

Problems of Female Education in District Kurram: A Case Study of BS Students of Government Post Graduate College Parachinar

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Abstract

Education is a fundamental right of every individual. Today, these societies have excelled in all fields of life where men and women receive equal education opportunities. This research study focuses on various co-education issues in Kurram District. The main research question was what are the main causes and their impacts on coeducation. However, in some societies, certain obstacles prevent girls from getting an education. This research study focuses on the challenges of co-education in Kurram District. The main objective is to explore the causes and impacts of these challenges. The study critically analyzes Kurram society from different perspectives and draws conclusions based on a literature review. The findings indicate that there are several sociocultural, political, economic, and religious barriers to co-education in Pukhtoon society. These include the patriarchal system, male dominance, conservatism, rigid customs and traditions, stereotyped social codes, poverty, male isolation from female role, complex social structure, Pardah (veil) system, religious misperceptions, illiterate Mullah (clergymen), gender disparities, female segregation, domestic affairs, and lack of political empowerment of women. The study recommends that removing these obstacles could help advance girls' education.

Keywords: Female, education, Bachelor, System, Kurram

Introduction

Education has its roots in the Latin words educate and nurture, and it is considered an important means of building human capital, which is a crucial tool for achieving sustainable economic growth. Education has a significant impact on economic, scientific, and social development (Memon, 2007). Economic thinking has undergone a significant change in recent times, and education is now regarded as an investment in human capital (Samina, 2011). Education is seen as a ladder to elevate people's skills, which in turn are useful in achieving higher incomes, high yields, and high growth (Fazal, 2004; Quddus, 1990). Education boosts the productivity and efficiency of individuals, thereby producing skilled labor that is vital for leading the economy towards a path of economic development (Shahid, 2012; Harlan, 2014; Zai, 2008).

Female education in Pakistan

A country's educational system is always influenced by the ethics, culture, moral values, ways and characteristics of society. Pakistan's female literacy rate is one of the lowest in the world at 15%, and for every literate woman, there are five literate men due to the culturally prescribed role for women as homemakers, resulting in a lack of prioritization for girls' education (Bank, 1997). Unfortunately, the dropout rate for women accelerates at a staggering pace after primary education, with only 0.8% of women reaching university education (Banco, 1997). The limited facilities for higher education further exacerbate the issue, with very few girls in rural areas receiving more than elementary or primary education (Bibi, 2006-07).

In 1959, the National Education Commission recognized that a mother's education is crucial for an educated home and community. However, female education barely reaches 6.6%, and it receives very little priority due to societal beliefs that women's help is needed at home, education may fill their daughters' heads with unwanted ideas, and girls who reach puberty are withdrawn from schools in rural and urban areas to marry (Pakistan, 1959). It is the responsibility of

the government to establish an education system that meets the social and individual needs of women (Fazal, 2004). Female birth is nowadays considered a blessing, not as a stigma or something about which the government is anxious. Therefore, the government must spend money to increase female literacy. Other countries, which have done just this, should help to overcome this fear. It is very encouraging to find out that more and more of our educated women are taking up social work and establishing community welfare organizations (Bibi, 2007). The fate of our women lies in their own hands; the sooner they realize their importance and individuality, the better it will be for them.

Female education in Pukhtoon Society

The socio-culture of Pukhtoon society is based upon centuries old traditions. In this respect in Pukhtoon society the role of women in all circles is also a traditional one. Pukhtoon society has its own special norms and codes-here women are considered as the symbol of honor, the status of women in Pukhtoon society is very unsatisfactory in the social life. They cannot enjoy even their religious and legal rights. But only the Pukhtoon cannot be blamed for such discrimination as the position of women is less degraded in other societies as well. There is no uniformity in the legal status of women in the country (Fazal, 2004). The diversity of culture in the four provinces, the rural/urban division, in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was very worse. The British were afraid of the tribal men's education. It is quite clear that from education point of view the Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa's areas are very backward. Less attention is given to women education (Atique, 2012; affer, 1990).

Education in District Kurram

Education is crucial for every person, but the education of women holds greater significance. It is often quoted that educating a man is equivalent to educating an individual, but educating a woman is equivalent to educating an entire nation. Women play a vital role in nation-building (Zaman, 2017; Alam, 2012). As

children spend most of their time with their mothers, the mother's character has a profound impact on the child's impressionable mind. Therefore, it is impossible to build a progressive society without educating women. Similarly, in Kurram district, like other areas of KPK, there is a significant gap in female education (Zaman, (2017).

Statement of the Problem

Surveys are conducted with the aim of adding something new to the body of knowledge. The researcher will bring the problems of female education that are in the shadows. Here the researcher resembles a sculptor who works on a diamond and strives to make it unique. The researcher selected this area to attract the authorities' attention to the problems of female education. Here the researcher will not only bring these challenges, but also recommend remedies for these wounds. The specific purpose beyond the research is to put women's education on the safer side and heal their wounds by doing them a great favor.

Objectives of the Study

- Knowing the importance of female education.
- To dig out the causes of problems of female education in District Kurram.
- To explore the effects of problems on victims.

Material and Methods

The present study is descriptive-exploratory research that utilizes a mixed-methods approach. The study combines both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of government programs and services for women's education. The use of a mixed-methods approach enhances the study's richness and provides a more diverse range of perspectives that might have been overlooked.

The researcher collected data from both primary and secondary sources. A structured questionnaire was developed for quantitative data collection from students at the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the Government Parachinar, and the

participants were selected randomly. In addition, the researcher employed in-depth interviews as a qualitative research method to explore the participants' perspectives on the relevant issues. The researcher also collected secondary data from various scholarly sources such as books, articles, theses, and journals, including Foshay (1991) and Tousi (2011)

Result and Discussion

As compared to other nations Pakistan ranks low in literacy, although it has made some progress in the last 70 years. Literacy has risen from 13.2 percent in 1951 to 58% in 2018 but this progress is far from satisfactory (Education, 2018). Pakistan is counted among countries with very low literacy rate. Other South Asian countries like Srilanka, India and Bangladesh have higher literacy rate than Pakistan. In Pakistan there is a marked disparity in the rate of literacy between male and female and between the urban and rural population (Khan, 2007).

Customs and traditions vary from region to region, but as far as Pukhtoon tradition is concerned they provided very less opportunity to female education. Same is the case with District Kurram when it comes to female education. Here females desire to get more and more education and they are devoted to the fullest, but unfortunately, they come across different obstacles where they cannot stand firm on their feet. Some females quit their studies in mid as they become submissive to tough situation (Hashmi, 2008).

In fact, fault lies in the society as it remains stubborn when conversation is related to female education. The problem is that they stand firm by customs and traditions. One can imagine zero tolerance which becomes the main hindrance in female education. One can play their role to provide soft ground to female education, if society is doing a massive favor (Ravieya, 2007). Maximum parents are uneducated and because of this flaw they are unable realizing the importance of education. Here comes the job of a researcher tracking down the root causes and obstacles in the way of female education in District Kurram.

The researcher feels the need of female education from the heart, because if we desire an educated nation, we have to produce educated mothers where they may train their children under their tutelage as it the first step towards a long journey. All those problems being faced by women in getting education was brought forth with the help of questionnaire, and they would help out in solved the related problem. Women can quench their thirst of knowledge if society shows consideration. They cannot revolt against their society as they would not survive properly without the concerned society.

The situation of female education in Kurram is not much satisfactory, that's why it's also one of the backward districts among the others in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Female in co-education in District Kurram faces some fundamental problems. An attempt has been made to discuss the problems that have been the main obstacle for women to obtain education at the Government Parachinar Graduate College at baccalaureate level. It has been observed in current study that the 80% respondents argued that their parents were educated while 20% responded parents were illiterate. But still they have good approach about education that's why they allowed us to gain knowledge in Co-education system.

Table No.1

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	16	80%
2	No	04	20%
3	Total	20	100%

The next problem was highlight by 65% responded that our society didn't favor co-education due to one reason or another reason. While 35% respondents argued that reported that our society acknowledged the co-education system as shown in table No. 2.

Table No. 2

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	07	35%
2	No	13	65%
3	Total	20	100%

In the response of co-education, the 70% respondents accordingly reported that we had no opposition in our families regarding, while rest of the 30% reported that we had faced opposition in our families regarding co-education system.

Table No.3

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	06	30%
2	No	14	70%
3	Total	20	100%

In one of the other problems, 85% responded that they were taught that co-education encouraged them in their daily life. While 15% taught that co-education didn't encourage them in their daily life matter.

Table No. 4

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	17	85%
2	No	03	15%
3	Total	20	100%

Next table was about the role of co-education in national building, so in the response 90% has the view that co-education can play a pivotal role in the national development, while only 10% reported that co-education can't play any specific role in the national building.

Table No.5

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	18	90%
2	No	02	10%
3	Total	20	100%

In the light of the below Table No. 6, 60% of the respondents have argued that they feel fear about co-education due to one reason or another reason. While 40% responded that feel free in getting education in co-education system.

Table No. 6

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	12	60%
2	No	08	40%
3	Total	20	100%

In the light of the below mentioned question, 95% respondents argued that their teachers provided equal opportunity to all of them without gender discrimination. While only 5% responded that their teacher didn't provide equal opportunity to their students.

Table No. 7

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	19	95%
2	No	01	05%
3	Total	20	100%

In the answer of the below question, 65% reported that their teachers encouraged them to participate in curricular as well as co-curricular activities but unfortunately we couldn't participated in co-curricular activities due to one or another reason. While 35% responded that their teachers didn't encouraged them to participate in co-curricular activities.

Table No. 8

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	13	65%
2	No	07	35%
3	Total	20	100%

The below table No.9 showed the response of female students about separate institutions, 85% responded that there should be separate educational institutions provided to female students to get more and more enrolment without any fear. While 15% have argued that there is no need of separate institution at BS level.

Table No. 9

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	17	85%
2	No	03	15%
3	Total	20	100%

One of the major problem faced by all female students in Government post graduate college Parachinar, that there is no hostel facility in college for the girls' students, which is shown in the below Table No. 10

Table No. 10

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	00	00%
2	No	20	100%
3	Total	20	100%

In the response about the facilities, 80% respondents have argued that they were not satisfied with the education condition and facilities provides to female students in

Parachinar post graduate college. While only 20% responded that they were satisfied with the education condition and facilities provided by college to female education.

Table No. 11

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	04	20%
2	No	16	80%
3	Total	20	100%

In the light of the below question almost the result was 50, 50. Because almost all have wished to get higher education, in which 55% responded that they wanted to acquire higher education in female oriented institutions. While 45% has argued to get higher education in co-education system.

Table No. 12

S. NO	No. of Respondents		%age
1	Yes	09	45%
2	No	11	55%
3	Total	20	100%

Following are some of the major problems faced by students at BS level in co-education.

- i. Poverty
- ii. Social Cultural Factors
- iii. Lack of Family Interest

iv. Early Marriages

v. Lack of Facilities in college

Following are some of the remedies obtained at field work

i. Employment

ii. Awareness

iii. Motivation

iv. All sort of facilities for female students on priority base

v. Female staff

The majority of students recommend promoting female education not only in Parachinar but all over Pakistan as education has the power to change the fate of the country. They believe that education without gender discrimination is the only solution for societal development. As the saying goes, "give me an educated mother, and I will give you an educated nation."

This study's main findings are as follows: firstly, education is a fundamental need for both sexes, and women in Kurram are not entitled to co-education due to cultural and patriarchal systems, male dominance, gender disparity and discrimination, conservatism, misperceptions of religion, and female exploitation leading to illiteracy in the area. Secondly, co-education is essential for a nation's development, prosperity, and building a strong and coherent nation. Thirdly, co-education helps women utilize their skills in various fields, leading to positive outcomes for society. Fourthly, Kurram's social structure is based on cultural rigidity, prejudice, conservatism, patriarchal system, strict customs and traditions, customary laws, Pardah system, and confinement of women, which hinders their participation in co-education. Lastly, economic constraints on co-education in Kurram society are extreme poverty, unemployment, lack of basic needs, economic dependency, lack of funds for education, women with less economic power, and parents' unstable economic position that affects their daughters' education expenses.

Conclusion

The issue of coeducation is complex and requires more time, effort, and dedication from educators, researchers, and educational planners to address the social, cultural, economic, political, and religious obstacles to coeducation in Pakistani society, particularly in the Pukhtoon society. However, coeducation can provide men and women with the opportunity to understand each other and coexist peacefully. In the case of Kurram, coeducation allows women to express their potential and abilities in various fields of life, and broaden their knowledge to effectively socialize and educate children. Coeducation can be used as a tool to promote positive interactions between genders and produce a prosperous generation. Unfortunately, women face cultural, political, economic, and religious challenges in every part of the world, including Pakistan. These challenges are more severe in tribal belts due to the rigid culture and social system.

The study recommends that the government invest more in girls' education to promote female status in Kurram District. Additionally, awareness campaigns and educational seminars on "education for all" should be promoted, in line with the teachings of Islam and relevant cultural traditions, to broaden the mental horizon of people and increase acceptance of women's education. Furthermore, the government should adopt gender-balanced policies in education and provide scholarships or reward schemes to encourage vulnerable strata of the community. Effective measures should be taken to address the issues related to coeducation and provide a better platform for women in society to fulfill their roles and functions for national development

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