females will become good mothers				
Yes	163(97.6)	20(66.7)	0(0.0)	$x^2=155.312$ (p=.001)
No	0(0.0)	9(30.0)	17(100.0)	
Do not know	4(2.4)	1(3.3)	0(0.0)	
Females will be able to get better life partners				
Yes	161(96.4)	16(53.3)	0(0.0)	$x^2=146.288$ (p=.001)
No	2(1.2)	11(36.7)	17(100.0)	
Do not know	4(2.4)	3(10.0)	0(0.0)	
Educated females can bring up their children in a better way				
Yes	158(94.6)	14(46.7)	0(0.0)	$x^2=125.488$ (p=.001)
No	6(3.6)	14(46.7)	17(100.0)	
Do not know	3(1.8)	2(6.7)	0(0.0)	
Educated females can help their children in educational problems				
Yes	165(98.8)	20(66.7)	7(41.2)	$x^2=94.252$ (p=.001)
No	0(0.0)	7(23.3)	10(58.8)	
Do not know	2(1.2)	3(10.0)	0(0.0)	
Educated females can help their children in social problems				

Yes	166(99.4)	20(66.7)	0(0.0)	$\chi^2=150.215$ (p=.001)
No	0(0.0)	8(26.7)	15(88.2)	
Do not know	1(0.6)	2(6.7)	2(11.8)	
Educated females have job opportunities				
Yes	161(96.4)	25(83.3)	14(82.4)	$\chi^2=30.590$ (p=.001)
No	0(0.0)	5(16.7)	1(5.9)	
Do not know	6(3.6)	0(0.0)	2(11.8)	
Educated females are socio-economically empowered				
Yes	155(92.8)	19(63.3)	0(0.0)	$\chi^2=129.286$ (p=.001)
No	4(2.4)	11(36.7)	17(100.0)	
Do not know	8(4.8)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	
Educated females make sensible decisions in important matters				
Yes	162(97.0)	15(50.0)	0(0.0)	$\chi^2=136.273$ (p=.001)
No	2(1.2)	15(50.0)	15(88.2)	
Do not know	3(1.8)	0(0.0)	2(11.8)	
Educated females are less likely to marry early				
Yes	134(80.2)	12(40.0)	6(35.3)	$\chi^2=34.001$ (p=.001)
No	29(17.4)	15(50.0)	8(47.1)	
Do not know	4(2.4)	3(10.0)	3(17.6)	

Source: Survey * Frequencies are represented by figures in the table while percentages of the respondents are presented in parenthesis and in the end column number in parenthesis represents p value.

Discussion

An attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular object, group, phenomenon, event or symbol. Attitudes are the basic determinants of human behavior. If a person perceives something favorable then his/her action must be favorable. Parents' attitude is very important for children education especially the female ones. If parents' attitude is positive their children

will have higher education, otherwise they will have lower or no education.

Table 2 describes parents' perceptions about female education. The table states that 88, 85, 83, 81, 78 and 69 percent of the sampled respondents expressed favorable attitude regarding the statements; female education is necessary, female education is need of the day, educated females are better mothers, educated females are more successful, females should admit in better schools and females should be given higher education respectively. A 91, 89, 78, 73 and 69 percent of the sampled respondents showed unfavorable attitude regarding the statements; there is no need of female education, female education is a wastage of time and money, females should admit in less better schools, females should stay at home and females should be given limited schooling respectively. Whereas a very few respondents expressed neither favorable nor unfavorable attitude in response to the above mentioned statements.

It's a human nature that he starts every activity for material/ non material gains. Female education is considered a useless investment in many backward societies. But nowadays people are becoming aware of the fact that it's a gainful investment for the future of new generation.

Table 3 while expressing views about expected benefits of female education states that 93 percent of the sampled respondents replied that educated females would have job opportunities as compared to uneducated or low educated females. Similarly 90, 87 each, 85, 83 each, 81, 80 and 71 percent of the sampled respondents were also found confirming that educated females could help their children in educational problems, females would become good housewives, educated females could help their children in social problems, females would become good mothers, females would be able to get better life partners, educated females made sensible decisions in important matters, educated females would be socio-economically empowered, educated females could bring up their children in a better way and educated females would be less likely to marry early respectively. While minority of the respondents opposed and showed unawareness of the expected benefits of female education.

Overall results show that majority of the sampled respondents agreed upon the expected benefits of female education and they thought

it a gainful activity. It means that female education will have a better future as people are realizing the role and value of female education.

About female education Napoleon once said, “give me an educated woman, I’ll give you a strong nation”. Educated females are a blessing not only for their families but for the whole nation. No country can achieve its development goals without the contribution and share of women, which is possible only through educating this half portion of the population.

According to the table 4 a significant association was found between attitude about female education and females would become good housewives ($p=.000$). Similarly attitude about female education and females would become good mothers ($p=.000$), females would be able to get better life partners ($p=.000$), educated females could bring up their children in a better way ($p=.000$), educated females could help their children in educational problems ($p=.000$), educated females could help their children in social problems ($p=.000$), educated females would have job opportunities ($p=.000$), educated females would be socio-economically empowered ($p=.000$), educated females would make sensible decisions in important matters ($p=.000$) and educated females would be less likely to marry early ($p=.000$) were also associated significantly.

Results as a whole show a significant association of attitude about female education and expected benefits of female education. It indicates that due to material/non material gains from female education, parents were inclined to their daughters’ education.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Showing linkage between attitude about female education and its expected benefits, a significant association was observed among attitude about female education and educated females would become good housewives and good mothers, they would be able to get better life partners, educated females could bring up their children in a better way, they could help their children in educational, could provide the solution of social problems of children, educated females would have job opportunities, they would be socio-economically empowered, educated

females would make sensible decisions in important matters and they would be less likely to marry early.

On the basis of findings the study recommends that government should focus to maintain peace and harmony in the study area. This is because after 9/11 the miscreants have destroyed many female schools in FATA and in the surrounding of Peshawar city. Consistent support to education institution and provision of female jobs opportunities are also recommended to keep the attitude of parents positive towards female education.

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