

An Analysis of Parents Perception Towards Female Education: A Case Study of District Bandipora in North Kashmir

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ABSTRACT

Education is the basic fundamental right of each individual. Today when we accept that the mother is the first teacher of the child, it becomes necessary for us that we should also accept the importance of female education. The education of women is as much necessary like men for all round development, progress and prosperity of the country. The purpose of the present study was to identify the perception of parents towards female education in North Kashmir District Bandipora of Jammu and Kashmir State India. The Bandipora district is still behind in general female literacy rate as (37.35% as per census 2011), which is extremely low as compared to other districts of Kashmir valley. High level of discrimination has been found between the male and female literacy level in major parts of Bandipora District. The parents give a least preference to education of their daughters then sons, due to religious and social attitude, poverty, backwardness, illiteracy and ignorance of parents. The girls are actively engaged in agricultural fields, domestic chores and were forced for early marriage. Moreover the socio-economic problems like poverty, economic backwardness, prejudices, social inequality, poor malnutrition, gender inequality, religious orthodox etc. creates a main hindrance to education of their daughters. The present study was conducted through descriptive survey method. For this study 180 respondents from nine blocks were selected by simple random sampling techniques. The study findings that occupation, education, income and perception of parents have a significant impact upon the female education.

1. Introduction

Education is the basic fundamental right of each individual. It is a human right that should be accorded to all human beings solely by reason of being human. It is in real sense, is to humanize humanity, and to make life progressive, cultured and civilized. "Education is of great intrinsic importance with assessing inequalities of opportunity. It is also very important determinant of individual's income, health and capacity to interact and communicate with others. It has been a central significance to the development of individual progress and the national development in terms of social, political, and economic aspects. It is the beginning not only of individual knowledge, information and awareness, but also of holistic strategy for development and change", (R.Pandya and V.Parikh 2007). It is through education that man develops his thinking and reasoning, problem solving and creativity, intelligence and aptitude, positive sentiments and skills, good values and attitudes. A society cannot think itself civilized and cultured by keeping half of its population illiterate and uneducated. Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills, and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the all-round development process. "Women's, who constitutes half of the population in our country, if they remain uneducated and illiterate, progress and prosperity of any society, is not possible. Real advancement in any field of human life cannot be possible without women education. For development of society, economic prosperity, national unity or solidarity, happy and healthy homes, etc. women education is very essential", (D.D.Mehta 2018). "In the sense, education is important for

enabling females to breakthrough many traditional, orthodox and social barriers, and thus promoting social, economic, cultural, and occupational, personality and intellectual development", (R.Pandya and V.Parikh 2007). "The education of girls and women brings particular benefits to society in a number of ways. Educated mothers tend to ensure that their children in turn are educated and become effective members of society. They safeguard the future generation's health and nutrition. No country can become developed without developing the capabilities of women and encouraging the empowerment of women", (Murugan K.R.2007).

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru once said," To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened; once she is on the move, the family moves, the nation moves", (M Devi 2004). Mahatma Gandhi also said that, "if you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a women you educate an entire family", (Andal N 2002). According to Kothari Commission," For full development and progress of human resources, the improvement of human beings, reducing the birth rate and for moulding the character of children, the education of women is of great importance than that of men, (D.D.Mehta 2018).

The United Nation advocates that Education is the chief as well as primary factor for improving reproductive health of a girl child, or the adult woman and generally raising her status. There are strong links between a women's education, her reproductive behaviour and the survival of her children, (UN, 1998).

Dr. Roshan Ara, Women and education, (may 07 2016), revealed in his article that in Jammu and Kashmir despite the progress made during the last fifty years, female literacy remains very low, particularly in the Kashmir valley as the education of women was given least preference due to the consequence of illiteracy, ignorance, conservatism of parents, poverty and backwardness

The study was conducted in North Kashmir of Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir state India. The Bandipora town which is the administrative head quarter of the district is bounded by mountains on three sides and by Wular Lake in the fourth-the second largest fresh water lake in Asia. Among all the districts of Kashmir valley, the Bandipora district is still behind in general female literacy rate as compared to other districts. "The girls are still disadvantaged in their access to education, due to the negative perception, poverty, conservatism, orthodoxical thinking, social inequality, gender inequality, backwardness, religious and social attitude, occupation, income, illiteracy and ignorance of parents", (Showkat BA 2016). "The girls are the victims of discrimination, deprivation and dogmatism and were not allowed to take part in the arena of social, cultural, political, economic and literary world as well as network of social transformation. They were treated as second grade citizen, procreator, caretaker, homemaker and facilitator", (M.M Bora and K K Saharia 2007). "Majority of the young girls are forced to work in domestic and agricultural fields like cooking, washing clothes, looking after the children, keeping the house neat and clean and preparation of soil sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting and looking after domestic animals", (Khaliq S 2012). The male preference and female negligence has become a main working policy in major parts of district Bandipora. In some tribal villages of Bandipora district education for girls has been totally ignored and they are forced to get early marriage. The parent gives more preference to education of boys than girls. As per the 2011, census report the total literacy rate of Bandipora district is 56.28%. Among the male literacy rate is 56.36% and the female literacy rate is only 37.35%, which is lowest as compared to males as well as other districts of the Kashmir region, (census 2011). Therefore it seems appropriate to study the parent's attitude towards female education in north Kashmir of Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir State

2. Objectives

The main objective of the present study is to address and analysis the parent perception towards female education in North Kashmir of Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir State. The main objectives of the study are:

- To identify parent's perception about the education of girls.
- To explore the reasons girls drop out from schools.
- To suggest some measures for the promotion of female education.

3. Methodology

In the present study descriptive survey method was used.

This study was conducted in nine blocks (viz, Arin, Banokoot, Aloosa, Aragam, Ajas, Hajin, Naidkhai, Sumbal, and Ganastan) of Bandipora district in North Kashmir of Jammu and Kashmir State, India. The sample for the present study consisted of 180 parents drawn from nine blocks of Bandipora district. Out of the nine blocks, two villages/mohallahas have been randomly selected from each block by simple random sampling techniques. Data was collected through questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussions. Data collected through the above mentioned research instruments was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted by using simple percentage in the light of the objectives of the study.

4. Results and Conclusions

Table 1. Educational level of respondents

Ser no.	Level of education	Numbers	Percentage
01	Illiterate	29	16.11%
02	Primary	42	23.33%
03	Middle	48	26.66%
04	Secondary	28	15.55%
05	Higher	33	18.33%
	Total	180	100%

The table. 1 indicates that 26% of the respondents had education at middle level and 16% of the parents were illiterate while each 23, 15 and 18 percent of the parents had education up to primary, secondary and higher level. Further Through interview and focus group discussion it was found that education background and low socio-economic status of the parents have huge impact on girl's education. Those parents who have higher education have more awareness and understandings regarding the education of girls are compared to those parents who have low education level.

Table 2. Occupational level of the respondents

Ser No	Occupation	Numbers	Percentage
01	Farmers	82	45.55%
02	Business men	28	15.55%
03	Private employees	46	25.55%
04	Government employees	24	13.33%
	Total	180	100%

From the above table No.2, it has shown that more than 45% of the parents were farmers, while the each 15%, 25% and 13% of the parents are engaged in businesses, private sectors and government sectors. Through the discussion it was observed that occupation and income of the parents have a significant impact of girl's education, those parents who are engaged in government sectors and are business have a more awareness regarding the education of girls than those who are engaged in primary and private sectors. So it clearly indicates that low economic status and income groups are not favored towards female education and they cannot afford higher education of their daughters. In this way majority of the parents are forced of their daughters to work in agricultural fields as well as domestic chores, in spite of getting them education.

Table 3. Major obstacles for not sending their daughters to school

Ser. No	Major obstacles	Numbers	Percentage
01	School is far away	18	10%
02	Dearth of female teachers	12	6.66%
03	Lack of government policies	16	8.88%
04	Poverty	52	28.88%
05	Family traditions	44	24.44%
06	Religious pressure	38	21.11%
	Total respondents	180	100%

From the above discussion it was found that poverty of parents is the predominant factor that creates a main hindrance to female education. The family pressure was found to be another reason that creates a barrier to female education. The narrow-minded parents think that education spoils the character of their daughters if their daughter goes to

schools and colleges she will not work in domestic chores as well as in agricultural fields. Moreover the other major reasons for not sending their daughters to school were found are religious constraints (21%), school is far away (10%), lack of government policies (8%), and dearth of lady teachers (6%).

Table NO.4 Perception of respondents towards female education

S.No	Opinion of Respondents	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
01	Girls should be at home for only managing domestic tasks.	110	61.11%	70	38.88%
02	Heads of the family do not allow education for girls.	105	58.33%	75	41.66%
03	Educating a girl is against the family and social norms.	120	66.66%	60	33.33%
04	Large number of children's makes parents difficult to educate the girls.	160	88.88%	20	11.11%
05	Girls should be given opportunity in domestic household activities than education.	132	73.33%	45	25%
06	Marriage is more important for girls than education.	130	72.22%	50	27.77%
07	Parents fears to send their daughters to far off schools.	80	44.44%	100	50%
08	Educated girl makes a better citizens than an uneducated girls	40	22.22%	120	66.66%

Table No.4 shows the percentage of opinion of the respondents towards education of girls. From the above discussion it was found that 61% of parents are in favour while 39% are not in favour that girls should be at home for managing a domestic task. Further 58.33% of the respondent believes that heads of the family do not allow for female education while 41.66% were not agreeing this. Educating a girl is against the family and social norms were agreed by 66.66% and disagreed by 33.33%. Large number of children's makes a parent difficult to educate the girls were agreed by 88.88% and disagreed by 11.11%. Further 73.33% were agreed that girls should be given opportunity in domestic household activities than education and disagree by 25%. Marriage is important for girls than education were agreed by 72.22% and disagreed by 27.77%. Fear among parents to send their daughters far off schools were agreed by 44.44% and disagreed by 54.66%. Lastly educated girls makes a better citizens than an uneducated girls were agree by 22.22% and disagree by 66.66%. So From the above objectives, it was found that there are number of reasons like economic, familial, educational, psychological, religious and social reasons which puts the females behind for getting education.

5. Suggestions

1. State government should take up the responsibility of educating public opinion through mass media and print media in favour of female education.
2. Educational institutions should be set up in all the rural as well as in backward areas.

3. Scholarships, free education, free books and uniforms in larger numbers should be given particularly to females belonging to lower socio-economic status.
4. There is a direct need and importance of proper counseling, guidance and motivational campaign towards the spread of female education, especially in rural and backward areas as they are practically neglected so far.
5. The government should provide financial assistance to the poor parents so that they can educate their daughters.
6. The government should establish adult education centers to educate the illiterate parents, so that they can change their negative attitude to positive attitude regarding the education of daughters. In short education can bring an overall development of the society as well as the whole nation. Therefore, it is in the national interests and in the interests of society to make provisions for their education.

6. Conclusion

From the above study it has been found that parental education plays a vital role towards the education of women. The parents who belong to urban side have the positive thinking about the female education, the main reason behind their positiveness is that they ate themselves educated and they know the importance of education that is why they stress on female education and allow their daughters to join the schools. Whereas it has been found that the parents from rural

areas do not pay any heed towards the education of their daughters due to the low literacy rate, poverty, and orthodox thinking that is why the education of parents is important for the female education. It is the education which allows the people to come out from traditional thinking and social bondages, and it is through the parental education that

the literacy rate of female folk can be improved as well as increased. Education helps women to resist exploitation and increases women's awareness thus leading to their overall development.

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