

THE IMPACT OF FEMALE HIGHER EDUCATION ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF FAMILIES IN PESHAWAR: NORTH WEST OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The awareness and recognition concerning female education in general and female higher education in particular began in 70s. It has been realized that female education can bring a change in society and can play vital role in women empowerment and hence in socio-economic development. A new lexis was introduced i.e. WID (Women in Development). If educated people earn more than uneducated people, shouldn't the same thing happen for females? Empirical studies about women education have revealed that education of women leads to many economic and social benefits that includes increase in wage levels. Female education is an essential instrument of achieving self-respect, awareness, empowerment, improved level of health and living. This research is aimed to determine the impact of Female Higher Education on standard of living of the household; the impact of female higher education on family income and the effects of female higher education on health indicators. The data has been collected from 150 employed married women in Peshawar during 2019. The data is collected about Demographics, health indicators, social indicators and economic indicators of the family of the respondent. Chi-Square test is applied to analyze the collected data. The data analysis showed strong correlation between Female Higher Education, Health Indicators, Social Indicators and Economic Indicators. The research carried out concluded that there is a positive relationship between Female Higher Education and Socio Economic Status of the Family that in turn impact the socio economic development of the Peshawar city.

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Introduction

Female education and gender role in socio economic uplift of households is the most recent trend in the micro economics literature. In this age of globalization higher Education is the most important determinant of socio-economic development of families. In most developing economies boys are considered superior to girls. Pakistan is not an exception to this. A very big Gender gap in connection to education has been observed in Pakistan. The gap becomes more widen when it comes to higher education levels.

Female higher education impact the life of women and their family by increased wage levels and household income. Female higher education also effect family social life by improving the health of the family. Many researcher believe that higher rate of return of female higher education for individual families is an established fact. Decreasing gender gap in higher education improves gender equality by enlightening women and enhancing their skills. The current study is carried out to determine the impact of female higher education on standard of living of the household & on human development index and to quantify the impact of female higher education on family income.

Challenges in Female Education

Female education is facing many challenges in Pakistan particularly in Peshawar women have a comparative disadvantage in education and unfavorable situation in education. Female higher education is confronting following challenges:

Gender Discrimination

South Asia in general and Pakistan in particular observe gender discrimination in female Higher education sector (UNESCO, 2002). The World Economic Forum (Lopez-Claros & Zahidi, 2005), reports that despite the fact that religion Islam and constitution of Pakistan give equal rights to men and women for getting education, females are still considered as marginalized segment of the society. Hence, they are deprived from their right of getting higher education.

Financial Constraints

Large portion of population in Pakistan lives below the line of poverty. Low income class struggle to bear the cost of education (Barriers to Girls Education, 2018). Government has established colleges and universities in all major cities with low tuition fee but still parents have to pay for examination fee, books and stationary and for hostel if required. When this expenditure is added to other household expenditures, most of the times it become unbearable to the parents and they usually decide to refrain from letting their daughters get higher education.

Social Norms & Traditions

Social, cultural norms and traditions in Pakistan negatively impact women education and empowerment. Damaging cultural practices i.e. early marriages, unequal gender standards largely force young females from availing higher education. Further traditionally the division of labor left very little choices for females in job market and higher education. Society does not let female to establish their own businesses, work and study with males that in turn discourage females and their parents from getting higher education.

Types of Education in Pakistan

The higher education for females can be categorized as follow:

College Education

Undergraduate courses are offered in public and private colleges with limited number of courses and limited number of seats available for admission. Public sector colleges charge subsidized rates of fee and generally offer arts and sciences courses. The quality of education offered at public sector colleges is generally considered substandard.

University Education

Universities in Pakistan offer both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Being semi government and autonomous bodies universities fix their own fees. The fee in public sector universities is comparatively low than the private sector universities. Still many student could not afford the fees of universities. In addition universities are co-education institute and many parents do not allow their daughters to study with boys.

Technical and Vocational Education

Federal government introduced TVET (Technical & Vocational Education Training) in Pakistan for the females to support them to acquire skills and promote entrepreneurship for economic and industrial growth. It is kind of adult literacy platform. It is skill based professional program. Lack of effective implantation and supportive strategy, low capacity of trainers on government side and predominantly cultural glass ceilings for women ended TVET as ineffective.

Review of Literature

There are two main reasons for investigating the relationship between female higher education and socio-economic status of the family. Generally in the last decade living standard improved and extensive series of economic research identified that female higher education and the income levels are positively correlated (Anita c., et al., 2020)). Female who attained higher education are comparatively play substantial role in human resource development and in turn impact socio economic development (Mehmood, S., Chong, L., & Hussain, M. 2018)). Higher education paves ways for gender participation in governance, leadership and thus become an inspiration and beacon for many others (Pell, Winter 2015). Direct and positive relationship of female higher education and socio-economic development has been recognized across the world. This hypothesis has been further accepted by the research conducted globally. Many researchers concluded that female higher education effect society in general. (Bhagavatheeswaran et al., 2016; UNESCO, 2013).

In 1961 Schultz first time carried a research about the wage level and productivity of labor based on gender. Backer and Thomes (1994) concluded that higher education of women and training generate difference in earnings. Gatti (1999) observed that gender gap expand difference in education and training. Klasen S. (2008) also examined gender inequality in employment and education. They concluded that gender gap reduce economic prosperity of families and economies. Education also help female to achieve and improve human development indicators particularly gender equality. It is generally believed that female education can alleviate poverty and thus improve living standards and hence returns of female education are much larger than the return of education to male. Socio-Economic status of the families is analyzed by assessing family income, family size, family expenditure, assets and liabilities. Despite the fact that socio-economic effects of female education builds a large portion of economic literature, it is also believed that women play a very significant role in society and female education is a major key to socio- economic change of society but in Pakistan women are generally forced to play a pre specified role i.e. the performing & managing household chores and in some areas traditionally female help their

male counterpart in farming. Whereas in developed world and industrially advanced countries this is a commonly known that without female participation in economic activities social development cannot be achieved. The correlation between Female higher education and employment become a potential reason for research in this area. Jayachandran (2008&2015) emphasized that women prefer white collar employment and office hence the economic transferals is to brain based work from brawn-based work. The result is comparative advantage of women employment in services sector. Forward looking families then invest in skill trainings of women and invest more in men education. (Pitt R. et al. 2012).

Rationale of the Study

Female higher education is given paramount importance in developed countries however it has been overlooked in the developing countries. In the same way unfortunately higher education for women is also neglected in Pakistan. Consequently, Policy makers and stakeholders are not showing due significance towards women education. As a result females are left with limited opportunities henceforth gender disparities become more visible with the passage of time. The present study is proposed to quantify women higher education as an engine of socio economic development using primary data and will suggest recommendations for policy makers and future researchers.

Aims and Objectives

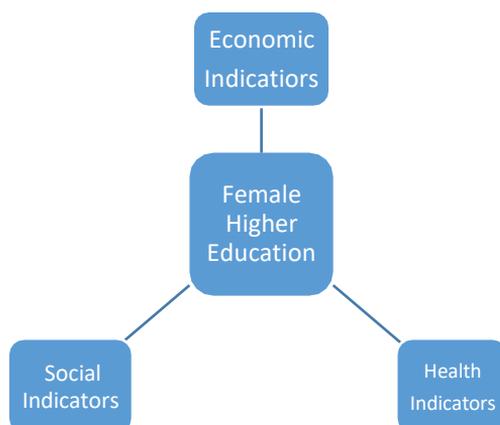
The research is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- To assess the impact of female higher education on standard of living of the household
- To quantify the impact of female higher education on family income
- To determine the effects of female higher education on health indicators.

Research Hypothesis

There is a positive correlation between female education and socio-economic development of a family.

Theoretical Framework



The theoretical framework shows that Female Higher Education is Independent Variable whereas Economic Indicators, Social Indicators and Health Indicators are Dependent Variables.

Economic Indicators include Income of the respondent, Consumption Expenditure and Savings of the Family, Household Facilities (Electric and Electronics, Furniture, Utilities), Size of the Family House, Car owned or otherwise, if owned Type of the Car, Assets of the family, Job opportunities, and Family Vacations. Social Indicators include Family Size, Education of the Children of the respondent, Housing, and Social life, Life Satisfaction, Happiness and Quality of life. The Health Indicators included: Health indicators include Awareness about Health, Age Specific Health Issues of Family Members, Number of Children, General Health Status of the family(Blood Pressure, Diabetes, Arthritis, Chronic Pain, Kidney Disease, Liver Disease, depression) , Oral health , hospital visits ,Waterborne Diseases , Food Based Illness, Low Birth Weight and Disability

Research Methodology

This part of the research explains the research methodology. It describes research site, sample size, sampling technique, and research instrument, research model.

Research Site

Peshawar the northwest city of the Pakistan is selected as research site because Peshawar is the capital city of the Khyber Pakhtunkhawa province. The data required for the research will be available in Peshawar.

Sample Size

To determine the impact of female higher education data will be collected from 150 married females. Out of which 50 will be with 12 years of education without any skill/training, 50 will be having 12 years of education with skill/training, 50 will be with 16 years of education. The data will be collected from married women employed in education, medicine, office jobs in public sector organizations. The age of the respondent will be 30-50 years.

Sampling Technique

Snow ball sampling technique is used to collect data. Since the sample size is 150 married employed female therefore snowball sampling technique is most suitable to identify the respondents.

Research Instrument

Self-structured questionnaire is used administered to collect the data. The designed questionnaire has three sections; the first section includes demographic questions, the second part is comprised of questions regarding education and income and the third section is about social and human indicators.

Research Model

Chi-Square test is used to analyze the data. Cross tabulations used to compare and quantify the impact of higher education on socio economic status of family and to assess correlation in the identified three groups of data because cross tabs is a statistical instrument used to analyze categorical data.

Discussion and Analysis

This section is divided into three sub sections.

Female Education and Social Indicators

Generally social indicators are the index to monitor the social life of a household and guide to the government for policy making (Ferris,1988). The social indicators included: Family Size, Education of the Children of the respondent, Housing, and Social life, Life Satisfaction, Happiness and Quality of life. In this section the relationship between female education and social indicators is calculated. Whether the Social Indicators of the Family of respondent are dependent on the Education of the Respondent. Chi-Square test is applied to determine the association Female Education and Social Indicator

Social Indicators * Female Higher Education

| Chi-Square Tests (Cross Tabulation) | | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------|--|
| | Value | Df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 74.125 ^a | 9 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 86.839 | 9 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 46.976 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 149 | | |

The analyzed data shows that the dependency of Social Indicators on Female Higher Education ($\chi^2 (2, N=150) = 74.125, P < 0.005$). This shows that Social Indicators are highly associated with the Female Higher Education.

Female Higher Education and Health Indicators

Socio- economic researchers usually use Health indicators to assess and quantify the impact of socio -economic development on health indicators. In this research we used health indicator to determine the impact of Female Higher Education on family life of the house hold. The Health Indicators included: Awareness about Health, Age Specific Health Issues of Family Members, Number of Children, General Health Status of the family(Blood Pressure, Diabetes, Arthritis, Chronic Pain, Disease, depression) , Oral health , Kidney Disease, Liver Disease, Hospital visits ,Waterborne Diseases , Food Based Illness, Low Birth Weight and Disability. In this section the association between health indicators and female higher education is determined. Female higher education is taken as an independent variable and the health indicators as dependent variables.

Health Indicators * Female Higher Education

| Chi-Square Tests (Cross Tabulation) | | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------|--|
| | Value | Df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 73.157 ^a | 9 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 85.310 | 9 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 47.191 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 149 | | |

The calculated Chi-Square results regarding association between Health Indicators and Female Higher Education shows strong association between independent and dependent variables ($X^2(2, N=150) = 73.310, P < 0.005$).

Female Education and Economic Indicators

The inequalities in the available household resources are steadfast, reliable and valid instruments to identify, determine and enumerate the impact of variables. In this study we used Income of the respondent, Consumption Expenditure and Savings of the Family, Household Facilities (Electric and Electronics, Furniture, Utilities), Size of the Family House, Car owned or otherwise, if owned Type of the Car, Assets of the family, Job opportunities, and Family Vacations as economic indicators. Chi-Square test is applied to determine the relationship between economic indicators and female higher education.

Economic Indicators * Female Higher Education

| Chi-Square Tests (Cross Tabulation) | | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------|--|
| | Value | Df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 75.373 ^a | 9 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 89.183 | 9 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 49.127 | 1 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 149 | | |

The results show that the economic Indicators are highly associated with Female Higher Education ($X^2(2, N=150) = 75.373, P < 0.005$). This shows that Social Indicators are highly associated with the Female Higher Education.

Conclusion

The research carried out showed strong correlation between Female Higher Education and socio-economic development of the family. It has been observed that families having female with higher education showed good trends in economic, health and social indicators. Hence we accept our research hypothesis: There is a positive correlation between female education and socio-economic development of a family. It is therefore suggested that policy makers and stakeholders should focus on female higher education because it positively affect the socio economic development of the country.

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