

## The attitude of Parents towards Their Daughters Higher Education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan

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### Abstract

*The present paper focused on finding out attitudes of parents towards their daughters' higher education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The objective was to find out the attitude of parents towards their daughters' higher education. The study was delimited to male parents of three districts, namely Dir Lower, Dir Upper and Swat. The target population was 4872 male parents. A sample of 360 male parents was selected according to L.R Gay sample selection table, and self-developed five Likert scale questionnaires were distributed among them. The data was fed into SPSS version 16 and analyzed through percentage and chi-square. The study found that positive attitude of parents had good effects on their daughters' higher education and recommended that government should increase the number of institutes, provide facilities at female higher education institutes and encourage the community to make parents' attitudes positive.*

### Key Words:

Attitude, Parents, Community, Higher Education and Daughter.

### Introduction

Education means to develop the faculty of human, especially his thoughts. Relax mind is the outcome of a good education system. Education enhances the mental faculty of human beings' men and makes their minds sharp to adjust themselves to the changing environment of the modern world (Mingat, 2007). Pakistan is a less developed country and has various difficulties in education sectors, including a high illiteracy rate, and the illiteracy ratio of the female is more than male. Feminine gender in Pakistan incorporates almost 54% of the total populace (Govt. of Pakistan, 2008).

In the same way, Aristotle says, Education means to develop the faculty of men, especially his thoughts and mind. Education is described as; overall improvement of an individual; thus, education means the bringing out and the improvement of all innate abilities of an individual. Government of Pakistan (2011) stated that No doubt, it is a mixture of belief, ideas, traditions, facts, proved theories, and the philosophies of one's life. The basic purpose of education is to illuminate the behavior and skills of a person, doesn't matter the education is formal, informal or non-formal, more probably no one can ignore the importance of education and specifically the guardian, either educated or uneducated. They have a passion for educating their kids, especially their daughters in Pakistan, consist almost 54% of the total population. But unluckily, they do not get an equal chance just like the masculine gender of the society.

Afzal (2000) has initiated that transport was one of the big challenges the girls opposed in provincial borders while going to school. It is suggested that the means of transportation supposed to be provided, especially to the girls to go to class. At the adjacent level, this means maybe masterminded by the common population on a supportive proposition or through the level union council. The maximum part (93.0%) of respondents was not ready to send the girls out of the limited local territories, just only 7.0% were ready to allow them.

Yasmeen (2005) stated that education in general and higher education, in particular, had an integral position in changing the standard of living in a country. The education had everlasting effects on the personal, social, financial, and cultural life of a nation and created a society that maintains their values. Similarly, education improves the chances of human beings to enjoy their lives in the best possible way.

Kramarae (2000) observed that merit-based and open civil society is a pre-requisite of Higher education. Education improves the knowledge of a person about his duties and rights in society. It brought improvement in the character of a person and did not believe in discrimination among people

of the same society. Therefore, the differences in gender, beliefs, religion, and caste vanished from society.

According to Khalid and Mukhtar (2002) stated that the big cause of the low ratio of females in colleges and universities is the lack of resources like schools' fees and other requirements for the schooling of girls. The female is considered fit for household duties only, and this type of mindset makes their education second priority (Maqsood et al., 2012). Similarly, the report of UNESCO (2010) observed that the early marriages of girls forced the parents to prepare the girls for the household duties and arrange their dowry instead of investing in their education. This was also observed that the sons' education is given preference because the parents think that if we invested more in their education, they would earn more in the future to support the family.

Sathar and Haque (2000) observed that in many cases, it is seen that female institutes were not found near homes or in villages and close cities. The thought that their daughters would travel a long distance to get higher education made the parents reluctant to send their daughters for higher education because the worries of the safety of their girls come first for the parents. This is the main issue in female higher education because it is observed that if the transport is available for them to pick and drop, there is always the threat that their daughters might be abused and harassed by the evildoers (World Bank, 2007; UNESCO, 2010).

In Pakistan, an increasing trend is observed in female education in colleges and universities in the recent past. However, there are many problems and hurdles in the way an upward flow is seen. This upward move in higher education is seen in the less developed areas, which show the rise of society. The girls' number in schools and colleges is bigger than the boys in some areas. This upward trend in female education is good for Pakistani society because it will make the girls able to provide the goods for the development of their country in every field. Many studies stated that once the ban is imposed on girls, then it is hard for other girls of the same family or area to remove that. But the increase in the number of female institutes of higher education is increased with the time that the institutes are far away from homes, and it would be difficult to travel (Maqsood et al., 2012).

Halai et al. (2007) noticed that the opinions of parents are different in science and arts education. The parents are more reluctant to search for educational institutes for girls' higher education. The environment of colleges and universities is important due to cultural and social pressure from society because society wants the girls to join those institutes for higher education, which are more secure environmentally. In Pakistan, women spend the major part of their life at home because this role of the household is preferred for them in society. Females are less educated because parents are more interested in the education of sons than daughters. The parents focused on providing guidance of female to learn the domestic works and make these skills perfect because the parents in general and parents in particular thought that for girls learning of household duties are more important and for sons the education and professional skills. This is because the sons will earn money in their future life, and daughters will do household duties.

Huisman and Smits (2009), stated that parents who have come to a sure level of training might need their kids to achieve in any event at that level. For enlistment of girls training, education of the mother could be especially huge. Mother, who has succeeded in accomplishing a sure level of training, has encountered its worth and realizes that it is accessible to girls to achieve that level. We, in this way, trust that utilization of the force and learning from advanced education to guarantee that their daughters are additionally educated.

Women are half of the Pakistani population, and Pakistan is an under-developed country in the world's community. It is a clear fact that the dream of development cannot be achieved without educating the female of Pakistani society. Pakistan includes four provinces, and the situations of every province are different. The province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa includes many underdeveloped areas. The tribal belt of the province, including the seven agencies (now settled districts) is underdeveloped in every area of life. The basic facilities are lacking in the area, but the situation of education and female education, in particular, is very bad. Schools and colleges are not available for the girls. The local culture keeps the girls inside homes, and the people of the area considered it against their values to send their daughters to schools and colleges. They thought that modern education is a threat to their honor and culture. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and, in particular, the tribal area is badly affected by the war of terror, but the situation is hopeful because the society generally thinks female education important for the development of society and families in Pakistan. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has seven administrative divisions, and the division of Malakand is one of them. The division of Malakand includes the districts of Malakand, Swat, Dir Lower, Dir Upper, Shangla, Buner, Lower Chitral, and Upper Chitral. The population is 8 million with a 952 square KM area. The princely states of Chitral, Dir, and Swat joined Pakistan in 1969. The administrative capital of the division is Saidu Sharif.

## **Literature Review**

The parents' attitudes had a direct impact on children's academic performance in schools and institutes of higher studies. The positive attitude of parents helps children in their personality development and become an active

member of society. The higher education of parents and the positive attitude of parents towards their children's education or higher education keep the children motivated and inspired to go for higher education like their parents. There are a number of studies and a lot of literature available in education which shows that parents' positive attitude has positive effects on children's education.

A study conducted by Alam (2010) on the study of attitude and academic achievement at the secondary level found that the attitude of students towards studies and their achievement are closely related to each other. The study showed that students with positive get good marks and their results are better than other students with a negative or lower positive attitude.

TNS (2004) expressed that parental states of mind toward education were, for the most part, extremely positive. Most (97%) agreed that a decent education could help your child to get an achievement in life. While 93% believe that the appraisals were huge for the eventual fate of their youngsters, 90% additionally concur that children learn critical life aptitudes in school. Seventy-five percent of parents (76%) had concurred that the school your children are great at corresponding with them, and the lion's share (86%) concurred that their children' educators make an incredible showing. A little more than a fifth (22%) trust that their child's school had a tendency to be excessively enthused about the brilliant children, to the detriment of others, yet just 7% trust that the school has much enthusiasm for the family life of their children. Simply under a fifth of parents/caregivers (18%) trust that the greater part of the things your children learn in school has nothing to do with genuine living. A little extent (14%) of parents was satisfactory that if your child would not like to study now, s/he could think about when s/he was more seasoned. Their study was in light of perceiving whether there was any distinction in the states of mind of parents to mind among the all-inclusive community and a gathering of parents whose children were as of now not going to class. This exploration has not recognized contrasts in the demeanours of parents in the all-inclusive community.

Islam urged society to provide education to both the genders and did not divide the male and female on the bases of their genders. Pakistan is an Islamic country; therefore, it should not do any discrimination in education. But there are areas like the tribal areas in the North of Pakistan where girls are not allowed to get education in general and higher education of particular (Latif, 2007).

Sen (2001) observed that the social norms and cultural values of Pakistani society are the cause of gender discrimination in Pakistan. There different regions in Pakistan that have their own different values and traditions for women. This diversity in Pakistani society makes it difficult and even impossible to upgrade the status of women in Pakistan. The different rural and urban settings, feudal and tribal cultures, religious and social values affect the lives of women directly. The women remain as subordinate to the man dominated society in Pakistan. The different regional and class settings looked to women differently. Man has the upper hand in society over women, and he is not willing to lose the grip over the situations which give him superior status for a very long time.

The status of a female is the lowest in Pakistan, and there are very few countries in the world which has a lower status of women than Pakistan. The history of Pakistan shows that girls' higher education ratio is very low because there are various reasons and hurdles for women to get higher education in Pakistan. Similarly, the situation of girls' education varies around the world, but the one common fact about female education is that the ratio of female education is lower as compared to boys' education in the world.

Sathar and Haque (2000) observed that the question of the environment in female higher education institutes gets importance due to the social mindset in our society. After the environment, the question of how the female will reach to their institutes is the second critical question. The question of the environment and the related social and personal problems of beginners are more critical than the students who are reading or reached to advance semesters.

Bajwa et al. (2007) mentioned in their study that the mindset of people living in Lahore is completely different from people living in other parts of the country. The parents in Lahore encouraged their daughters to perceive higher education to live a better life in the future. Allen and Smith (2008) observed that the environment of universities is more secure, and female students friendly, but the environment of sub-campus is not as secure as the university environment. This is the reason for discrimination in the female institutes of higher education.

Kumari et al. (1990) and Devasia et al. (1991) observed in their studies that the duty of mothers is to train and groom their daughter according to the socially and culturally set standards. At the beginning of their life, daughters are thought to remain calm and salient, do not interfere in the matters of males, and develop self-control. The girls are not allowed to go and wander outside homes. On the other hand, sons are preferred, and they received better treatment from their parents. This attitude of society made the man authoritative and dominant; therefore, in his future life, he dominant his wives and sister at homes. Similarly, Rahman (1994) observed that the female is trained by their mothers, grandmothers, elders' women in homes, and their elders' sisters. The female, when growing up, do the same because this is considered important for her to learn the household works and manners and transformed them into their coming female generation.

Society thought that women are made for homes and works inside the boundaries of homes. The duties of taking care of children, old, sick of the family are her topmost duty. The family thought that her duties are also economically for the family because no one is needed when they are doing the households. The perception of society is totally different about men. The man should protect the family and earn money to support the family economically. The women will do the homes' works as a full-time duty and the man the earning as a full-time duty. This type of situation is extremely suitable for men's dominance in society. The above-mentioned standards lead the society to gender discrimination (Zanden et al., 1990; Kazi et al., 1991).

Social affairs are arranged on the bases of gender, and there is a specific role for men and women in society. The biological features of males and females divided society into sex, but gender is referred to as the social values of society. Light, Keller, and Calhoun (1994) stated in their book of Sociology that the physical features give them the name boy and girl from the day of their birth. Similarly, they also stated that the base of discrimination is the physical appearance of male and female. Society fixed standards for girls and boys and trained them to follow those fixed standards in their life.

Khan (2007) observed that if the history of Pakistan was studied in detail, it showed many hurdles and reasons which kept the educational ratio of female low than the male. The discrimination starts with funds distribution for education. Male education was given more funds than the female. The man's role is to lead the society, and the women will play the role of subordinate inside home and outside in society. The boys in the family are provided with the best education, and they are prepared to earn more resources and compete effectively for a quality life. In contrast, girls are often not considered fit for a good education, and they are advised and trained to take care of kids and learned the art of household duties. The women are considered as mothers and wives, and therefore education is not given importance, and the low income of fathers is also caused by the low enrolment of females in schools and colleges.

### **Objective of the Study**

1. To find out attitudes of parents towards their daughters' education at a higher level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

H0-1 There is no significant relationship between parental attitude and female higher education.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Population**

The study was descriptive in nature. The male parents of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, who were sending their daughters to universities and colleges, were the population of the study. The target population of the study was all the male parents of districts Dir Lower, Dir Upper, and Swat. The total enrolled female students in the universities and colleges of these three districts are 4872.

#### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sampled population of the study is **360** male parents of district Dir Lower, Dir Upper, and Swat. The sampled population after equal division, the researcher collected to date from **120** male parents of each district. Cluster Random sampling techniques were selected to collect data from male parents.

#### **Data Collection Tool and Procedure**

The researcher made a questionnaire following the five Likert Scale format ranging from strongly agreed to disagree with exploring the attitude of male parents towards their daughters' higher educations. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire among male parents of districts Dir Lower, Dir Upper, and Swat, and data was collected from them.

#### **Data Analysis Technique**

The data of the questionnaire was first combined and summarized, and then it was entered into SPSS version 16. The entered data was analyzed through a chi-square test and percentage.

**Results**

**Table 1.** Female Higher Education is Must in the Current Environment.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2$ )
SA	175	48.6	48.6	9.49	355.33
A	142	39.5	88.1		
UD	7	1.9	90.0		
SDA	15	4.2	94.2		
DA	21	5.8	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative per cent of 88.1 showed that the parents in the majority agreed that female higher education is a must in the current environment. The parents who disagreed are less in number, and their cumulative percent is 10.0. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 335.33 is more than 9.49 table values with  $\alpha=0.05$ .

**Table 2.** Female Higher Education is Necessary for Proper Education of Their Children.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2$ )
SA	151	41.9	41.9	9.49	357.02
A	168	46.7	88.6		
UD	9	2.5	91.1		
SDA	18	5.0	96.1		
DA	14	3.9	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 88.6 showed that the parents in the majority agreed that female higher education is necessary for the proper education of their children. The parents who disagreed are less in number, and their cumulative percent is 8.9. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value of 357.02 is more than 9.49 table values with  $\alpha=0.05$ .

**Table 3.** Highly Qualified Female Can Support their Husbands in Time of Need.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2$ )
SA	129	35.8	35.8	9.49	361.36
A	186	51.7	87.5		
UD	11	3.1	90.6		
SDA	18	5.0	95.6		
DA	16	4.4	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 88.5 showed that the parents in the majority agreed that highly qualified female could support their husbands in times of need. The parents who disagreed are less in number, and their cumulative percent is 9.4. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 361.36 is more than 9.49 table values with  $\alpha=0.05$ .

**Table 4.** Preference of son over Daughter is a Hurdle in Female Higher Education.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2$ )
SA	166	46.1	46.1	9.49	445.55
A	174	48.3	94.4		
UD	8	2.2	96.7		

SDA	10	2.8	99.4
DA	2	.6	100.0
Total	360	100.0	

The cumulative percent of 94.4 showed that the parents in the majority agreed that the preference of son over daughter is a hurdle in female higher education. The parents who disagreed are less in number, and their cumulative percent is 9.4. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 445.55 is more than 9.49 table values with  $\alpha=0.05$ .

**Table 5.** Discouragement of Women to Work is a Reason for Female Low Enrolment.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2$ )
SA	128	35.6	35.6		392.72
A	193	53.6	89.2		
UD	19	5.3	94.4	9.49	
SDA	11	3.1	97.5		
DA	9	2.5	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 89.2 showed that the parents in the majority agreed that the discouragement of women to work is a reason for low female enrolment. The parents who disagreed are less in number, and their cumulative percent is 5.6. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 392.72 is more than 9.49 table values with  $\alpha=0.05$ .

**Table 6.** Educated Daughter can Financially Support their Parents.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	T-value	Chi-Square value ( $\chi^2$ )
SA	177	49.2	49.2	9.49	374.77
A	145	40.3	89.4		
UD	6	1.7	91.1		
SDA	17	4.7	95.8		
DA	15	4.2	100.0		
Total	360	100.0			

The cumulative percent of 89.4 showed that the parents, in the majority, agreed that educated daughter could financially support their parents. The parents who disagreed are less in number, and their cumulative percent is 5.6. The null hypothesis is rejected because the chi-square value 374.77 is more than 9.49 table values with  $\alpha=0.05$ .

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Female higher education is a must in the current world. Highly qualified female helped their children in pursuit of education. The highly qualified daughters support their parents as well as a husband in times of need. The parents agreed that the preference of son over a daughter is a hurdle in female higher education. The female is discouraged from working mostly in society; therefore, the parents agreed that it is a hurdle in female higher education. The study recommends that government should increase the number of female higher institutes, induct qualified teachers, provide facilities at female higher education institutes, involve the community, and encourage the parents to make their attitudes positive together with their daughters' higher education.

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