

Empowering Girls Through Education: A Case Study Of Girls Obstruction To Tertiary Education In District Nowshera

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Abstract

This research paper tends to focus on girl's obstacles in access to get higher education. Girl's education portrays significant role in formulation of human resources as well the establishment of supportable and the development of sophisticated community. This research study inculcates to prospect and revolutionize girl's learner's aspirations and the various barriers with respect to higher education. The kind of research design proposed for this study was of qualitative nature so as to get deeper understandings as well strengthens the area of interest i.e. barriers in acquiring girls tertiary education. Data collection was carried out from students of two public girl's high schools and two higher secondary schools in district Nowshera. Source of data collection was based on semi structured interviews and responses were further elaborated keeping the level of saturation of the interviews. Once saturation level was reached, thematic analysis was implemented to analyze the data. Finding of this research study extracted significant obstacles that hinders girls access to higher education i.e. Pakhtun cultural constraints, Commitment with Family and Cultural Obstacles, Gender Discrimination a Barrier in Girls Higher Education, Early Marriage an Obstacle in Girls higher education, Scarcity of Girls Higher Educational Institutions, Cultural obstacles and financial issues. Findings of this research study produced profitable recommendations i.e. "Each and every individual is exceptional and distinctive and based on equity and justice every girls has the ethical consideration of acquiring quality education in order to formulate a more sophisticated and balanced society.

Keywords: Tertiary Education, Cultural obstacles, Early Marriage, Gender Discrimination.

INTRODUCTION

Education portrays significant role in transforming positive change in individual lives (Baxter Magolda, 2003). Education empowers women of transforming the power of decision making and utilizing of their own choice in every walk of life (Hafsah Batool, M. I., & Rehman, 2022). Educating women is educating the entire society (Shetty, S., & Hans, 2015). Quality education is the fourth pillar of sustainable development goals (SDGs) (Hirsu, L., Quezada-Reyes, Z., & Hashemi, 2021). Quality of educational institution is directly linked with the

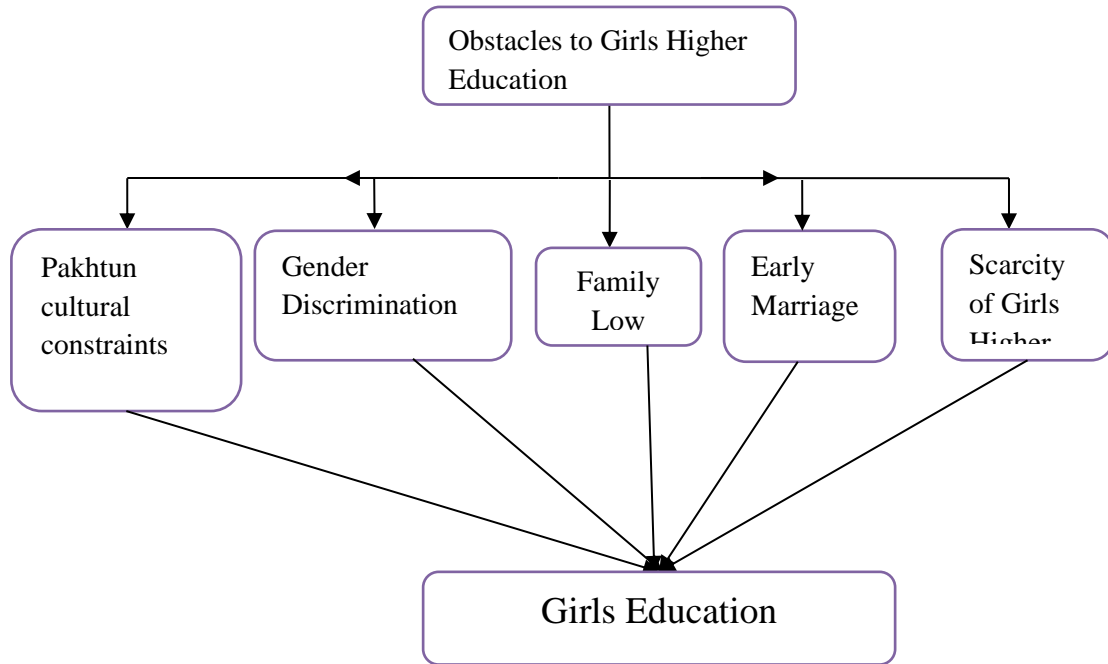
formulation of society and the implementation of all those practices and principals that help to transform a more equitable and a society which is based on justice and right to individuals of the society irrespective of gender, colour, race, and all distinctions (Villegas, 2007). Transformation of sophisticated society and culture is directly linked with committed, dedicated and constructivist principles, values and customs (Hamdan, A. 2005). Higher Educational institutes in Pakistan are struggling of providing proper training to families and as a result there is lack of professional

development as well parental style. Higher Educational institutes in Pakistan needs to provide skills necessary for the effective parental role and the need that will compel and enforce the parent to allow their daughters of acquiring quality higher education (Fazal, S., Naz, S., Khan, M. I., & Pedder, D. 2019). Society is the amalgam of both the male and female and the progress of a nation is solely based on the providing access to girl's higher education (O'Connor, P., Carvalho, T., Vabø, A., & Cardoso, 2015). Providing parental training to the parents will help their daughters to grasp the basic and concrete knowledge and skills to inculcate and strengthens their well being and personality and indirectly will improve the whole society (McCurdy, K., & Daro, D. 2001). Achieving the sustainable developmental goal (SDG) 4 i.e. provision of quality education needs the acquisition of education for all beliefs that will play a significant role in facilitating their domestic issues and will help girls to convince their colleagues to embrace tertiary education (Vladimirovaa, K., & Le Blanc, 2015). "Tertiary education refers to all formal post-secondary education, including public and private universities, colleges, technical training institutes, and vocational schools, tertiary education is instrumental in fostering growth, reducing poverty, and boosting

shared prosperity World Bank (2021)". College Principals should train teachers of how to inculcate higher order thinking such as metacognitive skills, creativity, critical and analytical skills so as to train girls of raising their voice and be the part of problem solving in society (Halpern, D. F. 1998). There is a direction interrelationship between parental attitudes and culture comprising various obstacles that hinders girl's higher education (Malik, S., & Courtney, K. 2011). Pakhtun tribe has a typical tradition, culture and customs. Pakhtun tribe possesses naïve-fashioned cultural norms. Aspirations and desires of women being are compressed and devalued in Pakhtun society. These are the male are decision maker and leaders in every walk of lives. Women are restricted as domestic wives and they have to fully obey the orders of their male partners (Hornby, G., & Lafaele, R. 2011).

Conceptual Framework

The interaction of two domains i.e. barriers and higher education two concepts are in close association with community and economics. Researcher has to find the role of parents, society, and cultural values in provision as will in prohibition of higher education of female gender. It includes their respective practical consequences in education amongst the females.



Statement of the Problem

This study unveiled those cultural constraints which are relevant to keep continue the university level education in respect to Girls. For this purpose following objectives will be achieved to fulfill the aim of the study.

Research Objectives

1. To unravel the obstacles to Girls access to Higher Education
2. To examine Girls attitudes with respect to Higher Education

Research Questions

1. How various barriers influence Girls access to get higher education?
2. What are Girls perceptions of acquiring higher education?

Significance of the study

The future researchers, policy makers, and planners will find this study handy and helpful in the field of higher education. Moreover, this study is considered important

because of the equal rights of education to all the female in the society. Therefore, this study will highlight the constraints regarding education in the societies of developing countries like Pakistan and results of this study will positively affect the intellects of the locality in respect of female education by providing valuable suggestions.

Research Design

Qualitative approach was adopted in this research study. The goal of this method was to explore the participant's experiences and perceptions with respect to the obstacles and barriers that hinder girl's access to higher education. This approach allowed the researcher to purposefully select individuals (Girls and their parents) for an in depth semi structured interview to get deeper understandings of what sort of constraints influence girls higher education. Data collection was carried out from students of two public girl's high schools

and two higher secondary schools in district Nowshera. Therefore the researcher visited along with a female assistant to collect the data. Thematic analysis was used in order to analyze the data. Data saturation principle was considered while conducting interviews.

DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was implemented of identifying; analyzing and interpreting patterns of meaning within qualitative data. Based on thematic analysis following themes were extracted from respondent's opinions:

Commitment with Family and Cultural Obstacles

Based on most of the Girls statements there are many Pakhtun cultural obstacles as well domestic obligations resisting girls of entering into college and university education. According to Parents, for girls in our society (Pakhtun) taking care of a family, the Pakhtun traditional style of perceptions of some parents where, men earn the money and the woman take responsibility of the house and children. Other girls expressed her thoughts of various obstacles and barriers that stop her of acquiring higher education. Majority of parent and students have stressed some negative aspects of the society that hinders higher education for girls like:

1. Stereotypes mindsets
2. Women the caretaker of the family
3. Cultural restrictions
4. Poor awareness about importance of girl's education

Gender Discrimination a Barrier in Girls Higher Education

Majority of the participants both parents and their daughters added that gender

discrimination is the consequence of culture. "There is significant variety in the status of women across classes, regions, and the rural, urban due to uneven socio economic development and the influence of tribal, religious and social formations on women's lives, however, the women's situation versus that of the men's is one of general subordination, determined by the forces of patriarchy across classes, regions, and the rural/urban divide". According to one of a parent gender differences is the main cause that restrict female to perform same sort of job parallel with male. In Pakistan society male members are considered as superior to females and women should only care about the household activities.

Early Marriage an Obstacle in Girls higher education

With reference to majority of Girls and their parent's opinions the main causes of women that hinder higher education are: based on parents interviews child marriages are increased even in school dropout. Early marriages also lead to increase in gender-based violence as well as increase in divorce levels due to lack of maturity by the girls. In Pakhtun society for women getting education is not a priority as compare to boys. Most of the families have wonders of expectations to get marry and have children too early. Parents stressed that in rural life early marriages is common and great obstacles of access to higher education.

Scarcity of Girls Higher Educational Institutions

Most of the parents stated that due to no availability of girl's colleges and universities it's quite difficult for them to permit their daughters to go into far away educational institutions. Parents and their daughters stressed that travel for girls is considered a

serious threat to their lives due sexual harassment and sexual abuse and that's why girls are scarcely permitted to get higher education.

Financial barriers

Financial disability doesn't allow girls to go and attend college and university of their own choice. Parents suggested different measures that will enable girls to carry on their educational activities smoothly, some of which are as follows.

1. Allocation of resources by Government and Non Government organizations
2. Financial assistance through Government Scholarships

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Based on data analysis this study produced valuable findings.

1. With regards to parents and students statements it was found that girls have to handle and support their family and keep an eye on domestic responsibilities and so cultural barriers was one of the main obstacles in girl's higher education.
2. It was also found that early marriage hinders access to girl's higher education.
3. It was found in the study that girls must be rendered with equal human rights and should be stimulated for the inculcation of effective and quality higher education.
4. Most of the parents stated that due to Scarcity of Girls Higher Educational Institutions it's a serious issue that restricts them

of permitting girls to far away colleges.

5. Similarly it was also found that family low socio economic status also hinders girl's higher education.
6. It was found that early marriage badly affect the education of a house wife it's near to impossible to get higher education especially in a joint family system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following recommendations were extracted from findings of the study.

1. District level separate girl's colleges and universities should be arranged to increase girl's literacy of higher education.
2. Local Government as well higher education commission needs to arrange financial support to girl's students of low socio-economic families.
3. Specific courses, diplomas should be introduced for female to enhance their skills, knowledge and capabilities and to revolutionize the significance of girls higher education so that to make them a productive part of the society.

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