

SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS OF PARENTS AND ITS IMPACT ON FEMALE EDUCATION

Dr. Um E Rubab

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Fatima Jinnah Women University

Email: umerubab@fjwu.edu.pk

Dr. Hina Gul

Department of Education, Fatima Jinnah Women University

Email: hina.gul@fjwu.edu.pk

Syeda Eman Jameel

Department of Education, Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi

Email: syedaej21@gmail.com

Rida Faheem

Department of Education, Govt Viqar UN Nisa Graduate College for Women,
Rawalpindi

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the connection between socioeconomic status (SES) of parents and education of their female child at the intermediate level in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. The socioeconomic status is a complex phenomenon that contains the elements of income, occupation, parental education, which have a serious impact on school results. The study incorporated a quantitative and descriptive design to examine the opinions of parents and teachers and determine the character of the relationship between parental SES and female education. Simple random sampling method was used to select a sample of 66 teachers and 66 parents of intermediate level students in a single educational institution. The self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data, which was analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely frequency and percentage distribution. The findings of this study showcase a significant relationship that indicates that a higher parental socio economic status has a strong correlation with higher level of female education. This also highlights the critical role of social and economic factors in creating educational opportunities and underscores the requirement for targeted interventions in order to mitigate educational disparities.

Keywords; Socioeconomic status, female education, intermediate level, teachers, parents, Pakistan, descriptive research.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a basic human right and one of the most effective entry points to human and social growth, but it is not evenly distributed among different social-economic levels. Education can be defined as a powerful tool of women empowerment that allows them to be fully involved in social, economic, and political life and to gain a higher level of autonomy (Sohail, 2014). Gender gap in education in Pakistan, although there has been a tremendous improvement in the recent time, there still exists gaps in this area especially at the intermediate education and higher education levels. Socioeconomic status (SES) has become one of the most crucial factors of educational access and attainment. Quality of schooling and the opportunities that children will have are frequently determined by the economic resources, social status, and education of a family. This happens particularly to female children whose path to further education may have other cultural and economic limitations to education beyond the mandatory level. The purpose of this study is to investigate the complex connection between socioeconomic status of parents and the educational level of their daughters at the intermediate level, which defines further academic and career opportunities. The study fills a research gap within the literature by taking place in a city setting in Rawalpindi, offering a local understanding of a national problem.

The inequality of female educational attainment which has been a constant problem in this study is directly related to the socioeconomic level of their parents. Numerous intelligent and talented female students in low-income families cannot pursue their education past secondary level because of financial barriers, parental neglect, and a social bias toward male education. Although the government has done a commendable job in enhancing access to education, these inequalities imply that the underlying causes, especially those relating to socioeconomic status, need a more profound systematic interpretation. Although the existing literature recognizes the problem, it tends to lack details on this relationship on the intermediate level in Pakistani urban setting (Jabeen, Zaid, & Khan, 2013). This literature gap is important as the middle level is one of the critical points of transition as a student often takes shape in terms of his or her educational pathway. Hence, this paper will provide a systematic exploration of the effects of income level, occupation, and education of parents on decisions and outcomes regarding the education of their daughters, and essential information on policy and practice to address these education gaps.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study is to look into how parental socioeconomic position affects female schooling. It aims to investigate whether the educational opportunities and results of daughters are correlated with the socioeconomic status of their parents. The study will investigate how socioeconomic position may either help or hinder women's education, taking into account things like societal expectations, cultural norms,

educational support, and resource accessibility. The study aims to clarify the unique obstacles that women from various socioeconomic backgrounds encounter in obtaining high-quality education and succeeding academically by examining this link. It also seeks to determine viable tactics and initiatives to provide equal educational opportunities for girls, irrespective of the socioeconomic background of their parents.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the views of teachers and parents about the socioeconomic status of parents and female education.
2. To find out the relationship between socioeconomic status of parents and female education at the intermediate level.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the perceptions of teachers regarding the influence of parental socioeconomic status on female education?
2. What are the perceptions of parents regarding the influence of their socioeconomic status on their daughters' education?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between the socioeconomic status of parents and the educational attainment of female students at the intermediate level?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this research are very important to different stakeholders (Bahar & Azim, 2012). The research can be of great importance to the policymakers as they can use it to design specific programs, like scholarships, financial aid, and incentives to encourage families with a lower socioeconomic status to educate their daughters. As a teacher and an administrator, the research findings can assist in establishing support systems and counseling programs to students who might be struggling with financial or social issues. This work can also help parents, as it shows the importance of investing in the education of their girls in the long term, irrespective of their current socioeconomic status. Lastly, this research paper adds to the literature on gender and education in Pakistan, giving future researchers a platform on this crucial field.

Delimitations

In order to have a manageable and narrow scope of study, this study was limited to the following aspects:

1. Geographical Delimitation: The research was carried out in only one location that is Government Viqar-un-Nisa Graduate College for Women in Rawalpindi. The results cannot be applied to other cities or other regions of Pakistan.
2. Population Delimitation: The researchers only studied teachers and parents of students pursuing their studies in the intermediate level, namely, in Pre-Medical and ICS programs.
3. Methodological Delimitation: The analytic method in the study was descriptive quantitative. This research was beyond the scope of a mixed-methods approach or a pure qualitative approach.

Review of Literature

Socioeconomic status (SES) and educational achievements is the established field of study in the world, whereas the particularities of the interaction in a developing nation, such as Pakistan, especially female education demand more thorough research.

International attitudes towards SES and Education.

Socioeconomic status is a complex phenomenon which in many cases is quantified by income, education of the parents, and occupational prestige. Other scholars such as Lareau (2003) have pointed to the role of economic resources and social status of a family in determining the educational experiences and opportunities of a child and thus inequality in the results is a common occurrence. The income of parents has a direct bearing on whether they can afford to get quality education, school fees, books and even tutoring, which are essential in achieving success in education. Moreover, the wealthier families are able to have a more enriching home environment and have access to things such as computers, books, and learning trips as it has been suggested by Marshall (2009) and Smith (2007). These analyses have highlighted that the disparity in education is usually home based, even before a child is introduced to the institutional education system. Human rights in education, as a source of peace and social development (Reardon, 2002), is also irrevocably connected to the socioeconomic status because low-income families do not always have access to education based on their rights.

The Parental Education and Occupation.

The other important element of SES is parental education. Parents who are highly educated tend to value their education more, are more active in their children schooling and have the knowledge and skills to help them in their homework and allow them to plan their education. Local studies conducted by Awan et al. (2011) and Suleman et al. (2015) in the Pakistani setting have revealed a very close relationship between the educational level of the mother and that of their children and in particular, their daughters on their academic performance. Well educated mothers are also viewed as role models and champions of the education of their daughters who are influenced to further their education. In the same manner, occupation of parents is important. Professional or high-status occupation parents can also have networks that can offer their offspring career related opportunities and advice, and establish a definite route between education and occupation. Teacher as a means of inculcating educational values is also important as pointed out by Nisa and Parveen (2019), who point to the perceptions of female teachers disseminating the concepts of peace to students, which is an idea that is part of a wider educational philosophy of empowerment.

Pakistani context of cultural and Economic Barriers.

There are global trends, but in the Pakistani context, there are special challenges. Cultural norms, patriarchal systems, and gender inequality system often make male education more important than female education especially when there is a lack of financial resources (Mustafa, Khan, and Jameel, 2016). According to research conducted by Murtaza (2013), hidden fences that bar girls to going to school and staying in school includes early marriages and the perceived unnecessary investment in

a daughter's education. The Pakistani social image of a female education is usually associated with familial and community values, and to many families, education of a daughter is perceived as a liability and not an investment. This is the most prevailing constrain in making decisions of economic nature, more than cultural norms revealed by different studies. The purpose of this research is to present some specific, measurable information about this correlation at a given level of education within a Pakistani urban environment to be able to deal with these particular obstacles.

Conceptual Framework of the study

The study's conceptual framework is based on a clear correlation between two key variables: the dependent variable, female education, and the independent variable, parental socioeconomic status (SES).

Three primary indicators are used to measure the composite construct of Parental Socioeconomic Status (SES), the independent variable:

- Parental income is the term used to describe the family's financial resources, which have a direct impact on their capacity to cover tuition, books, uniforms, transportation, and additional educational resources like private tutoring.
- Parental Education: Both the mother's and father's educational backgrounds are taken into account. A stronger appreciation for formal education, a more encouraging home learning environment, and a greater ability to support academic difficulties are all thought to be associated with parents who have more education.
- Parental Occupation: This indicator reflects the social and professional standing of the family. Parents in skilled, professional, or high-status occupations are often better able to provide networks and guidance that can benefit their children's educational and career trajectories.

Whereas female education is the dependent variable, with an emphasis on intermediate educational attainment. A number of observable factors are used to measure this, including:

- Enrollment in a program at an intermediate level.
- The extent of parental financial assistance for educational costs.
- Grades and academic performance.

According to the framework, parents with higher incomes, educational backgrounds, and professional standing provide more opportunities and support, which raises their daughters' educational attainment. Important elements like the family's beliefs about women's empowerment and the presence of a supportive home environment for education act as mediators in this relationship. Without changing the variables, the descriptive quantitative design of the study is employed to measure these relationships' strength in a methodical manner.

Research Method

This paper adopted a descriptive quantitative research design because it methodically examines the relationship between female education and parental socioeconomic status. To offer structural, objective, and empirical research on the variables, the quantitative approach was chosen. The descriptive character of the design has provided an opportunity to characterize the population as well as to study in detail the relationship

between the two most significant variables without manipulating them. The survey was employed as a methodology and data were collected using a standardized questionnaire to assure consistency and reliability. This approach is suitable to gather data representing a large sample and conduct an analysis of relationships between variables.

Population of the Study

The sample size of this study was all intermediate-level teachers and parents of students that are under the Pre-Medical and ICS programs in Government Viqar-un-Nisa Graduate College of Women in Rawalpindi. A total population of 80 teachers and 80 parents were involved. This population was chosen because the college has a high number of female students enrolled in the intermediate level and it would be an ideal location to investigate the research questions.

Sample of the Study

A sample of 66 teachers and 66 parents was selected out of the target population so as to have adequate representation and statistical power. The method of sampling was simple random sampling of the participants. This approach means that each person in the population will have an equal opportunity to be selected, and this will reduce selection bias, and help maximize the generalizability of the results in the framework of the delimited context of a study. The selection procedure was done by giving each potential participant a unique number and then random number generator was used to select the final sample.

Tool of Research

A questionnaire was the principal instrument used to develop data about the socioeconomic condition of parents and their perceptions of female education. The questionnaire had been designed into two sections. The initial section included demographic information such as parental income, occupation and education. The second section comprised of a set of statements and questions to determine what teachers and parents thought were the factors that affect female education. Expert opinion was used to validate the instrument, in this case a panel of subject-matter experts has reviewed the questionnaire in terms of clarity, relevance and accuracy. The instrument reliability was determined by carrying out a pilot test. The questionnaire had a high coefficient of internal consistency and reliability (the Cronbachs alpha was 0.89).

Data Collection

Data collection was a rigorous and structured process in order to yield the best quality information. Prior to the study, the college administration granted formal consent to carry it out. To determine any possible problems with the questionnaire as well as to clarify the formulation of the questions, a pilot test was done with a few teachers and parents. The researcher then conducted the main data collection process by visiting the sampled college himself and administer the questionnaires to respondents. Each of the participants was informed about the objective of the research and their confidentiality was guaranteed. The questionnaires were self-administered and time was given to complete the questionnaires. The data collected was then verified as complete and accurate and then subjected to analysis.

Data Analysis

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Once the process of data collection was complete, the raw data was coded and keyed into a statistical software package (SPSS) where it was analyzed. The analysis was based mostly on descriptive statistics to summarize and describe the nature of data. The demographic profiles of the subjects and summarization of the responses were presented by frequency and percent distribution. In order to establish the association between parental socioeconomic status and female education, correlation analysis was used. The level of statistical significance of the results was evaluated at 0.05. Tables and charts were used to present the data in order to give a clear and organized representation of the results.

Results

Parental (PKR/month)	Income	% of Parents	% of Daughters Enrolled in Higher Education
Below 20,000		25%	15%
20,001 - 50,000		40%	50%
50,001 - 100,000		25%	75%
Above 100,000		10%	95%
Factor	% of Teachers Agreeing		
Parental Income	90%		
Mother's Education	85%		
Father's Education	95%		
Social Norms	70%		
Availability of Resources	80%		
Parental Educational Level	Correlation Coefficient (r)		P-value
Mother's Education	+0.65		< 0.01
Father's Education	+0.78		< 0.01

Findings

The main findings according to the data analysis were the following ones:

- The socioeconomic status of parents has a strong positive correlation with the educational level of their intermediate level daughters.
- Parental income is a reliable indicator of a female student joining and completing her intermediate education.
- Support of a family towards the education of their daughter is mainly dependent on the educational background of their father especially.
- The level of education of the mother is directly correlated with the achievements of her daughter.
- According to a large proportion of educators, the major obstacle to female education in the society is financial constraint.
- The more fortunate parents have greater likelihood of positive and progressive opinions regarding the essence of female education.
- Home availability of educational resources, associated with parental SES, is positively valued with regards to academic performance of a student.
- In the study, societal and cultural values also play a role, but the monetary aspect

continues to dominate in decision making when it comes to female education.

- Study data demonstrate that there is a definite upward movement in higher education enrolment amongst daughters with increases in parental income where 95 percent of the daughters in the households with an income more than PKR 100,000 are enrolled in higher education whereas just 15 percent of the daughters in the lowest income group are enrolled.
- The vast majority of educators (95) see the education of the father as the most decisive in the education of females, even more than that of the mother (85) and income of parents (90).
- The analysis has indicated that there is a strong statistically significant positive relationship between parental education and female education where the analysis gave a correlation coefficient (r) of +0.78 fathers education and +0.65 mothers education.

Conclusions

The research finds that there is a strong, positive association between socioeconomic status of parents and educational achievement of their female children. The results validate the claim that an economic position of a family of origin, the education of parents and their occupational status are important factors that can influence the capacity of a female student to seek and to achieve success in her education. The statistics speak volumes that students with higher socioeconomic status are clearly out ahead in their access and attainment of intermediate education, especially female students. This work presents facts about the continued disparity in education of female students of disadvantaged background.

Discussion

The results reported in this research agree with available literature that underscores the importance of socioeconomic factors in educational achievement. The high parental income and female education point to the importance of combating economic impediments. The effects of parental education, particularly the dad, are an indication of the need to advance adult literacy programs and parental education awareness programs. The study was based exclusively on one institution, but the findings indicate a general trend in the region. These findings also suggest that a holistic intervention approach which involves not only providing financial incentives but also altering societal perceptions is needed in closing the gender gap in education. It is also important that the study concentrates on the middle level because it is a pivotal point in future education and career.

Recommendations

Resting on the results and conclusions of this paper, the following recommendations are offered:

- The government and educational authorities must also establish special scholarship schemes and financial support to female children whose families have low incomes to enable them to further their education past secondary level.
- Awareness and education campaigns among parents need to be put in place to emphasize the importance and long-term gains of support in female education regardless of their socioeconomic status.

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- Schools' ought to consider introducing mentorship programs and career counseling to female students (especially those with disadvantaged backgrounds) to help them pursue an academic education and professional career.
- To confirm and generalize the results of this study, a larger sample size and across geographical Pakistan should be used in future studies.

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