

Gender & Higher Education: A case study of Pakistani Society

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Abstract

Education is fundamental right of every individual irrespective of race, gender, class, religion or culture. Unfortunately, in Pakistan education is only for male members of the society. Women are not considered for this basic right of education. Though, few are given opportunity to access education, yet the majority, especially in rural areas, is denied from getting higher education in the country.

This article highlights the overall situation of higher education in the country and it makes sociological analysis of gender differential in higher education. This paper also looks into the root causes and analysis from sociological perspective with the aim to give few suggestions.

Keywords: *Pakistan, Sociological Perspective, Gender, Higher Education, Gender Discrimination.*

Definition and Meaning

The word education in its literal sense has been derived from the Latin words Educare Educatum or Educere ‘Educatum’ and Educare’ mean to train, to bring up and to nourish, while ‘educere’ means to lead out. The former implies that education is something external; to be imposed or put in from outside the latter indicates growth from within.

Aristotle defined education as “a process necessary for the creation of a sound mind in sound body” (Issani 2003: 09).

In Pakistan the time has also come for the government to farm out critical subjects/topics for research to the universities through the Higher Education Commission (HEC), and the Federal Ministry of Education and Provincial Education Departments (Issani and 2003). Students seem to view education as a means of ‘getting ahead’ (Gibson 1965: 144).

There are cultural differences in the personality formation of upper middle class lower class, regardless of color, due to their early trainings. (Dorothy West by and Gibson 1965)

A Philosophy of Education is the set of beliefs, ideas and expectations a teacher has about the learning process (M.C. Dhawan, 2005).

In Tagore’s Philosophy of education, the aesthetic development of the senses was an important as the intellectual- if not more so and music, literature, art, dance, and drama were given great prominence in the daily life of the education (M.C. Dhawan, 2005).

Statement of Problem

Women constitute almost half (50%) of the total population of Pakistan. But their access to opportunities, resources and decision making positions is constrained by tribal, feudal and patriarchal norms. These norms view women as the property of male members placing restrictions on their mobility and role within and outside their home. Skill enhancement must exist to actively participate in social, economic and political strengthening, balanced opportunities in institutions for education. Highly educated women have a feeling and sense of respect, pride and intellectual ability. They have a sense of accomplishment to reach the feeling of independency. Women are the centre of atmosphere of more respectful relationship with husband, better family relationships, influencing friends, to come to centre.

Justification of Study

This study will cover areas of female education especially concerned with higher education environment. Their families' health, self esteem civic sense, skill development and economic enhancement, evaluation and comparison, institutional linkages and policies. Highly educated women are positively related to higher aspiration for participation in education by all means. During this research study we enquired about the problems of co-curricular activities for female faculty especially in the universities. In our country, the ratio of higher education is also making its place but not as quickly as in other countries.

Gender and Education

Education is an important component of social control, other than socialization of educational structure is the conferring of status. When we compare our non-western society to western society, women are totally dominated by men first by fathers, brothers and then by husbands. Numerous examples of the low position of women can be cited. Men and women are taught to be different and assigned different tasks. This division of tasks is strongly influenced by culture, environment and education, peers and the level of technology in a society. As the role of education expands in a society, as in our country, we can expect its latent functions to multiply. Another manifest function of disseminate education is to create as well as transmit knowledge. Our universities increasingly emphasize innovation to meet the challenges of the fast pacing modern world. This requires a two pronged approach. First, universities should provide research facilities/ scholarships and special quota for females to take advantage of new theories and technological applications. Higher education in females is

considered as a means of social change. Higher education in females is an important means of attaining higher occupational positions off course. But what we have to remove the certain limits to equality of opportunity in education. Some of the societies do have more equality of opportunity for females in higher education. Education plays synonymous with socialization, but it stands for institutional and professional training, skills and learning. We can flourish our-selves more and more by trainings, seminars and workshops. Debate over the lack of educational opportunities for females and later suggest reforms to promote higher studies. The reasons behind of highly achieved females in our educational institutions are complex and universities are not providing sufficient training to the faculties due to constraints limitations which, if provided further they could improve their academic guts also. This study is meant to understand the relationship of research and quality of education. A comparative study will reveals some lacking in our education system and some good ideas of western universities will be adopted and implemented in university and education system will be thrust of my research.

Nowadays Pakistan is in a serious type of financial constraint and facing number of challenges and difficulties. But it needs the reformation not only the administration of universities but especially the government and its policies have to be rescheduled to lay off their hands in financial matters. There is no way for the government because globally every where people or government is focusing on health issues and the education for the development of the nations but the situation in our country is not satisfactory.

It is worth mentioning that Higher Education is only for those candidates who are only on merit. Cream must be on surface or we do not want the quality number but the quality only specially after intermediate. Higher Education does mean the road for talent Hunters.

Key Objectives

- To assist in preparing development programmes for improving teacher and student performance.
- To encourage networking among faculty members to share new approaches and experiences.
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Hypotheses

- a) The standard of our education is not comparable with international standard.

- b) The status of working females is debatable (not equal).
- c) The life style of well qualified females varies from society to society.

Literature Review

Issani and Dr. Virk (2003) in this book the reformed literature have emphasized the importance of information, the necessary acquisition of skills related to information and, in particular, skills related to the curriculum and total programme in their book *The Book Higher Education in Pakistan*. It has been cited in the context of an explicit total rethinking of the form that this education will be a continuation, though an extension of what has preceded about the Higher Education in a better format. According to Dhawan (2005) the rich material about purpose and meaning of Education in his book *Philosophy of Education*. He explained that there is no limit to the learning capabilities of the human mind and that progress meant the perfection of science and technology. He also believed that people are products of nature, with equal rights bestowed upon them to the moral, practical and intellectual pursuits of reason.

Some Major Causes of Gender Difference

Due to the old traditions prevailing and we are not leaving our girls to hostels for getting higher education from universities and hesitate to send our girls even after getting the excellent opportunities of scholarships from abroad because of family restrictions. The socio economic status of the parents is one the major causes in attaining higher education rate. Most of the parents are not conversant. They do not afford the educational expenses especially for females. They engage their girls in household works and insist on their marriages. Some other causes in Higher education for girls are gender role stereotypes restricted involvement of girls in decision making process. High dependency ratio of the women on the head of family, patriarchal structure of society, mute girlhood, restricted movements of girl, domestic work related to females, intra household activities, rigid cultural patterns, limited transportation, poor roads, unsafe travelling, conservative attitude of the family members and preference to boys for higher education values. Expectations from the Muslim girls such as modesty and veiling are the major cause. Predilection of boy's education over girl's education is also one of the major causes of gender difference. Females can contribute a most active and dynamic section of any society the section that is not receptive of the ideas of novelty and change. Females have many perspectives and have the power to implement constructive naivety. Females are the valued possession of any society, without them there can be no strength. Education plays important role in the development of

personality and to groom the personality of students in university. Teachers with very higher calibre and highly qualified degree, equipped with all skills, international experience holder can be an excellent teacher and guide for students.

Now some major questions arise when we focus on Higher Education of females.

1. What are the major characteristics in structure of Higher Education Sector in Pakistan?
2. What are the major stumbling blocks in Higher education structure especially for females of Pakistan?
3. What are the major educational policies that have been addressed to increase the higher education for females in Pakistan?

Conclusion

As the facts and figures mentioned earlier clearly and satisfactory signal to those realities which are unalienable and irreplaceable. The importance and advantages of higher education in country must be high and noticeable and must double by encouraging those institutions which are busy importing higher education. Because it is crystal clear fact the Pakistan is already back foot in this connection in general and Sindh in particular. Hence, higher authorities must pay attention to this reality so that maximum benefits must be drawn from the people by enabling them, for it is my strong belief that everybody is qualified with talents and there is only need for the discovery of the same due to higher education must be women play their matchless role in the formation of a good nation, it brings the internal revolution.

Recommendations

There are plenty of recommendations it is hoped that higher authority may be able to accept and implement them for the betterment of the society especially for female education. They are as following:

- a) Policy making in education is necessary for the development of country.
- b) The higher education planning instrument for institutional management.
- c) Improvement in local conditions which varies from area to area and province to province.
- d) Improvements in Technical System e.g. making the process easier for applying in any of the institution with proper allocation of resources, special allowances /scholarships for females.

- e) Fulfillment of bureaucratic promises towards gender equality. The government and institutional management should ensure the participation of women in higher education and fix the quota for females in scholarships also.
- f) Government should augment welfare services. So that the poor families should focus on Higher Education Facilities for their females.
- g) Government should introduce such programmes that instigate create ideas, motivation, energy, idealism, national integration and self-discipline among the youth girls specially.
- h) Conduct a campaign on print media and electronic media to highlight now the now importance of Higher Education for females.
- i) An environment of Research/Higher Education will not work out until and unless we not facilitate our teaching staff members.

We also need attention of Industrialists, NGO's, and the International donors, to sponsor our faculty members and students to easily attend international conferences/seminars/workshops, which will be further helping in their institutes.

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