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Parents' Attitude towards their Children's Education: A Survey

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Abstract

Attitude is crucial for success in personal and professional life. Parental attitude refers to parents' perspective on their child, influencing their choices, actions, and personality. Supportive or suppressive parenting attitudes can impact children's flourishing. An appropriate attitude includes hope and reasonable expectations. The current study was designed to identify the parents' attitude towards education of their male and female children in Bahawalpur, Pakistan. The study was descriptive in nature. The study was delimited to the parents of certain urban and rural areas from district Bahawalpur due to shortage of time and resources which consists of urban as well as rural areas. For this study, 391 parents were randomly selected as a sample. The collected data was entered into SPSS software for analysis. Later on, the data analysis was exported to the word office to tabulate correctly. First of all frequency and percentage were calculated and T-test was used for comparing the data. The results of the study indicated that parents give equal importance to the education of their male and female children. Parents don't consider girls source of earning. On the other hand, some parents are broad minded in the provision of higher education to their girls and some examples were noted by the researchers. It was also found that the daughters earn money for their family members. It was recommended that parents should pay full attention to their male and female children. The researchers' conclusion with suggestions and recommendations was also summed up at the end of the study.

Key Words: Attitude, Education, Attention, Responses, Hope.

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

Education is vital for achieving long-term national development goals and improving social and economic standards. Advancements in information and communication technologies have made education even more important. The quality of education provided to citizens, regardless of gender or area, is essential for a nation's prosperity and wellbeing. The quality of human resources and education level drive socio-economic development. Society's need for education is to keep cultural values alive and transfer them to future generations. Education is crucial for sustainable development, growth and social parity. It facilitates exploration and adaptation processes, ensuring societal wellbeing. Primary schooling plays a significant role in socialization and instilling basic life principles. However, gender inequalities persist in education worldwide, with women often not receiving equal opportunities. Factors such as gender, religion, economic status, age and geographical location affect female education. In Pakistan, parents often prefer sons over daughters, fearing they may interfere in decision-making and are economically dependent on men. Therefore, education is a basic human right for every child. Girls and women are often entrusted with household responsibilities, care for children and participate in economic activities without remuneration. Men, on the other hand, earn income and protect the family from violence. This situation benefits men economically, denying women the right to education. In the 21st century, policy initiatives focus on addressing women's issues, eliminating discrimination and enhancing women's capabilities and participation in economic and social activities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to identify the attitude of the parents towards education of their children in Bahawalpur and to explore whether their perceptions show significant differences with respect to certain background variables. More specifically, parent's perception of benefits of girl's education and barriers to girl's education were examined.

Statement of the Problem

The current study indicates that parental involvement positively impacts children's academic performance but further study is needed to understand the additional aspects which contribute to this impact.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were:

1. To identify the attitude of parents towards the education of their male and female children.
2. To determine the bias for education of their male and female children in parents.
3. To find out significant difference between parent's attitude towards education of their male and female children in urban and rural areas.
4. To explore the problems which affect the education of female children.
5. To give suitable suggestions to parents for improvement of girl's education.

Research Questions

The following were the research questions of the study:

1. What is the attitude of parents towards the education of their male and female children"
2. Is there any bias for education of their male and female children in parents?
3. What are the differences between parent's attitude towards their children in urban and rural areas?
4. What are the problems which affect the education of female children?

Significance of the Study

The study highlights the importance of parents' involvement in their children's education, highlighting the need for improvement in Pakistani education system. It emphasizes the role parents play in resolving academic problems and enhancing their attitude towards children's education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nature of Education

Education is a fundamental human right and governments have a responsibility to make it accessible to all citizens, contributing to economic development and social wellbeing. Female

education is equally righteous, as it can help reduce unemployment and improve decision-making. However, in developing countries, female education faces challenges such as transportation, social and cultural issues, and demographical issues. Islam does not condone female education, but it is a binding responsibility for all Muslims. Pakistan ranks low in the Global Gender Gap index, and addressing these issues requires concerted efforts from government authorities, private sector, NGOs, and media. Addressing basic issues like transportation, teacher training, curriculum upgrades, and the establishment of separate female institutions can help build confidence in female education.

Education for All

In today's globalized world, equal access to education is crucial for a better and happier life for individuals, regardless of cultural background. Education not only contributes to personal growth but also to society and nation as a whole. As part of the UNESCO initiative, we should strive to achieve equal access to education worldwide. Education holds essential benefits for mankind, including alleviating poverty, promoting economic and financial prosperity, and saving lives in unsuitable growing up circumstances. It also helps young people avoid mistakes due to lack of information and discussions. The right to education is an inherent human right, encompassing primary, secondary, and higher education. Technical and vocational education contributes to eradicating unemployment and creating a skilled workforce. Education also contributes to global peace and harmony among nations, as ignorance leads to extremism and non-tolerance. Therefore, it is our obligation to provide children with free basic education for a better, safe, and secure world.

Importance of Female Education

Education is a fundamental need for development, and women's active participation is crucial for sustainable development. Despite efforts, female education levels remain low in developing countries, with lower literacy rates and higher dropout rates. Education is essential for the family, as well as for the overall living standard. Educated women are competent in many fields, contributing to a prosperous family. A well-educated mother can provide a better environment for her child's growth and education. Providing education to every woman should be a top priority for governments. Parents should be encouraged to invest in

their daughters' education rather than dowry. By removing discrimination on female education, population growth rates can be controlled. It is time for individuals, civil society, and governments to work together to expand and promote women's education in the best interest of the nation.

Female Education in Islam

Gender inequality is a common accusation against Islam, with educational opportunities often being a primary example of this disparity. Education is seen as a crucial factor in determining a society's economic, social, and political advancement, and if over fifty percent of the population is denied this basic fundamental right, human rights activists may seek reasons for this disparity. Religion, particularly Islam, is cited as a major stumbling block for women's advancement, as studies have shown that women's acquisition of knowledge is often opposed in many parts of Africa and South East Asia. Islam emphasizes the importance of knowledge acquisition, as highlighted in over five hundred places in the Holy Qur'an. Prophet-hood involves the dissemination of knowledge and wisdom to all, with four out of five duties directly discussing knowledge. However, if the doors of acquiring knowledge are closed for women or unjustified restrictions are imposed, they may struggle to understand the nature of the verses revealed to them and attain the wisdom and hikma that Allah Almighty wished them to know through the Holy Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him). The Holy Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) also stated that acquisition of knowledge is binding on all Muslims, both men and women without discrimination. He made special arrangements for the education and training of women, demonstrating that the acquisition of knowledge is obligatory for both men and women.

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reports that some women asked the Holy Prophet to set a special day for them to acquire knowledge. The Prophet fixed this day, and he would meet them, advise, and educate them about the commandments of Allah Almighty. 'A'isha al-Siddiqah, the mother of the faithful, was a hadith-narrator, scholar, intellectual, and jurist who reported 2,210 traditions. This demonstrates that women could not only teach women but also men after fulfilling certain preconditions. The concept of knowledge in Islam covers a broad spectrum of subjects, including biology, sociology, and the creation of the universe. It is important to note that the Qur'an explains the Islamic concept of knowledge as being vast and inclusive, not just restricted to traditional religious sciences. Another misnomer is the view that women are only allowed to gain

knowledge from female teachers and that instruction from men is prohibited due to the demands of purdah. However, Islam is based on practical reality, and there is no stipulation that only women can teach other women or a bar regarding male teachers for women. If the rules of attire and dress are properly observed, men can teach female students under Sharia. Those who argue against women leaving the home in pursuit of knowledge are also severely misguided. Allah Almighty states that women must keep their eyes lowered and guard their chastity, and they must not show off their adornments and beautification except that which becomes visible itself.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Major objectives of the study were to identify the attitude of the parents towards the education of their male and female children, to determine the bias for education of their male and female children from parents, to find out significant difference between parents attitude towards their children with respect to urban and rural areas, to explore the problems which effects the girls education, to give suitable suggestion to parents for improvement of girls education.

The study was descriptive and quantitative in nature. Method adopted for gathering data from male and female parents was survey method. Descriptive studies are conducted to study the present and past situation of something which is under the study. So this study was an attempt to find the real position of the attitude of parents towards education of their male and female children, whether there is any inequality is present or not.

Validation and Reliability of Research Tool

On the basis of expert opinion about questionnaire 22 items were finalized to collect information from the parents of children at secondary level. Construct of the questionnaire was based on their attitude toward their children's academics and their performance. The information about age, gender, qualification, occupation was also included in questionnaire items as demographics. For determining the internal consistency of items in research instrument, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated. These results were analyzed by using software package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Reliability of the questionnaire was 0.735. The details of factors wise reliability of this table.

Table 3.1 Reliability of Research Instrument

Sr. No.	Factors	Item No.	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Equal importance	1,2	0.807
2	Brain wave for girls education	9,15,17,13,22	0.725
3	Big idea about boys education	6,18,10,12	0.792
4	Financial problems	4,20,19,5,16,8,21	0.720
5	General opinions about girls education	3,14,7,11	0.635

Sample of the Study

No doubt, the data collection from all population is impossible so that's why sampling is adopted. For this study 391 parents were randomly selected as a sample from certain areas of urban and rural areas from Bahawalpur, Pakistan. Then parents were divided further into groups on the basis of education, profession and income for better understanding the factors which effect the education of male and female education. During the data collection the researchers got help from friends and family to distribute the questionnaire due to unfavorable circumstances.

Administration of Research Tool and Collecting the Data

After finalizing the research tool the researchers went to the selected area and met the parents for the purpose of their research study. For this purpose, the researchers got help of family and friends.

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Table.1 Parents Opinions about Equal Importance

Sr. No.	Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach's Alpha
1	1	Parents give equal importance to boys and girls in education.	.833		
2	2	Parents select institution of same quality for boys and girls	.769	12.794	0.807

Table 1 shows construct items related to parents' opinions about equal importance Factor loading is given against each item. Variance explained was 12.794 Parents give equal importance to boys and girls in education and institution of same quality for boys and girls were included in said factor. The value of Cronbach's Alpha was 0.807

Table.2 Parents opinions about brain wave for girls education

Sr. No.	Item No.	Statement	<i>Factor Loading</i>	Variance Explained	Cronbach's Alpha
1	9	Separate coaching facilities for girls can improve female education	.711		
2	15	Girls should have freedom to choice their area of study	.579		
3	17	Girls should have the opportunity to go out of city for higher education	.551		
4	13	Parents should provide internet facilities to their girls for education purpose	.485	8.963	0.725
5	22	Proper implementation of women harassment act can improve girls education	.455		

Table 2 shows construct items related to parents' opinions about brain wave for girls' education. Factor loading is given against each item. Variance explained was 8.963 separate coaching facilities for girls can improve female education, freedom to choice their area of study, the opportunity to go out of city for higher education, provide internet facilities to their girls for education purpose and proper implementation of women harassment act can improve girls education were included in said factor. The value of Cronbach's Alpha was 0.725

Table 3 Parents opinions about big idea about boys education

Sr. No.	Item No.	Statement	<i>Factor Loading</i>	Variance Explained	Cronbach's Alpha
1	6	Parents choose English medium schools for boys instead of girls	.517		
2	18	Parents prefer boys education for their better employment opportunities	.513		
3	10	Parents provide additional coaching facilities to boys	.406	8.404	0.792
4	12	Parents proudly discuss the education achievement of their boys	.370		

Table 3 shows construct items related to parents' opinion about big idea about boys' education. Factor loading is given against each item. Variance explained was 8.404. Parents choose English medium schools for boys instead of girls, better employment opportunities, provide additional coaching facilities to boys and proudly s the education achievement of their boys were included in said factor. The value discuss of Cronbach's Alpha was 0.792.

Table 4 Parents opinions about financial problems

Sr. No.	Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach's Alpha
1	4	Parents hesitate to spend money on the education of girls	.739		
2	20	You think that girls can improve domestic income through education	.712		
3	19	Number of children causes the hurdle in education of girls	.690		
4	5	Parents don't provide higher education to girls because of their marriage/marital status	.644	7.521	0.720
5	16	Household responsibilities are given preference over education for girls	.577		
6	8	Financial issue play role in the education of girls and boys	.550		
7	21	Girls provide financial assistance to their parents after getting proper education	.512		

Table 4 shows construct items related to parents' opinion about financial problems. Factor loading is given against each item. Variance explained was 7.521. Parents hesitate to spend money on the education for girls, improve domestic income through education, number of children causes the hurdle in education of girls, parents don't provide higher education to girls because of their marriage / marital status, household responsibilities were given preference over education for girls, financial issue play role in the education of girls and boys and financial assistance to their parents after getting proper education were included in said factor. The value of Cronbach's Alpha was 0.720.

Table 5 Parents opinions about general opinion about girls education

Sr. No.	Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach's Alpha
1	3	Parents hesitate to send girls to school due to social atmosphere	.669		
2	14	Girls are under the pressure of family honor	.594		
3	7	Parents give full moral support to girls in education	.494	.6936	0.635
4	11	Poor transport facilities is a major problem for girls education in rural areas	.437		

Table 5 shows construct Hems related to parents' opinion about general opinion about girls education Factor loading is given against each item Variance explained was 6.936. parents hesitate to send girls to school due to social atmosphere, girls were under the pressure of family honor, moral support to girls in education and poor transport facilities was a major problem for girls education in rural areas were included in said factor. The value of Cronbach's Alpha was 0.635.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigates parents' attitudes towards their children's education in Bahawalpur, focusing on factors such as facilities, educational expenses, and parental performance. The research found that most parents provided computers and internet access, but some argued against it. The study found that parents behaviors whether related to home or school environments affected children's academic achievement. While attitudes were generally similar, some parents had rigid attitudes towards education. Positive parental behavior positively impacted children's academic achievement, while non-supportive behavior negatively affected them. Although parents were not as involved in their children's academic matters as teachers, their involvement was crucial for their success and progress.

CONCLUSION, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Education is crucial for a successful life and parents' duties regarding children's education are becoming increasingly important. Appreciation from parents for good performance is crucial for better results. However, parental investment attitudes often favor boys, reducing children's aspirations for education. This study analyzed various aspects of parent behavior including

personal attachments and discrimination towards girls. In Asian countries like Pakistan, parents treat all children equally but there is a rigid belief in discrimination against female children. Poverty, financial issues, cultural trends and domestic needs also hinder female education. To overcome these challenges, education should be free or arranged as stipends for girls in schools. The study found that parents' attitudes significantly impact their children's academic achievement. Key behaviors include paying educational expenses, evaluating results, providing a peaceful home environment, treating children equally and attending school meetings. Parents give equal importance to both genders but may differ due to factors like social atmosphere, traditional trends, financial issues and domestic needs. Co-education is important for girls' education and some parents prefer separate coaching facilities. However, some parents have conservative views about girls' education, believing some subjects are enough. The government should focus on improving education quality, improving transportation facilities, establishing separate education institutions, enforcing the Protection Act against Women Harassment and providing proper training for teachers. They should also promote female education through print, electronic media and civil society. Adequate career counseling should be provided to students and parents should not bind their daughters' secondary education to hinder their progress in society.

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