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ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS TO FEMALE HIGHER EDUCATION IN PUKHTUN SOCIETY

**YOUNAS KHAN^{*1}, ASAD ULLAH² FAKHR UD DIN³, SOHAIL AHMAD³, TEHSEENA
JAFFAR³**

1: PhD Scholar, Department of Rural Sociology, The University of Agriculture Peshawar
Pakistan

2: Mphil Scholar, Department of Sociology, The University of Malakand Chakdara Pakistan

3: Mphil scholar, Department of Rural Sociology, The University of Agriculture Peshawar
Pakistan

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***Corresponding Author: Younas Khan: PhD Scholar, Department of Rural Sociology, The
University of Agriculture Peshawar, Pakistan, E Mail: younas.soc@aup.edu.pk**

ABSTRACT

The present study entitled economic constraints to female in getting higher education was conducted in union council balamabat district Dir lower Pakistan, to explore the economic anomalies which affect female higher education negatively. A sample size stood of 375 was selected by using purposive sampling techniques. The data was collected from both sexes through a well designed data collection tool questionnaire. Frequency and percentage distribution and chi square test was used to ascertain the association between dependent '*female higher education*' and independent variable '*economic constraints*' by using SPSS software. The study found that, a highly significant association ($p=0.000$) was found between dependent and independent variables indicators, the prevalence of poverty; lack of scholarships and loan by the government; inadequate budget allocation; expensive educational system and economic supremacy of male members of a society over women negatively affects women higher education. An immediate steps up is the order of the day by the government to increase the

budget which is a tumbling factor along with giving loans and scholarships will increased the level of higher education generally while female particularly were extended some of the recommendations in the light of present study.

Keywords: Economic constraints, Female higher education, Insufficient Budget, Pukhtoon Society

INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment is a phenomenon related with several sticky points such as "voice, resources & rights. It comprises power, perceptions, resources and relationships based on access to sources, resources, and achievements. Empowerment of women is usually tasked up with economic supremacy and access to resources both inside and outside ^{[1][2][3]}. Since the dawn of the history, education plays a fundamental role in the process of development as well as with regards to Millennium Development Goal education is the only solution and a key factor of reducing poverty and other institutional inequalities^[4]. Likewise, all the institutions particularly education itself is strongly affect higher education where universities and colleges are the fundamental source of economic development and growth of a nation. As facts and figures from various researched concluded that, a country where higher education ratio is higher ultimately the economic prosperity is higher ^{[5] [6]}. In addition, to know the purpose of social life, human must attained education to know and understand the societal values and

importance which further provokes to a better and fruitful decision making for others and for themselves. In developed countries like America, up to 12th grade children's must acquired their education first by hook or by crook; even if they can't afford financially the government are responsible after 12th grade to give loan, scholarships and other financial aids ^[7].

Thus it is clear from the above paragraph that the development and prosperity of a nation is only depending upon acquisition of education. While in contrast, in Pakistani scenario getting higher education generally while higher education for female particularly is not fully encouraged by the virtue of institutional constraints such as familial, economics, political, religious and education. The existing literatures and facts from researches suggested that when women not get into educational institution the societal fabrics may disturbed and will be in dysfunctional. As *Napoleon* was of the opinion that gives me an educated mother I will give you an educated nation ^[8]. Likewise, female education generally

promotes labor force participation and higher wages for women; also encourage healthier and better educated families and enhance women own well-being. Education for women helps to overcome on constraints whether economic, social, socio-cultural. The higher the ratio of female education the higher would be positive impacts on society. As UNSECO, reported that, the literacy rate with regards to Pakistan scenario is 38% as compare to India 38% and Sri Lanka having the ratio is 78%. In addition particularly women enrollment in universities level the ratio is 2.5% in Pakistani societies ^[9]. In addition with, if we had reached the gender parity goal by 2005, more than 1 million childhood deaths could have been averted ^[10]. But unfortunately, the status of women education in Pakistan is quite unhappy due to the persistence of barbaric factors such as economic, socio-cultural, political instability and misinterpretation of religious teachings. As World Bank Group reported that there are two categorical constraints in the way of female education in Pakistan are *Demand* and *Supply* constraints. Further the *demand* constraints are sub-divided into three levels; familial, individual and community level which barbecues female from get into higher education particularly. Whereas, the *supply* constraints are those sources which run the

educational institutions which is governmental sector which not focused female education seriously; thus resulting half of the population lives their entire life in darkness. Similarly, getting higher education is the order of the day; for rapid economic, social and cultural development and advance higher educational institutions is a powerful source and a symbol of the developed nation as well as helpful in the creation of modern civil society^{[11][12]}.

In contrast with regards to Pakistani society specifically female access to higher education is a tumbling factor and not satisfactory level as well as in employment and enrollment in universities. Where women in rural areas the literacy is more alarming as compare to urban areas due to poor infrastructure and limited colleges and universities. However, most of the women which are employed in the field of teaching while nil at managerial level by the virtue of social, cultural, economic limitations ^[13]. Beside these, there are various obstacles to get higher education by women in Pakistani society but the fundamental reason is lacking of financial resources ^[14]. To dig out the objective causes of the fore-mentioned social problem this study has been initiated to empirically sum of the economic constraints

having negatively impacting female higher education.

Research Questions

Q1. Do you think economic constraints impede female from getting higher education?

Q2. Do you believe that poverty negatively affects female higher education?

Q3. Do you believe that economic supremacy of male impede female from getting higher education?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross sectional research design was used to illustrates and measure the association between dependent variable “female higher education” and independent

variable “economic constraints” by using chi-square test in district dir lower Khyber pukhtunkhwa Pakistan. District Dir lower consists of seven tehsils where each tehsil are subdivided into union council. Union council Balamabat was selected purposively as the universe of the study. Further, according to the census report which was conducted in 1998 the total population of union council Balamabat stood of 17790 resulting 375 sample sizes as per Sekeran universal table of sample size distribution. In addition, three likert scale and a well known data collection tool questionnaire was used for this quantitative research. The conceptual frame work of the study is shown as below;

Table 1: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Economic Constraints	Female Higher Education

Furthermore, the collected data is analyzed by using Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) to show the desired results in terms of Uni-varaite analysis (frequency, percentage distributions) and Bi-Varaite analysis (Chi square test)was used to ascertain the relationship between dependent and independent variable. The formula of chisquare (χ^2) is shown below which was outlined by McCall and Robert (1975);

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table (2) disclosed the demographic sketch of the local respondents entailed that, majority of the respondents having 58.1 percent was male on the basis of their sex and 41.9 percent were female. The data collection from female is really hard for researcher because of strong socio-cultural and religious constraints. Further, on the basis of the age majority 77.1 percent of the respondents were belong to the age group containing 20 to 25, having 17.6 percent

were age group 26 to 30 and 5.3 percent had their age group which come under the jurisdiction of above 31 year. Likewise, to know the status of the respondents with regards to their marital social life majority 80.0% of the respondents were married while the remaining 20.0% were unmarried in the research area. It is clear from these results that early marriage concept is still prevailed resulting from the traditional socio-cultural setup may impede female particularly while male generally from getting their higher educational studies. This statement is also supported by the virtue of pre existing literature/researches (i.e.) Maqsood *et al.*, and UNICEP, highlighted that in South Asian societies the practiced of early marriage ratio is 48% in 2005. As results early marriage further creates problems to young female particularly which downfall their social and economic status in terms of income, acquisition of education and so on which further provokes female to live their life in barbaric condition^{[15][16]}. Similarly, 62.4% of the respondents had bachelor degree, 19.5% having master qualification, 14.1% was acquired Mphil degree and only 4.0% of the respondents doing their PhD degree. This results are similar as such above discussed, the concept of early marriage getting higher education by a female particularly can't

availed due to domestic chores and socio-cultural limitations while the male up to some extent acquired their higher studies. Moreover, the table further illustrates that, majority of the respondents 65.1% were live their social life in joint family system, 21.2% were living in extended familial structure and the remaining 13.6% were lived their social life under the umbrella of nuclear family.

Table no 3 dismantled that, majority 72.3% of the respondents stated that, the prevalence of poverty is a major barrier to female higher education, 25.3 % of the respondents negated and 2.4 % of the respondents have no knowledge regarding the said statement. Likewise, a highly significant association ($p=0.000$) was found between poverty and female higher education. It means that there is a direct and positive relationship was found between poverty and higher education. These results are similar with Gerboad work highlighted that poverty whether at macro or micro level impede and effects negatively female getting higher education. At macro level the government is unable to provides higher education and low spending budget in education sector while in contrast at micro level poor and miserable situation of household deprive the female higher education^[17].

Moreover, the results showed that, 69.3 % of the respondents disclosed that lake of

scholarship is a constraint to female higher education, 27.5 % negated and 3.2% of the respondents had no idea about the above statement. Similarly, a significant association ($p=0.000$) and direct relationship was found between lack of scholarships and female higher education. From these findings it could be concluded that due to lack of scholarships and strict rules and regulation to get loan (longer process and more time spending) is key obstacle in the way of female access to their higher education because of the prevalence of poverty in rural areas as compare to urban social life. This statement is supported with the findings of Mashriqi which she opined that, in the first world countries like an America access to scholarship is carried out which resulted a better educational institution platform ;even if they cannot afford college, they are offered financial aid, loans, and scholarships from their governmental and non-governmental agencies to continue their studies. Whereas the situation is quit unhappy with special reference to Afghanistan. Thus concluded that underdeveloped and developing nations are still in vain to give scholarships to the needy and intellectual scholars to get their higher studies ^[7].

The perceptions of local people with regards to expensive educational system majority 63.5 % of the respondents dismantled that, expensive education is a fundamental

constraint to female higher education, 32.5 % of the respondents rejected and 4.0 % of the respondents had no idea about the said statement. Likewise, a highly significant association ($P=0.000$) was found between female higher education and expensive educational system. It means that, due to higher expenses come on higher education that's why the female particularly are not acquired their higher education in the research area. This statement is similar with the findings of UNICEF reported that, the prevalence of infinite hurdles may hinder the developmental process of the nation including community or household level such as expenditure of books, fees and other related issues are come under the umbrella of direct cost whereas, socio-cultural , strict religious beliefs, gender stereotypes and gender difference with regards to access to higher education particularly female are come under the jurisdiction of indirect cost; resulted low enrollment of women in getting higher education in the research area^[18].

The table 6 illustrates that, majority 77.9 % of the respondents disclosed that, inadequate budget allocation for education sectors is a constraint to female getting higher education, 13.3 % of the respondents negated and 8.8 % of the respondents had no idea regarding the above statement. Likewise, a highly significant association ($p=0.000$) was found between female higher education and

inadequate budget from the government side. This above statement is supported from the findings of Glick & Sahan & Gerboad highlighted that, since from independence Pakistan is one of the countries with lowest allocation of budget for Educational institution. Such as the budget is not increased since last three decades from 2.4%. However, it is now exceed to 3.4% which is the highest GDP with highest percentage in the history of Pakistan recently it had increased to 3.4 % of GDP which is the highest percentage in the history of Pakistan. Thus the government is failed to ensure relevant budget to educational sector resulting the ratio of illiteracy is cry of the day and a tumbling factor in Pakistan scenario particularly^{[17][19]}.

Moreover , the table 7 further shows that 91.2 % were thought that limited income of the family effects parents decisions to prioritize expenditures on the education of their male children rather than female, 6.4 % of the respondents rejecting the statement and having 2.4 % of the respondents have no idea regarding this sort of statement. Similarly, a highly significant association ($p=0.000$) was also found between female higher education and prioritization of male education over female. This statement is supported from by the findings of Maqssod A, et al viewed that, the supremacy over economic resources by male hegemonic structure prevailed since the dawn

of the history which provokes women into a lower societal position with special regards to their basic rights such as access to education, employment opportunities and so many others rights. Even if the cost of schooling is lower than in that situation the female are not enjoyed their education rights due to preference of boy's education over female. Their parents are just limited their girls in domestics chores/ private sphere rather than public sphere involvement. It is clear from the above findings that, male hegemony over economy may negatively affects female education generally while higher education particularly in the universe of the study^[15].

The table highlight that, 62.9 % of the respondents says that the economy and other wealth are managed by male members of the family impede female from higher education, 32.8 % of the respondents rejected the above statement, and 4.3 % of the respondents have no idea regarding above statement. Likewise, a highly significant association ($p=0.000$) was also found between economic supremacy over female and female higher education. This result is quite similar with the preceding outcomes. This statement is supported from by the findings of Khan, H. et al, and Khan.Y etal., disclosed that, Pakistani society generally while pukhtun society particularly is male dominated society where the economic supremacy is controlled by the male member

since dawn of the history as a tumbling factor for female enrollment ratio decreasing generally while in higher education, politics, employment particularly. In the research area

the women are just limited to do household chores and domestic works rather to involve outside activities from the home resulting barbaric condition of female ^{[8][20]}.

Table 2: Socio-economic status of the local respondents/ Demographic sketch

S. No	Attributes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender		
	a. Male	218	58.1
	b. Female	157	41.9
2	Age		
	a. 20-25	289	77.1
	b. 26-30	66	17.6
	c. Above 31	20	5.3
3	Marital Status		
	a. Married	300	80.0
	b. Unmarried	75	20.0
4	Educational Level		
	a. Bachelor	234	62.4
	b. Master	73	19.5
	c. Mphil	53	14.1
	d. PhD	15	4.0
5	Family Type		
	a. Joint	244	65.1
	b. Extended	80	21.2
	c. Nuclear	51	13.6

Table with explanations of Uni-variate and Bi-variate analysis of attributes are following;

Table 3: The prevalence of poverty resulted low enrollment of female in higher education

Yes	No	Uncertain	Total	Chi Square (χ^2)
271 (72.3)	95 (25.3)	9 (2.4)	375 (100.0)	$\chi^2=268.549$ (P= 0.000)
Note: Number in table represent frequencies and number in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of the respondent				

Table 4: Lake of scholarships and strict rules access to loan for education impede female from getting their higher education

Yes	No	Uncertain	Total	Chi Square (χ^2)
260 (69.3)	103 (27.5)	12 (3.2)	375 (100.0)	$\chi^2= 264.910$ (P=0.000)
Note: Number in table represent frequencies and number in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of the respondent				

Table 5: Expensive educational system negatively affects female higher studies

Yes	No	Uncertain	Total	Chi Square (χ^2)
238 (63.5)	122 (32.5)	15 (4.0)	375 (100.0)	$\chi^2=252.864$ (P=0.000)
Note: Number in table represent frequencies and number in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of the respondent				

Table 6: Inadequate budget allocation from the government to educational sector impedes female higher education.

Yes	No	Uncertain	Total	Chi Square (χ^2)
292 (77.9)	50 (13.3)	33 (8.8)	375(100.0)	$\chi^2=564.878$ (P=0.000)
Note: Number in table represent frequencies and number in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of the respondent				

Table 7: Limited income of the family effects parent's decision to prioritize expenditure on male higher education rather than female

Yes	No	Uncertain	Total	Chi Square (χ^2)
342 (91.2)	23 (6.4)	9 (2.4)	375 (100.0)	$\chi^2 = 30.682$ (P=0.000)
Note: Number in table represent frequencies and number in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of the respondent				

Table 8: Economic supremacy of male impede female from getting higher education

Yes	No	Uncertain	Total	Chi Square (χ^2)
236 (6.9)	123 (32.8)	16 (4.3)	375(100.0)	$\chi^2 = 258.706$ (P=0.000)
Note: Number in table represent frequencies and number in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of the respondent				

CONCLUSION

The current study entitled economic constraints to female in getting higher education was carried out in district Dir Lower Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Pakistan. The study concluded that the prevalence of poverty, inadequate budget allocation by the government to educational sector, expensive educational system and lack of scholarships were major declining factors of female in higher education. In addition the economic supremacy of male since the dawn of the history over women resulted almost discrimination and lower down the social and economic status of women generally while in the study area particularly. It is a fact that getting education of female resulted educational generation as well as bring peace and solidarity at macro (state) and micro (family) level. An immediate step should be taken by the government to increase their budget in educational sector along with giving loans and scholarships will increase the ratio of female higher education were put

forwarded some of the recommendations in the light of present study.

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