
ROLE OF EDUCATION IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A CASE OF RURAL PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

Manan Aslam

Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities,
MNS-University of Agriculture, Multan, Punjab,
Pakistan
Email: manan.aslam@mnsuam.edu.pk

Muhammad Aslam

School Education Department,
Government of Punjab,
Pakistan

Muhammad Ahsin Ayub

Ayub Agricultural Research Institute (AARI),
Faisalabad, Punjab,
Pakistan

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of major factors influencing the women education in district Faisalabad. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to collect the data. The Faisalabad district was selected for this purpose. The tehsils of Faisalabad district were Faisalabad, ChakJhumra, Jaranwala, Summandri and Tandianwala. The data was collected in three phases. In first phase tehsil Faisalabad was selected and in second phase the tehsil Faisalabad was categorized into three segments based on the income distribution, the first segment represented the low-income class of the society and the second category represents the middle-class areas and the later represents the higher income group families. While in the third phase, the two areas from each class were selected for data collection using random sampling technique. The 40 respondents were selected from each class i.e. lower income, middle income and higher income. The total sample size was consisted of 120 respondents. The comprehensive questionnaire carried the information including social and economic conditions of the household was designed data collection. The data was analyzed using statistical packages for social sciences SPSS. The study inferred that the women education was influenced by the rising poverty, family

income and social barriers. Finally, the study recommended that government should take steps in reducing poverty by establishing departments that raises the employment rate for women so that peoples don't neglect the major portion of social capital the females.

KEYWORDS

Education, Female Education, Women Empowerment

INTRODUCTION

The gender discrimination refers to the condition of disparity in attainment of complete civil rights between male and female. The male and female keep the social and cultural rights, duties and obligations; these cultural obligations cause the poverty and discrimination of income distribution. The inequality in the attainment of wealth by male and female is the common phenomena in the under-developing and developing countries (Chaudhry & Rahman, 2009).

The situation is different in Pakistan from the other developed countries in a way that the male and female are living in a diverse world. The males have the dominating role; therefore, the resources and supplies are assigned in favor of them. The male has access to the better education and skills in the society as compared to the females. The role of women is only confined to the house and is provided with skills that are related household so that female could become good mothers and wives. The women role is limited in decision making even the structure of their lives. The gender discrimination is authoritative in the learning system between rural and urban localities of Punjab province (Asian Development Bank, 2002).

Education has played a significant role in women empowerment (Sandhya, 2015). It is necessary for changing the economic condition as well as development of the human resource. Therefore, women empowerment is necessary in Pakistan. The higher the education of females will cause the wages to increase and thus raises profits. So, the female education can play an important role in eradicating the poverty of the family and raises the status (Chaudhry & Rahman, 2009).

The women education also plays an important role in the life of children, their physical conditions as well as education (Schultz 2002, World Bank 2007). The study conducted by (Klasen, 2002) shows that the women illiteracy minimizes

the average income level of family, the women education reduces fertility rate, mortality rate of newborns and the education of the offspring (Knowles *et al.*, 2002). The poverty can't be reduced unless women are empowered so empowerment of women in rural areas diminishes the poverty. The educated woman is healthier and fit as compared to uneducated one. The political, socio economic and employment prospective are low in the society of less women education. The representation of women in education, socio-economic, key to employment and political participation is also very low. The women education is the eradicate poverty in the country (Siddique, 1998).

The primary education should be necessary as a minimum scale so as to modify living standard (Arif, Saqib & Zahid, 1999). The schooling impact performs through the improvement in the efficiency of the workers and disclose in the shape of ages or salaries in labor markets both publically and privately. The education changes the living condition in many ways as women get awareness regarding health issues. It enhances the potential of women to use health services properly given by state. Educated women can play e key role for the betterment of family system and society. It influences the fertility rate and usage of contraceptive methods (Bledsoe & Casterline, 1999; Mazumdar, 1989).

The education of female may also establish to contain better effects on the offspring health as well as education in the community. It has also substantial influences on the rate of fertility as well as contraceptive methods. Eventually, the education is an ominous need and the requirement for growth and the sustainable development of any nation by civilizing the living standard of the natives. So, in this background the research investigates the impact of determinants of women education in rural localities and constraints faced by women in attaining education. Although, many studies have been conducted in all countries to check the relationship between poverty and women education but few studies have been conducted so far to explore the determinants of women education. More specifically this study has been designed to delineate the impact of various factors influencing women education in various localities of district Faisalabad.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies have been undertaken to study the determinants of women empowerment via education. The study conducted by Raja (2000) showed women education is a first step in development path of any nation and education

is a multi-dimensional process as it enhances economic growth and reduced poverty and built the human capacity. Taxak (2013) examined the education inequality in socio-economic range in Indian perspective. The study undertaken by Castello and Domenech (2002) implied that education disparities were due to the fewer investment in education and the human capital. The study by Meenakshi and Ray (2002) explored the household where head was a female faced poverty because of small scale family and small number of adult males. Nelly (2015) examined the empowerment of women in the sense of social change theory and evaluated the women veracities in industrialized and developing countries. The findings of the study of Fabre and Augersaud-Veron (2004) shows that there is a trade-off between human capital accumulation and education and poor families are unable to provide education women from private educational institutes. However, the public education system compromises on quality. The study also showed that illiteracy promoted child labor so policies should have aimed at reducing poverty through promoting education. Afzal, Malik, Begum, Sarwar & Fatima (2005) found poverty could be reduced through increasing efficiency and efficiency could be attained by education the study also found the bi-directional collinearity between economic growth and education. Chaudhry (2007) also found the same results. Chaudhry and Rahman (2009) implied that educational disparity was negatively related with rural poverty and family size, male & female ratio had positive impact on poverty. So, there is need to generate more employment for females in Pakistan. Awan, Malik, Sarwar & Waqas (2011) also supported these findings. The last study included in this manuscript is undertaken by Khalil (2013) which showed the female literacy in Pakistan is at 39.6% and male is 67.9% indicating the gender gap. The rural women focused only on household tasks rather than education. The study found that the educated families support the children in educational matters and in income as well so there was need to reduce gender gap in educational institutes and reduce women discrimination.

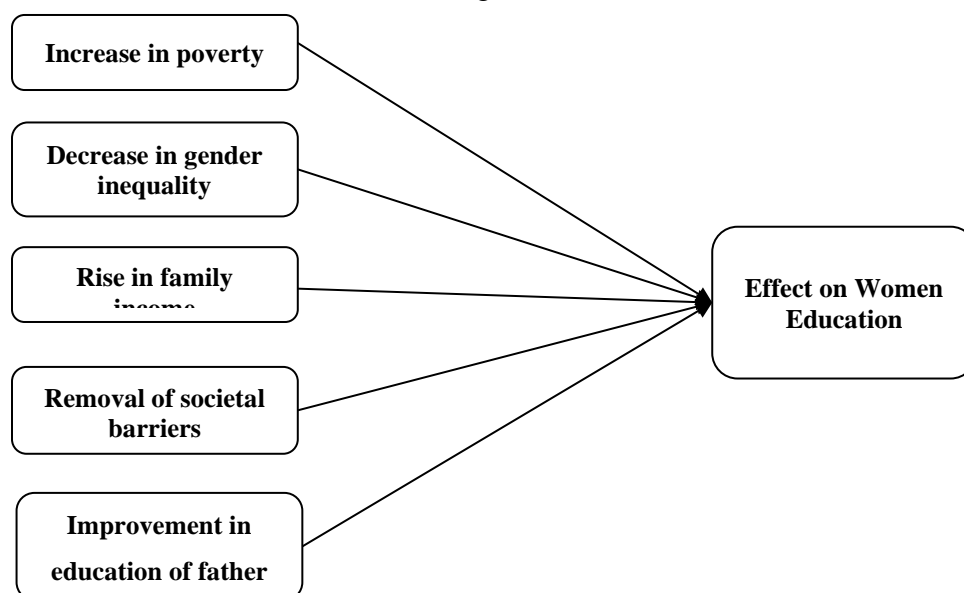
According to the above-mentioned reviews it is safely concluded that the poverty cannot be lessened without empowerment of women and the women poverty particularly in the rural localities may be reduced by improving and accelerating women education. If women have proper and better education, then they will have more fitness and health awareness and vice versa. If the level of female education will be less in the society then political, socio-economic and the employment prospects will also be lesser in the state. Participation of women in the education, socio-economic, employment and

other political actions was also very less. Education of women should be specified as a key priority area to eliminate the poverty from the state. By keeping in view this, primary education should be the minimum necessity in the nation so as to modify the living standards of the people of the state.

Conceptual framework

Theoretical model is given in figure 1

Figure 1



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in Faisalabad district because it is highly populated city and third largest city of Pakistan. The multi-stage sampling technique was used for data collection from Faisalabad. There were total five tehsils of Faisalabad: Faisalabad, Chak Jhumra, Jaranwala, Summandri and Tandianwala. The survey was conducted in three phases, in first phase tehsil Faisalabad (itself) was selected and second phase, respondents have been categorizing into three categories including the lower income group, middle income group and higher income group. In the last third phase the respondents were selected though random sampling technique. The 40 respondents were selected from each class and a total 120 respondents were selected for

interview. A pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect the data from selected respondents through personal interviews of concerned respondents. For this purpose, questionnaires were designed for selected women in the study area. Data were collected from 01-15 June; 2017. The questionnaire consisted of the socio-economic conditions of the household. The computer software statistical package for social sciences SPSS was used for analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

(Factors affecting Women Education)

The functional form is given by the following

$$WE=f(Z_i)$$

Where,

(1)

WE= Effect on education of women

Z_i = explanatory variables $i = 5$

The equation can also be written as

$$WE_i = \lambda_0 Z_i^{\lambda_i} e^{\mu}$$

(2)

$$WE = \lambda_0 Z_1^{\lambda_1} Z_2^{\lambda_2} Z_3^{\lambda_3} Z_4^{\lambda_4} Z_5^{\lambda_5} e^{\mu}$$

(3)

Taking log on both sides

$$\ln WE = \lambda_0 + \lambda_1 \ln Z_1 + \lambda_2 \ln Z_2 + \lambda_3 \ln Z_3 + \lambda_4 \ln Z_4 + \lambda_5 \ln Z_5 + \mu$$

(4)

Where,

WE are the dependent variable used to check the effect of various factors viz.

Increase in poverty, decrease in gender inequality, rise in family income, removal of societal barriers and improvement in education of father on women education. The categorical data was collected by using scale (very high=5, high=4, medium=3, low=2 and very low=1

Z_s are following explanatory variables

Z_1 = Increase in poverty

Z_2 = Decrease in gender inequality

Z_3 = Rise in family income

Z_4 = Removal of societal barriers

Z_5 = Improvement in education of father

λ_0 is intercept, λ_s are elasticities, μ is errors of the model

ln= Natural Log

FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

The relationship between dependent variable (women education) and independent variables (increase in poverty, decrease in gender inequality, rise in family income, removal of societal barriers, improvement in education of father) was estimated by employing the double log form of regression model because this relationship has been obtained by using scattered plot.

The multicollinearity is tested by using Tolerance Test which shows how much the variables are correlated to each other. However, Variance Inflation Factor VIF is reciprocal of the Tolerance. The rise in the value of the VIF makes the variance of the regression coefficient, the unstable estimate the higher the value of VIF the higher is the multicollinearity. If VIF is greater than 10 it indicates the presence of collinearity but in our study the VIF value is less than the critical value 10 showing the variables are not collinear.

Table1.
Collinearity Statistics of Variables

Variables	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
Increase in poverty	.090	1.11
Decrease in gender inequality	.091	1.098
Rise in family income	.085	1.176
Removal of societal barriers	.087	1.149
Improvement in education of father	.092	1.086

Source: Author's own estimations

The coefficient of determination R^2 is 0.56 which indicate that independent variables are 58% explained by explanatory variables and rest 32% are due to residuals (Gujrati, 2003). The adjusted R^2 is 0.51. The F-Statics is 11.35 ($p < 0.05$) implied that model was highly appropriate. The results showed that 7.25 times the dependent variables were affected by the effect other than explanatory variables.

The coefficient of poverty 25.62 ($p < 0.05$) shows negative sign and significant.

The results explained that for only 1% decrease in poverty ultimately increases 25.62% women education keeping other things constant. So, it was safely concluded that the poverty was very crucial as it reduced the ability of women to acquire more education. The studies of Raja (2000), Fabre and Augersaud-Veron (2004), Afzal et al. (2005) and Chaudhry (2007) also supported our result.

Gender inequality is still the main issue in backward areas of all provinces of Pakistan. If it will more and more than it has adverse effects on the women education and vice versa. The coefficient of decrease in gender inequality 2.39 ($p < 0.05$) is positive and insignificant. The results indicated that the 1% improvement in the category of gender equality will lead to 2.39% improvement in women education all else constant. Chaudhry and Rahman (2009), Awan et al. (2011), Taxak (2013) and Khalil (2013) also explained similar types of result against this variable in their research.

The increase in income may positively affect the education of women in the society. Higher the family income, higher will be the education of women and vice versa. The coefficient of increase in income is 1.24 ($p < 0.05$) having positive sign and significant impact. The coefficient showed that the 1% improvement in family income will lead to 1.24% improvement in women education. Khalil (2013) also stated almost same kinds of the results in his research. If societal barriers will be removed, then the education of women will be increased more and more in the country. Malala Yousaf Zai was a good example in this context; she said that education should be for all in her recent address at United Nations Proceedings. So, various societal barriers should be removed by revisiting government policies and laws in order to promote women education in the community. The coefficient of decrease in societal barriers in the society 25.85 ($p < 0.05$) showed positive sign and was highly significant. The coefficient of variable explained that for every one percent improvement in category of societal barriers (decrease in societal barriers), there might 25.85 percent improvement in women education, keeping all other factors constant. The coefficient of improvement in father education 20.20 ($p < 0.05$) was positive and insignificant which implied for every 1% increase in father education caused 20.20% improvement in the women education.

Table 2
Regression Results (Factors affecting Women Education)

Variables	Coefficient	standard error	t-value	significance (p-value)
(constant)	7.25	0.60	64.20	.089
Increase in poverty	-25.62	9.319	-3.067	.004*
Decrease in gender inequality	2.39	3.252	1.023	.401 ^{NS}
Rise in family income	1.24	.541	3.401	.002*
Removal of societal barriers	25.85	5.896	4.453	.000*
Improvement in education of father	20.20	25.896	.952	.456 ^{NS}
R ²		0.56		
Adjusted R ²		0.51		
F- Value		11.35		

Source: Author's own estimations

* = Significant at 95% level of confidence

**= Significant at 90% level of confidence

^{NS} = Non-significant

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study estimated impact of major attributes (increase in poverty, decrease in gender inequality, rise in family income, removal of societal barriers and improvement in education of father etc.) on the women education in Punjab, Pakistan. The findings of this study confirmed that women education was highly influenced by increase in poverty, rise in family income, and removal of societal barriers. So, in order to improve women education in Pakistan the government should pay attention in reducing poverty and increasing the employment opportunities for women so that male should have realized the importance of this important social capital and will not put aside them in decision making. Moreover, the media should promote those programs related to women education by disseminating the importance of women education in terms of socio-economic benefits, health and family structure. This strategy would be successful to alter the people's mind-set particularly mother's rigidity and irrational attitude regarding the education and employment of daughters.

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