

Parental Perception about Female Education: A Descriptive Study of District Pishin

By

Muhammad Din¹, Sadia Barrech², Mohammad Yousuf³

Abstract:

Family plays a pivotal role in the education of its members in general, and the role of parents in female members of family education is specifically of highest significance. This research study focuses the analysis of parental perception regarding female education. The main objective of the study is to explore the obstacles impeding female education and the perception of parents regarding female education. The study has adopted descriptive design and is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative nature. The study has been conducted in Pishin--a prominent district of Balochistan. A total of 300 parent both fathers and mothers were interviewed by selecting them via simple random and cluster sampling techniques. The study data elaborates that a high majority of parents particularly the mothers felt that parents have very important role in the education of their female children. Socio-economic conditions of family, the occupation of parents and family structure highly influence the perception parents regarding female education. Additionally, socio-religious and cultural factors also have direct and indirect effects on parental perception regarding female education. The study suggests policy and operation focused recommendations.

Keywords: Parental Perception, socio-economic, socio-religious, effects, Pishin

Introduction:

In today's global challenging situation, there is a race for success and in this race every individual and every nation have the desire to be most

¹ M.Phil. Scholar, Pakistan Study Centre, University of Balochistan, Quetta. Pakistan
Email: muahmmaddin3@gmail.com

²Sadia Barrech, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, University of Balochistan, Quetta.
Email; sadiabarrech@yahoo.com

³ Lecturer, Department of Social Work, University of Balochistan, Quetta.
Email: usuf.barech@gmail.com

successful by any cost. Education has been considered as most significant tool to be victorious. In families, parents have developed a variety of perceptions about the children in their family. Such perceptions of parents are established by several direct and underlying factors. (Blaug, 1997). The importance of women's role in the process of development was recognized long ago. Women have economic, political and social roles to play. Keeping in view the importance of female education, it is believed that major cause of lagging behind in general, in economic and social progress, in most of the developing countries, including Pakistan is the absence of a higher percentage of educated and technically qualified women (Khattak, 2013).

The backwardness of the society is one of the impacts of poor conditions of female education in Pakistan. Balochistan is the most backward part of Pakistan in term of girl's education. The geographical, economic, political and cultural environment subjugates the female in all spheres of life (Harkness, 1991). But the situation of girl's education is ignored on the academic level as not much work has done to explore the situation of female education in Balochistan.

This study target is to familiarize the subject and to specify the significance of this research. It includes an overview of education in Balochistan as a whole and pacifically in District Pishin, with distinctive situation to girl's education in the tribal society. It provides a general impression regarding the starring role of socio-economic position and the parental involvement in Girl's education as well of the girl's access to learning. This part of the study provides basis for the research by presenting information collected form the literature. This part structured the study as the literature provided with the variables that influenced the perceptions of the parents regarding the girl's education. These variables are applied by the researcher while collecting data regarding parental perception regarding girl's education in district Pishin of Balochistan.

Review of Literature:

Many of the studies have been done regarding the parental response toward the girl's education in the advanced world. Some of the studies are being concluded about the parental response to their daughter's education in Pakistan also.

Universal Picture of Women Education:

Many of works reflect the global position of girl's education. This literature shows women education is facing problems throughout the world. M. Gillet in "*Readings in the History of Education*" stated that the education of women is an old concern. "Not only religious script and folklore but also some of the great philosophers of antiquity have stressed

its importance as cultural imperative. According to Socrates, “if women are to have the same duties as men, they must have the same education” (Gillet, 1969). *National Study of Youth and Religion* provides a comprehensive historical perspective of the female educational development on universal basis. This study highlighted that the women educational development started from 17th century and were materialized in 1787 in the form of the establishment of The Young Ladies Academy and then followed by Pierce’s Litchfield Academy’ in 1792 in US (National Study of Youth and Religion”. At, www.youthandreligion.org/resources).

Linda Eisenmann, in “*A Historical Dictionary of Women’s Education in United States*” focuses over the women education in U.S.A. during 20th century. This study asserted that after many efforts in 1945, the first woman was accepted to Harvard Medical school and women enrolment equal to men in colleges with 51% in 1980, which marked the revolution in the history of women education (Eisenmann, 1998).

Huebler Fariedrich’s work “*Beyond Gender: Measuring Disparity in South Asia using an Education Parity Index*” is dealing with the female education system in the Muslim world. This work guided the current research by providing conceptual framework for the development and adaptation of female education in the Muslim countries of Arabia as well as of South Asian Muslim countries. The work focuses over the female education before the partition of India and also provided with some factual data regarding the female education atmosphere in the modern states after the partition of India. This study serves the current research as it also provided with some factual analysis of the female education in Pakistan (Fariedrich, 2008).

Women Education in Pakistan:

The historical backwardness of the girl’s education was explained by Noorullah, and Naik, in “*A history of education in India*” in these words. This work is useful source as it provided the historical account of the educational development in pre partitioned India. Beside this work also accounted the educational setup of Pakistan and provides useful analysis. (Noorullah and Naik, 1951).

Maryam Tariq’s “*Educational Empowerment of Women: Case study of Khyber Pukhtunkhawa (KPK)*”, not only accounted the women education in KPK but also provided information about the education system of Pakistan. Education is most important for females due to the fact that it helps the women get mature, practical and strong in decision making. Education has its short and long term impacts on the life of women in all walks of life such as employment, health, education, politics, or any other aspect of life. (Tariq, 2016). M Anita Weissin his research;

“*Benazir Bhutto and the Future of Women in Pakistan*”, provided a worse picture of girl’s education and women empowerment in Pakistan. According to M Anita Weiss, “it is widely presumed that higher levels of female literacy have an inverse effect on women’s fertility, a sobering thought, especially when placed in the context of a country with one of the world’s highest population rates”(Weiss, 1999).

Zia Shehla & Farzana Bari, in “*Baseline Report on Women’s Participation in Political & Public Life in Pakistan*” provided a comprehensive picture of the women life in Pakistan. this study provided that some of the reasons why Pakistan has slow growth rates and in 20 years i.e. from 1952-1972 the total growth in female literacy in the country was just 3% which improved to 16% by 1981. This 16% literacy rate further rose up to 20.9% in 1990-91 and according to the Economic Survey of Pakistan; it was again the lowest in the world. (Shehla and Bari, 1999). In this sense this book consists of much useful data regarding the educational setup and provided statistical analysis of the women education in Pakistan.

Beside this to cross check the authenticity of the statistics; Fazal Shaheed and Kareem Mumtaz, in *Women’s Economic Participation in Pakistan: a Status Report* also provided analysis on the basis of statistical data. They asserted that the situation in Pakistan reflects the negligence of the concerned authorities and non-seriousness of the society toward the basic requirement for development which is education. (Shaheed and Mumtaz, 1990). Government of Pakistan’s “Compendium on Gender Statistics in Pakistan”, *Statistics compiled from 2004 Data*, not only provided the authentic data but also provided the state perspective of the girl’s education in Pakistan.

Girl’s Education in Balochistan:

Samina Naz, in her research work “*The status of female education in rural Balochistan*” highlighted the problems of education with special focus to girls. This work narrates the problems and prospects of women education in Balochistan. This work is useful source for the current study as it guides the current research in directing research dimensions. This study also helps in understanding the importance of parental response for girl’s education in the tribal society.

Chief Minister’s Policy Reform Unit’s report “*State of School Education in Balochistan: An Analysis*”, is another authentic source which analysis the state response and vision toward education in Balochistan. This report is useful source as it has statistical data which helps the current study by providing facts regarding girl’s education in Balochistan. This report provided data about every district of Balochistan. in this sense it

become more useful for the current study as it also provides figures about district Pishin.

There are many works which reflect the relation of the tribal culture of Balochistan and the conditions of female education in Balochistan. Although these sources are useful but here the researcher included the work of the researcher of Balochistan. in this respect Barkat Shah Kakar, Usman Tobwal, Kaleemullah Bareach & S.R. Sultan, provided a teamwork research “*Social and Cultural Barrier to female Education in Balochistan; An Assessment study with focus on district Pishin*”. This research highlighted the problems of female education in Balochistan. The beauty of this work is the cultural understandings of the society. This study analysis the cultural factors associated with female education in Balochistan. This work serves the study as it guided the research in many ways from dimensions to limitations.

Paterson’s *Women's empowerment in challenging environments: a case study from Balochistan* and the report of Vision 21 Foundation. “*Balochistan Problems and Solutions*”, also provided some data and guidance for the current research. These literatures also highlight the cultural aspects of the female education related issues. Beside these works the researchers H. Sarparah and A. R. Sabir, in their research “*Scenography of Nomadic Life in Brahui Haiku*”, focuses the nomadic life of the people of Balochistan with specification of the Brahui tribe of Balochistan.

The above mentioned literature provides the conceptual framework for the study. But none of the study targeted parental response with special focus to district Pishin. The current study getting guide from the above literature describes the parental response toward female education in district Pishin,

Girl’s Education in District Pishin:

The government of Balochistan report of 2014 shows that 80-90% children are in school in district Pishin. This marked the education level of the district in a good position as compare to other districts of Balochistan. The report also stated that Pishin is one of the three districts of Balochistan where private schools are functioning. The district Pishin possess educational infrastructure as the report stated that in term of number of Primary Schools Pishin is marked with 2nd position in Balochistan with 752 primary schools. Similarly the District Pishin is marked as with highest numbers of Middle schools (109) and marked as third position for the number of High schools (34) among the districts of Balochistan (CMPRU, 2014).

The female education remains a problem in the district as the report highlighted that the female teacher ratio in high schools stands 32 and student to teacher ratio stands 1: 17. To proceed for the subject it is important to analyse some of the facts about the education of District Pishin. In district Pishin Government, Private and Community schools are working to provide education for the children. The enrolment of the number of the students in government schools placed District Pishin in 7th position in the province. The report shows that 67% of the children are being enrolled in the government schools, while 20% are being enrolled in Private sector schools which also include Madrassas. The report also provided with the fact that 9.8% children were never enrolled in any type of School while 3.8% of the children dropout from schools (CMPRU, 2014). These above facts regarding the child education were never tried to interpret to identify the problem of the backwardness of the education level and more significantly the girl's education was left ignorant. The enrolment data shows the ignorance of the girl's education as it is evident from the following.

The enrolment data shows a clear difference among the male and female education in Pishin. The enrolment in primary schools indicated that 14845 girls were enrolled in 2008-9, which was 38.7%. Similarly the 2009-10 and 2010-11 enrolment shows decrease in percentage enrolment of the girls, which was 15006 by number and 38% of the total, similar was the enrolment of 2010-11 (14680 which was 38% of the total enrolment) (CMPRU, 2014). This data require be interpreting and analysing to find out the causes of the decrease of enrolment of girls in District Pishin. On the other side the enrolment of girls in Middle schools shows little satisfactory situation in term of gender enrolment.

Total of 6214 girls were enrolled in 2008-2009, which was 40.7% of the total enrolment. In 2009-2010 the girl's enrolment shows more positive results with total number of 7349, which was 45.2% of the total enrolment in middle schools in district Pishin. But the enrolment of girls in high school shows again dissatisfactory situations. In 2008-9 totals number of the enrolled girls was 2825 (21.9%), which shows further percentile decline till 2010-11, as in it was 21.6% (CMPRU, 2014).

The facts show multi-dimensional issues and hurdles in girl's education in the district Pishin. Although these will be analysed in the conceptual framework work of the study but it here it is worth mentioning that it involves socio-economic, socio-religious and socio-political aspects of the prevailing system in district Pishin. The next part of this study opted to conceptualize the subject and provide limitations and dimensions for research.

Objectives of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to analyse the perception of parents about female education, however, the specific objectives are;

- To explore the problems and obstacles impeding female education.
- To elaborate the perception of parents regarding female education.

Research Methodology;

Actually the nature of the study is descriptive; therefore, it requires a mix method approach in order to reach into the depth of the issue. The universe of the study was district Pishin, of Balochistan province. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis was conducted for this study by collecting and analyzing secondary and primary data. Secondary data was sought out from previous researches, papers, articles, books, government reports, documents, and e-resources. While primary data was collected from parents belongs to various professions like government servant, shopkeepers, formers, households etc. among these parents government officials (128), shopkeepers (17), formers (60), daily wages (25) and households (70) were interviewed directly as well as indirectly through discussion and structured questionnaire. Random sampling technique was applied to get reliable data. Mustered data was processed and analyzed through SPSS which helped in drawing solid conclusions.

Results and Discussion:**Classification of the Data:**

Interviews are conducted in different parts of district Pishin, in which 300 parents were questioned to know their perceptions regarding female education in their respective cultural, economic and social boundaries. Before analyzing their perceptions, it is important to classify them into groups with respect to their gender, profession etc. Three hundred parents were interviewed which includes 205 male and 95 female parents.

Classification of the Parents by Profession:

The classification of parents on the basis of their profession is highlighted in following lines.

Regarding their response most of the educated parents whether male or female responded in positive way toward girl's education. 95 of the Fathers and 19 of the Mothers from government servant responded in positive way and asserted that girl's education in as compulsory as that of boys. While the remaining 14 government servant parents (8 male and 6 female), shows negative response toward female education. Regarding the response of the parents associated with shop keeping presented a mix response. 5 of them supported girl's education while 6 of them show clear

denial of girl's education. The remaining 6 shop holder parents responded that girl's should be given education just to enable them to understand wright and wrong in their lives, and declined further education under the influence of culture.

Most of the former parents were not in the support of girl's education as 43 of them denied to educate their daughters by asserting many socio-cultural obligations and even some of these formers denied girl's education on religious grounds. On the other hand 17 of the former parents supported girl's education and regarded it as significant element and right of the female life in modern world. One of the significant portions of the parents was those whom are dealing with house hold, which makes 24% of the total sample. The male parents from the Household portion completely agreed that girls should also be given education so that to help themselves, their family and even the society

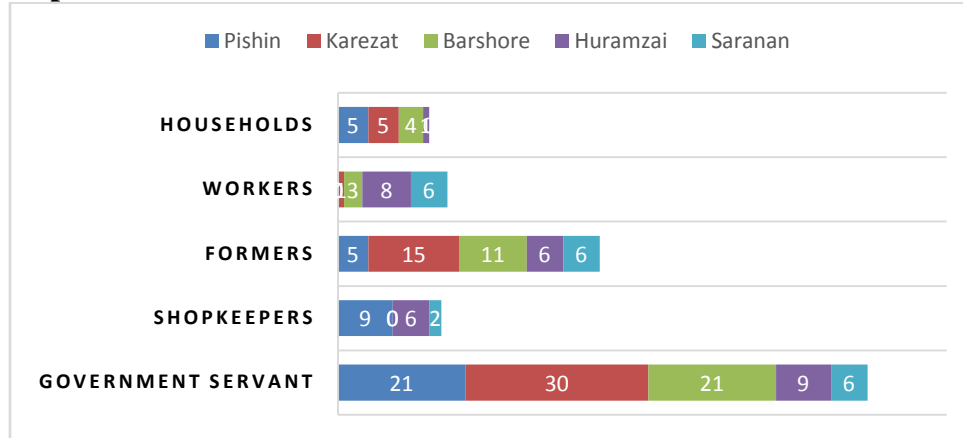
Parental Responses on Effects of Socio-economic/Financial Position of Family and & Socio-religious and Cultural Factors on Female Education.

Economy:

The economy of the people of district Pishin is based on agriculture and services. Apart from these two sources trading and shop-keeping also mark considerable portion of the economy. Beside this some people are involved in mining and some in animal grazing, but that make a considerable portion of the society. On this behalf the economic power of the people of district Pishin vary from person to person and from one part to other. Overall the economic condition of the people placed them at the bottom of middle class or at the top of lower class on the basis of income.

The data presents the views of fathers regarding financial position of the family and socio-economic structure of society, which influences their perceptions toward female education. The data indicates that 88% of the male parents believe that female education is effected by socio-economic structure of society and financial position of the family. These parents include 87 educated and government servant whom had a good experience of the education and its need. Figure 1 and 2 presents that 77% of the interviewed parents regarded weak economy of the family as one of the most powerful obstacle impeding female education in the district.

Figure 1: Socio-economic/financial position of family and parental response

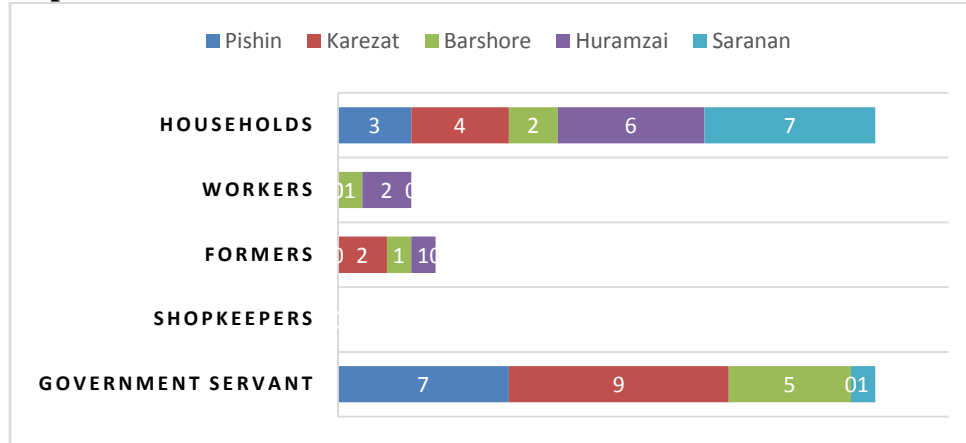


Source: Field Survey

It is interesting that male parents from all the interviewed profession regarded economy as the most important factor for education. The educated as well the formers asserted that instead of financial position of the family the economic structure of the society plays more important role in female education. They criticized the economic structure of the society where educated women are given little opportunity to help their families by adding their shares in the income of the family.

However, on the parts of mothers the response was cooler as compare to fathers, while mother responses which are affected by the financial position of the family or economic structure of the society. The data indicates that 51 mothers regarded financial position of the family or economic structure of the society as the influencing factor.

Figure 2: Socio-economic/financial position of family and parental response



Source: Field Survey

The above figure enclosed the perceptions of educated as well as uneducated mothers. But not like fathers assertion they regarded financial position of the family as the stronger obstacle impeding female education in District Pishin.

Responding the perceptions of the parents for girl's education the economy plays a vital role, as it always influenced the parental as well the societal perception regarding female. Mr. Naseer told that, most of the parents wanted to educate their children but economy matters. When I asked him that many of the parents did not responded positively toward girl's education not because of economy but of culture or religious prevailing values, he agreed me but provided with explanation. He explained that, many of the religious scholars are providing education for their daughters but many limits their daughters to religious education only. He reasoned that it is just because of economy as modern education cost money while religious education is mostly free in the district.

However, the study classifies the parental response with respect to the established dimensions. The perceptions of the interviewees reflect that economy influences 77% of the parental response toward girl's education. Assignment of huge percentage is caused by as economy directly influences the remaining factors also. Ignoring the other dimensions correlated with economy the economy will be the least influencing element in parental perceptions regarding girl's education in district Pishin.

Socio-Religious Culture and Parental Response:

The society of District Pishin, where the religious elites show negative attitude toward female education. Table 3 and 4 presents parental perceptions under the influence of socio-religious culture of the society. The data presents that 70% of the parents regarded socio-religious culture with negative attitude toward female education in the district.

Table 3. Socio-Religious culture and Parental Response

Administrative Distribution of Male						
Profession	Pishin	Karezat	Barshore	Huramzai	Saranan	Total
Government Servant	32	40	21	11	06	110
Shopkeepers	03	04	01	00	01	09
Formers	01	03	02	00	00	06
Workers	01	01	03	01	01	07
Households	05	17	04	02	05	33
Total	42	65	31	14	13	165

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows the assertion of 165 fathers, which is 80% of the total interviewed male parents. Most of the educated male parents believe that in the district religious norms are misinterpreted by the religious elites. The common people have very little knowledge of the religious teaching of Islam regarding female rights, which further worsened the situation of female education in the district.

However, the female presents similar views but due to their close attachments with the prevailing socio-religious norms they were less critical. 45 mothers criticised the prevailing socio-religious norms regarding female education in the district, which makes 47% of the total. Table 4 presents the responses of mothers influenced by socio-religious culture of the District Pishin.

Table 4. Socio-Religious culture and Parental Response

Administrative Distribution of Female						
Profession	Pishin	Karezat	Barshore	Huramzai	Saranan	Total
Government Servant	07	09	05	00	01	22
Shopkeepers	00	00	00	00	00	00
Formers	00	00	00	00	00	00
Workers	02	02	01	00	00	05
Households	04	07	02	02	03	18
Total	13	18	08	02	04	45

Source: Field Survey

Although Islam regarded education as compulsory for both male and female but agreed with the collected information from the parents, women are ignored especially in the field of education in District Pishin.

Conclusion:

The most significant factor that influences parental response is “ Socio-cultural values” the prevailing cultural values influences the perceptions of all the parents, regardless of their level of education, social status and income. This was accompanied by Patriarchal Structure of Society, which not only restricted female to homes but also curbs basic rights of girl’s including educational rights. Besidethese Socio-Economic conditions also affected the parental response in both positive and negative way. The rich parents relate their Socio-economic conditions with cultural values and believe that no education is required for their daughters. The poor parents show positive attitude under the influence of Socio-economic conditions, as they believe that educated daughter has more opportunities for having a safe and happy life.

Financial position of parents is one of the most effecting factor of parental response, as the parents with weak financial position could not support their daughter’s education. The impacts of financial position are multiplies with the cultural values and leading way for the early marriages of girls. This further influences parental response as they stats to believe that education is not important for their daughters instead of education they have to learn the household activities.

Socio-religious prevailing religious beliefs also influences the parental response in negative way regarding girl's education in the district. The illiterate parents perceive girl's education as against their religious thoughts. Beside the above factors the early marriage culture of girls and misconception of the co-education also affect the girl's education especially higher education. These factors influence the parental response negatively and produce hurdles for girl's education in the district Pishin.

On the social context, the social elite i.e. religious elite, cultural elite and the educated elite; must come forward to solve the issues of the girl's education in the district Pishin. The religious elite must take the responsibility to correct the perceptions of male regarding the rights of women; through their influence in society. The religious elite occupy a special position in the society, which makes their actions and thoughts worthy. Their oral actions can mold the parental response toward positivity regarding girl's education in the district.

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