

## Female Education And Its Consequences: A Parental Openion (*A Case Study Of District Killa Abdullah, Balochistan*)

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### Abstract:

This research study aimed to explore the parental perception regarding female education in District Killa Abdullah. The study focused mainly on socio-economic factors that hindered females' education, household chores that kept females uneducated, traditional norms and values that bounded women to be inside boundary walls throughout their life spans, and feudalist parental perception that cursed on educated females and considered them as out of social norms and values women. To carry out this research, primary data collected through random sampling technique at household level and **160** households were interviewed, Data analysis techniques such as simple numerical analysis were applied that produced extraordinary results for interpretation. Findings of this research revealed that females are extremely marginalized compare to their male counterparts. Female face multi challenges such as, lack of feasible transportation to move to education institutes, getting early marriages that result into mal-nutrition and dropping out of the schools and many more. Recommendations were made to encourage girl's education and to disseminate information regarding significance of girl's education to remote rural areas too so that women shall have equal opportunities to get education and play their vital role in development of the country. Government needs to take some immediate serious steps to eradicate these traditional and feudalist norms and values.

**Key Words:** Parental perception, Females education, Socio-economic factors, Balochistan Province, Discrimination.

### Introduction:

Napoleon was once asked what the most important need of France was during his reign. He replied, "Nation's progress is impossible without trained and educated mothers. If the women of my country are not educated about half of the people will be ignorant." Education for women is highly imperative as it develops them as an individual who play a pivotal role in a society, are well informed and independent. They are the ones who lead to the upbringing of children and fulfill the duty of educating them along the way. A famous saying is that "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." It means that a mother exercises great influence over the lives of her children. She is able to mold their thoughts and character. (Latif, 2009)

Women's education is crucial for societal progress. It empowers women, promotes gender equality, enhances economic development, and contributes to overall social well-being by fostering informed and capable communities.

Certainly, women's education holds multifaceted importance:

1. **Empowerment:** Education equips women with knowledge and skills, empowering them to make informed choices about their lives, health, and well-being. It enhances their confidence and self-esteem. (Latif, 2009)
2. **Gender Equality:** Education is a catalyst for dismantling gender disparities. It challenges traditional gender roles and fosters a more inclusive society, promoting equal opportunities for women in various fields.
3. **Economic Development:** Educated women contribute significantly to economic growth. They are more likely to participate in the workforce, which expands the labor market and boosts productivity. This, in turn, positively impacts the overall economy.
4. **Health Improvement:** Educated women tend to have better health outcomes. They are more likely to access healthcare services, make informed decisions about family planning, and ensure the well-being of their children.
5. **Child Education:** Educated mothers are more likely to prioritize and invest in their children's education. This creates a positive cycle of education, breaking the cycle of poverty and improving the overall educational landscape.
6. **Social Development:** Women's education promotes social cohesion and community development. Educated women often engage in community initiatives, contributing to social progress and sustainable development.
7. **Political Participation:** Education is a key factor in increasing women's participation in politics. Educated women are more likely to engage in civic activities, advocate for their rights, and contribute to the democratic process.
8. **Reducing Gender-Based Violence:** Education raises awareness about women's rights and helps challenge harmful social norms. It is a powerful tool in reducing gender-based violence by promoting a culture of respect and equality.
9. **Innovation and Creativity:** Diverse perspectives foster innovation. Educated women bring unique ideas and perspectives to various fields, contributing to innovation and problem-solving in science, technology, business, and other sectors.
10. **Global Impact:** Women's education is a global investment. When women are educated, the positive effects extend beyond individual communities, positively impacting regional and global development goals.

In summary, women's education is not just a matter of individual development; it's a key driver for societal progress, promoting equality, health, economic prosperity, and overall well-being.

### **Rural vs Urban:**

Rural and urban education in Pakistan face distinct challenges. Rural areas often lack infrastructure, experienced teachers, and resources, impacting the quality of education. In contrast, urban areas typically have better facilities but may struggle with overcrowded classrooms and disparities in educational access. Efforts to address these disparities include improving infrastructure in rural areas and ensuring equitable resource distribution nationwide.

In Pakistan, rural and urban parents often display varying attitudes towards girls' education. Urban areas tend to have a more progressive outlook, with parents valuing education for both genders. In contrast, some rural areas may still adhere to traditional beliefs, posing challenges for girls' education due to cultural norms and limited access to schools. Efforts to bridge this gap include awareness campaigns and improving educational infrastructure in rural regions.

Barriers to girls' education in Pakistan include cultural norms discouraging female education, economic challenges leading to prioritization of boys' education, limited access to schools in remote areas, inadequate infrastructure, and security concerns affecting girls' attendance. Efforts are being made to address these issues, but persistent challenges remain.

1. **Cultural Norms and Gender Bias:** Deep-seated cultural beliefs often prioritize boys' education over girls'. Traditional gender roles may limit girls' perceived roles to domestic responsibilities, reinforcing the idea that investing in their education is less important.
2. **Limited Access to Schools:** In many rural areas, there is a lack of schools, and those that exist may be far from girls' homes. Poor infrastructure, inadequate transportation, and a lack of safe routes to schools can further hinder access.
3. **Economic Constraints:** Families facing financial challenges may prioritize spending limited resources on educating boys rather than girls. Additionally, economic pressures may lead to early marriages for girls, cutting short their educational opportunities.
4. **Security Concerns:** Particularly in certain regions of Pakistan, security issues pose a significant barrier to girls' education. Fear of violence, including attacks on schools, can discourage parents from sending their daughters to school.
5. **Child Labor:** Girls may be forced into labor at an early age, contributing to the economic needs of the family. This not only deprives them of education but also perpetuates a cycle of poverty.
6. **Lack of Female Teachers:** The scarcity of female teachers, especially in rural areas, can be a barrier. Conservative cultural norms may discourage families from sending their girls to schools where male teachers are predominant.
7. **Inadequate Facilities and Resources:** Many schools lack proper facilities, such as separate toilets for girls, which can be a deterrent. Additionally, a shortage of educational materials and outdated teaching methods can affect the quality of education provided.
8. **Social Stigma and Fear of Harassment:** Societal norms and the fear of harassment, including sexual harassment, can dissuade families from sending their daughters to school. Creating safe and supportive environments is crucial to overcoming this barrier.

Addressing these barriers requires a multi-faceted approach involving government policies, community engagement, awareness campaigns, and targeted efforts to improve infrastructure and security.

### **Literature Review:**

Education is utmost priority for all countries; however, gender parity exists in education particularly in primary education in Asian and South Asian region. South Asia has about 23.5 million girls out of school. Not surprisingly the main reason for this gender gap in education in South Asia is poverty. In Pakistani society as well the underlying cause of all obstacles faced by women in education is poverty. However, there are some other main obstacles too, such as indigenous society, old norms, religious customs, lack of food, water, and sanitation; schools that are at long distance from home; and household labor divided by gender, all contribute to educational inequality. (MICS, 2010), Ayesha Gul, Arab Naz and Muhammad Nadeemullah (2018).

There are apparent differences in gender literacy and in the level of literacy in different parts of the country. Some 58 % of the male population qualifies as literate while female literacy rate is estimated at only 32 %. Two-thirds of Pakistani women cannot read or write. There isn't huge difference in literacy among 4 provinces. Sindh, because of Karachi, has the highest rate at 60% while Balochistan at 53% has the lowest rate. However, it is among women living in various parts of the country that literacy rates vary a great deal in Balochistan the rate is as low as 15 % while it is 36 % for Punjab's women. It is obvious that the women of Balochistan must be targeted in any initiative to educate the masses in Pakistan (MICS, 2010), Hussain, Naz, Khan, Daraz, and Khan (2015).

Like in every underdeveloped country in the world, women in Pakistan are in the list of that group of people who are deprived and disadvantaged both at educational and societal level. (Latif, 2009) Data compiling agencies urgently need to chart rural and urban female enrolment ratio independently. Because the problems facing by rural woman are crystal clearly vary from those of urban women, therefore, rural woman deserve special attention. Many girls are rarely permitted to continue their basic education and they are forcibly dropped out at primary or secondary level of education that results into deprivation of getting higher education. This phenomenon can easily be observed in females' promotion from one class to another. And, this exacerbated drop-out system results into the creation of illiterate females in the society whom would serve as illiterate mothers someday that could paralyze the whole society in sense of education. (Aslam, 2007)

In recent past, the wastage regarding female education was at its greatest possible hike that needed to be addressed at emergency basis. The females' wastage in their first few years of lives for their school would exacerbate the already alarming situation of illiterate females. In Pakistan, many cultural and financial limitations that can easily hinder females from getting higher education as for example, social security like harassment, patriarchal family system, unpaid labor at homes, poverty, insufficient fund allocation for girls' education promotion especially in rural communities and many more. Additionally, patriarchal family system, high level of poverty, low-amount allocation for females' education, gender discrimination at every level of the society add fuel to the burning stove in Pakistan. Females' education in Pakistan is at its lowest possible level due to these above-mentioned factors. (Aslam, 2007, Khalid & Mukhtar 2002).

researches has been increased manifolds that are the direct result of discrimination against women since centuries. The case is simple; women have been kept deprived of education in these centuries due to all above discussed factors. And gender inequality in education; its causes and repercussions has got the attention of numerous modern researches and, with the same enthusiasm, different faculties have contributed to this phenomenon at great level in the country. In the sociological point of view, education pays for increase in women's status, efficacy at workplaces and perfect ability to deal with their respective societies. According to UN charter, education is the basic human right of every human-being irrespective of sex, race, religion or region. At the same time, complete human capital development can never be achieved without well-educated females in every respective society across the world (Heise et al. 1999).

Socio-cultural factors prevent girls from attending mixed school beyond the primary level, as well as single gender school at distance. Lack of single gender schools also been reported as a major deterrent to the girls' continuation into middle and high schools concluded that gender gap in illiteracy can be reduced by 40 percent in rural Pakistan if gender gaps in primary education were eliminated. Holmes. (Breen, 2003 & Goldthrope.1997).

Ghaus in 1996 analyzed the demand for child schooling in Pakistan and as well as focused on the two potential sources of bias in the estimation of the demand for schooling. Study shows that distance to primary school was not significant as a cause of drop out, however the distance to middle and high schools affected the schooling of both the sexes. Overall the distance to middle schools was a more important factor influencing girls schooling compared to males. (Ghulam R. 2007 & Rehman, 2009).

However, contrast to the findings of Ghaus, some researchers such as Burki, S. J. in 2005 had found that the closest the school is from home in distance the higher the enrollment of girls in school is. He considered having a school at 1 km had a positive and significant effect on the primary school attendance; however, this is only the case which is applicable to rural girls only.

#### **Methodology:**

This research is exploratory in nature which explores the parent's perceptions towards female education in district Killa Abdullah Primary data collected to find out the cause and effect of decisions regarding female education in district and its consequences. Apart from reviewing relevant literatures household level data collected to analyze. 160 Households which were selected through purposive sampling and random sampling methods in district Killa Abdullah was collected and analyzed to build opinion while applying Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This software is used to find out the difference and relationships between different variables.

#### **Research Question:**

To know about parent's perceptions towards female education in district Killa Abdullah and reasons/barriers girls facing in acquiring education.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**

#### **Respondent profile**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
18 – 26	12	7.6
27-32	27	16.5
33-40	73	45.7
Above	48	30
<b>Qualification</b>		
Illiterate	75	46.8
Primary	35	21.8
Secondary	15	9.3
Matriculation	16	10
Intermediate	8	5
Bachelors	11	6.8

<b>Family type wise distribution</b>		
Nuclear	19	11.8
Joint	101	63.2
Extended	40	25
<b>Occupation wise distribution</b>		
Self-employee	40	25
Government employee	17	10.4
Private employee	31	19
Agriculture	73	45.6
<b>Income based distribution( Rupees PKR )</b>		
Less than or equal to 20,000	91	58
21,000-30,000	29	18
31,000-40,000	14	8.7
More than 41,000	26	16.3
<b>Family members-based distribution</b>		
6-10	17	10.6
11-15	44	27.5
16-20	78	48.4
Above	20	12.5
<b>Parents who allow their children to get education</b>		
Yes	40	25
No	120	75
<b>Distribution based who consider early marriage impede female Education</b>		
strongly agree	65	40.6
Agree	27	16.8
strongly disagree	10	6.2
Disagree	30	18.6
do not know	28	17

This study revealed that in Killa Abdullah bazar, 46.8% of total respondents were illiterate and 21% were primary educated. Lack of education in parents causes the lack of importance of education among population of Killa Abdullah bazar. 44% of the male children enrollment found in government institutes, while, 28% of the female children were found enrolled in government institutes. Moreover, 28% male children were admitted in traditional madrassah schools, while, 44% female children were admitted in madrassah schools by their parents. This large amount of percent difference shows gender discrimination against females shown by their parents/guardians in this traditional society. Respondents regarding about purdah, 21.3% of the respondents strongly agreed and 52% of the respondents simply agreed to it. Whereas, 11.3% strongly disagreed and 6.7% disagreed while 8.7% were of the view that they do not know. Moreover, 75% of the respondents were against the female education, while, only 25% in the favor of female education.

This discrimination shows that future of females in Killa Abdullah bazar is in dark and it needs state level work to change the fate of these women. Low income is another major cause of low enrollment in study area however, having low income still parents prefer only education of male rather than female as they cannot afford to educate their all children.

Unfortunately, in Killa Abdullah bazar people were found ignorant enough regarding the women's participation in economic uplift in family affairs. Only 14.5% respondents redounded positively that educated women would uplift their families economically. The rest of the percent was either against it or not aware to grasp the essence of this question. This is very serious issue that needs to be tackled in Killa Abdullah bazar timely.

However, luckily 51% of the respondent were found awaked who agreed that poverty was one of the reasons that hindered female from getting education. Response regarding poverty result tells that 6.6% of the respondents with the frequency of 10 strongly agreed while 52% of the respondents merely agreed. Out of total population, 12.7% disagreed and 28.7% were of the view that they do not know. In results, it was found that lack of government and private transportation played a very disappointing role to hinder females of Killa Abdullah bazar from education. In this regard, 68% of the respondents felt the need of easily accessible transport and they agreed that both public and private transports were very necessary for females' education.

Presently 23million children are out of schools in Pakistan, the scenario is even worst in Balochistan. As only FATA is lagging behind Balochistan in literacy rate. Overall literacy rate in Pakistan is 58% and 42% of its people are even deprived of getting basic education. This phenomenon is worst for girls as more than 50% girls are out-of-schools among these 23million children. Similarly, girls in Balochistan face the worst kind of marginalization where a well-do-family's son can be a PhD, but his sister would be illiterate due to many factors that are elaborated in detail above.

In this research, researcher pondered upon the modern education, and its importance and benefits for the girls and their society. In a society where gender discrimination is at its highest possible level, only modern education could play a positive role to bring gender equality in it. But there are many responsible factors that keep the girls at bay from getting education in research area and other rural areas of Pakistan. In Killa Abdullah a great many people show soft corner to their traditional norms and values. These traditional norms and values are against female education. So, these people are keeping them out of schools and getting their early marriage. In this sense, these people instruct their females to do household chores and they think that females' education is of no value as they are leaving their parental homes after getting married.

In Pakistan, rural areas are being controlled firmly by patriarchal system that hinders females from modern education. As patriarchal system considers only male dominancy in every aspect of life. Similarly, caste system also restricts females from getting education as some castes are rigid enough to let their females out of homes and do some good for their own and society by getting education.

Additionally, Veiling (Purdah) is another responsible factor in Killa Abdullah bazar that makes the females deprived of getting education. In this area, the females are confined to the boundaries of their homes 24 hours. And, they cannot roam in the bazar to get daily use things and education. Here, females are only allowed to go out of homes when they need physician that visit would also be accompanied by male member of the family.

low-income scenario also plays the role to keep females out of the schools. In Killa Abdullah bazar majority of the people are living under the poverty line that means they hardly manage three-time food daily. This means that these people are not giving attention to females' education as they are busy 24-hours round to feed their stomach. Because they are unable to afford expensive females' education. Everyone knows that education needs sound economic status for pursuance of educational courses that does not fall under the economic capacity of these majority of the people who are living under the poverty line. As mentioned earlier, these people are even managing their lively food very difficultly so complete education for their girls is even impossible for them to manage.

### **Conclusion:**

In modern times, education is necessary for development and prosperity of any nation. It is the only way through which all the nations can get the art of living in a successful method. In economic perspective, economic prosperity can only be achieved through well-educated children of a society. In the same way, educated women double the economic growth of a society as it is widely observed in developed countries. As these developed countries are of the motto that "Education for all with irrespective of Gender". While, parental perception for female education in Killa Abdullah was found very strange and ignorant. Majority of the parents who responded in this research were either against female education or against it. They were found unaware regarding the importance of female education. As this region is much tribal and traditional, so the government was also reported lagging behind in Killa Abdullah to education these females. So, government needs to assist the people of Killa Abdullah on emergency basis for both genders in general and for females particular.

This research observed serious issues in Killa Abdullah bazar that have marginalized women in the fields of education. Because, Killa Abdullah bazar is not much different from other rural areas of Pakistan, it is in rural areas of Balochistan that is really among the backward areas of it. In this regard, uneducated elders never allow their children to get higher education. In this area, it seems that these people are still living in dark ages. The women are extremely ill-treated in this society where we can imagine that they are even not treated as human beings. Government needs to take some immediate serious steps to eradicate these traditional and feudal norms and values.

The conclusion regarding female girls' education in Pakistan is multifaceted. Progress has been made in recent years, but challenges persist, including gender disparities, cultural barriers, and limited access to quality education. Ongoing efforts to address these issues are crucial for fostering equal educational opportunities for girls in Pakistan.

### **Recommendations:**

The following recommendations are suggested to improve girl's education.

#### 1. Community Engagement:

- Establish community forums to raise awareness about the importance of girls' education.
- Involve local leaders, religious figures, and influential community members to advocate for and support girls' schooling.

#### 2. Financial Incentives:

- Provide financial incentives such as scholarships, stipends, or conditional cash transfers to families for sending their girls to school.
- Introduce programs that alleviate economic pressures, addressing the link between poverty and limited access to education.

#### 3. Infrastructure Development:

- Invest in building and upgrading school infrastructure, ensuring that schools are accessible, safe, and equipped with necessary facilities.
- Establish separate, clean, and secure toilets for girls to encourage attendance.

4. Female Teacher Recruitment:

- Actively recruit and train female teachers to address the shortage of female educators in rural areas.
- Create incentives for qualified women to pursue teaching careers, fostering a supportive environment for female students.

5. Awareness Campaigns:

- Launch targeted awareness campaigns emphasizing the long-term benefits of educating girls.
- Use various media channels, community events, and local language materials to reach a wide audience and challenge cultural norms.

6. School Feeding Programs:

- Implement school feeding programs to address nutritional needs, making education more attractive for families struggling with food insecurity.
- Ensure that meals provided are culturally appropriate and meet dietary requirements.

7. Mobile Education Units:

- Introduce mobile education units to reach remote areas, bringing education directly to communities that lack nearby schools.
- Use technology to facilitate learning, especially in areas where establishing permanent schools is challenging.

8. Empowerment Programs:

- Develop programs that empower girls with life skills, vocational training, and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- Emphasize education as a means to break the cycle of poverty and improve overall community well-being.

9. Partnerships with NGOs and Civil Society:

- Collaborate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local civil society groups to implement and support education initiatives.
- Leverage external resources and expertise to enhance the effectiveness of interventions.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Implement robust monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the impact of initiatives.
- Regularly review progress, gather feedback from communities, and adjust strategies based on the evolving needs of the target population.

By combining these recommendations, a holistic and community-driven approach can be taken to promote girls' education in rural areas of Pakistan, addressing various socio-economic and cultural factors that contribute to barriers.

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