Sexual Harassment: A barrier to Girls Education

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Abstrak

Ada beberapa contoh di mana ketidaksetaraan ditunjukkan terhadap perempuan. Pendidikan adalah salah satu sektor di mana pendaftaran perempuan jauh lebih sedikit daripada pendaftaran laki-laki. Meskipun ada banyak faktor di baliknya, penelitian saat ini akan melihat salah satu fenomena pelecehan seksual yang paling sedikit diteliti sebagai penyebab di balik kurangnya pendaftaran. Masalah pelecehan seksual paling sedikit diteliti di negara-negara Muslim. Tujuan penelitian ini yaitu menyelidiki dampak norma sosial patriarki, jarak jauh ke sekolah, kehadiran guru perempuan dan pelecehan seksual sebagai faktor penyebab pendaftaran anak perempuan. Jenis penelitian ini yaitu kuantitatif. Sampel penelitian ini sebanyak 200 responden dikumpulkan melalui teknik multistage sampling dari delapan lokasi pedesaan. Metode yang digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data yaitu observasi dan kuesioner. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data yaitu lembar kuesioner. Teknik yang digunakan untuk analisis data yaitu analisis deskriptif kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Hasil penelitian yaitu masyarakat plus budaya, khususnya di daerah pedesaan menyebabkan rendahnya literasi anak perempuan. Batasan sosial dan budaya ini menciptakan rintangan bagi perempuan dalam tindakan sosial. Akibatnya mayoritas anak perempuan terbatas pada perbatasan rumah mereka. Mayoritas responden mengatakan bahwa nilai-nilai budaya tradisional mempengaruhi pendidikan anak perempuan. Masyarakat tidak setuju menyekolahkan anak perempuannya untuk bekerja karena lingkungan yang tidak aman.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan, Anak Perempuan, Pelecehan Seksual

Abstract

There are several instances where inequality is shown against women. Education is one sector where the enrollment of women is far less than the enrollment of men. While there are many factors behind it, the current research will look at one of the least researched phenomena of sexual harassment as the cause behind the lack of registration. The issue of sexual harassment is the least studied in Muslim countries. The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of patriarchal social norms, long distance to school, the presence of female teachers, and sexual harassment as factors causing the enrollment of girls. This type of research is quantitative. The sample for this study was 200 respondents collected through a multistage sampling technique from eight rural locations. The methods used in collecting data are observation and questionnaires. The instrument used in collecting data is a questionnaire sheet. The technique used for data analysis is descriptive qualitative and quantitative analysis. The study results show that society plus culture, especially in rural areas, causes low literacy in girls. These social and cultural boundaries create obstacles for women in social action. As a result, most girls are confined to the confines of their homes. The majority of respondents said that traditional cultural values influenced girls' education. The community does not agree to send their daughters to school to work because of the unsafe environment.

Keywords: Education, Girls, Sexual Harassment

1. INTRODUCTION

Female are considered physically and emotionally weak so they are given more physical and emotional security as compare to male. Parents are conscious about security of their daughters. The physical and social cost of long distances travel also is worrisome for them (Mehmood & Li, 2018; Phillips et al., 2019). Sexual Harassment is one of that barrier. Parents hesitate to send girls to educational institute for number of socio cultural barriers. Sexual harassment badly effect performances of female students (DeGue et al., 2021; Ejaz et al., 2015; Gillander Gådin & Stein, 2019). Previous study explained sexual harassment

include staring, touching, unwanted jokes and dialogues, bullying , unnecessary favor, verbal insult, physical proximity and indecent body language (Sadruddin, 2013). Other study also narrated categories of sexual harassment that consist of sexist remarks, sexual advances, sexual coercion and assaults (Ali, 2013).

In a conference at Kenya, the author was surprised to know about a finding that female are less sexually harassed in Muslim countries. It was later discussed that the fact is not that they are not being harassed, but they avoid discussing it (De Backer, 2020; Tyagi & Sen, 2020; Wigger, 2019). That is make sexual harassment is not explored in Muslim countries. There are many factors which cause low literacy in girls. That included unsafe travelling in public transport, sexual harassment and less family support. Some parents it is shameful that their girl child study among male child in primary co-education (Maas et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2019). This is taken as threat to family honor. Previous study shared that in Pakistan modesty and shame culturally attached to women in sexual harassment cases (Ali & Kramar, 2015). They are conscious about physical proximity of male and female child. Parents do not send their daughters to school because of be sexual harassment by peers and male teachers. Girls are not allowed to go for shopping, neither are they permitted to play outside the house for extended periods of time as boys frequently do. This socialization style builds sense of superiority in male and made female more timid (Allen et al., 2019; Thomas et al., 2021). Boys consequently build up with sense of self-assurance to tackle the world. Women became less participatory because of this discrimination in socialization.

In rural areas of Pakistan the *Biradri* system and family pressure is another factor that keeps girls behind in education. Especially, when it is combine family system the restrictions on girl child increase even more (Anwar et al., 2019; Jamil, 2020). Distance to educational institutes is another barrier for female education. As it is preferred for girls to be at home. Previous study narrated that women going out of home is looked at as a taboo in local culture (Malik & Khalid, 2008). If at all they are to go to Scholl it should be situated at closest area. In case they are allowed to travel they have to accompany a male for that. In case of non-availability of male they have to accompany another female (Phillips et al., 2019; Song, L., Appleton, S., & Knight, 2006). But they cannot travel in these areas. In Pakistan, people usually like sex-segregated faculties however there is a lack of female's faculties, particularly inside rural areas. Parents and girls hesitate to take admission in such schools where there is less number of female faculties.

In line with previous study that expressed the need of women education for societal development (Shaukat & Pell, 2015). They themselves become economic contributors to nation and inspire other women as well. However female education is being neglected b state and individual in Pakistan. Very less initiative were taken to provide them safe environment practically. According to feminists studies in male dominated societies female are always kept inside their place. That is why they have less opportunities in every field including education. In patriarchal societies male historically entitled to extra power than female. According to previous study that found in sending boys to schools and keep girls students inside the family circle (Aslam, 2009). Previous researcher opinion gender prejudice was stayed alive in rural areas as household value (Hashmi, 2009). It is considered there that women studies are not that important because they have limited mobility. In view of previous study this enrollment decrease even more in rural areas (Lloyd et al., 2007). The fear of harassment at work place is one of factor that is why female are not allowed to work. Women usually do not attempt to work because of fear of hostile work environment (Guenther, 2015; Iñiguez-Berrozpe & Boeren, 2020).

Women are generally discriminated in culture as well. Girls are also given in fine to quarrel adjustments and they are considered property. There are structural factors which keep girls out of school. Schools do not possess sufficient facilities according to needs of female

students. These factors contribute to low literacy rate in communities. The aims of this study are to explore the effect of Sexual harassment on girls' education. This study also tries to dig out the intensity of indicators of sexual harassment.

2. METHODS

This type of research is quantitative. The current study is conducted in a district of central Punjab. It is a part of central Punjab. A sample of 200 respondents was collected through multistage sampling technique from eight rural locations. At the first stage four union council were selected randomly. At second stage two villages were selected from each union council. At third stage twenty five respondents from each village were selected randomly. 50% of the participants were females.

The data was collected with the help of questionnaire. The technique used for data analysis is descriptive qualitative and quantitative analysis. It was pre-tested on nine respondents, before data collection. After pre-testing, some questions were modified as per requirement. Each item of investigation was analyzed in to a frequency distribution. The percentage was calculated and presented into table.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The quantitative data is given in percentage form to explain the trend of area. Along with tables people opinions according that indicator is also described here. After discussing this data the conclusion based on facts is mentioned at the end. Out of two hundred respondents only 16.65% were illiterate. 45% respondents belong to nuclear family. Whereas 50% respondents are living with joint families. Only 5% respondents have extended family. The parents who are living in nuclear family they are in favor of sending their daughters to school. It decreases in combine families and even more in extended family. Family system as barrier to enrollment is show in Table 1.

Table 1. Family System as Barrier to Enrollment

No.	Family Tradition Hinder Girls Enrollment	Frequency	Percentage
1	Agree	121	60.5%
2	Disagree	79	39.5%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Base on Table 1 explains the respondent's opinion about traditional family system as problems for girl education where 60.5% agree with it. Respondent opinion about willingness to send their daughters to school only 12 percent said they do not want to send their daughters to school whereas 80% percent parents are favor of sending their daughters to school. Although the level of education they opt for their daughters are different. Education level of Girls is show in Table 2.

Table 2. Education Level of Girls

No.	Education Level	Frequency	Percent
1	Basic religious	20	10.00%
2	Elementary	10	5.00%
3	Middle	20	10.00%
4	Secondary	70	35.00%

No.	Education Level	Frequency	Percent
5	Higher Secondary	55	27.5%
6	Higher Education	25	12.5%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Base on Table 2, show 10% respondents said basic religious education is enough for girls. In comparison to that 5% said elementary education is sufficient for girls. Whereas 10.00% said girls should get education up to middle, 35% said secondary and 27.5% higher secondary. Only 12.5% said that girls should get higher education up to university. Pakistan women are valued as secondary citizens whereas the majority of respondents of current research give equal position to female in society as that of man. Perception of female position in society is show in Table 3.

Table 3. Perception of Female Position in Society

No.	Female Position in Society	Frequency	Percentage
1	Equal to male	100	50.00%
2	Inferior to male	83	41.5%
3	Superior to male	17	8.50%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Base on Table 3 show that 41.5 people said that female are inferior to male. Although their opinion about women equality could not be validated with other indicators of women equality in society; used in current research. Majority of respondents are against women job after education. They do not consider society favorable for women employment. The data of girls' job after education is show in Table 4.

Table 4. Girls Job after Education

No.	Job After Education	Frequency	Percentage
1	Agree	33	16.5%
2	Disagree	167	83.5%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Base on Table 4, show that 83.5% of respondent disagree. In their view environment is not as women friendly that women can peruse their career here. There are few perpetrators in society who become reason to terminate women economic development. The result of data related to coeducation aspect is show in Table 5.

Table 5. Coeducation

No.	Willingness to Send Girls in Coeducation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	50	25%
2	No	150	75%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Based on Table 5, more parents are not willing to send girls in coeducation. This is shown by the data of respondents as much as 75% said not. A clear majority was of the opinion that they will not send their daughters to co-education institutes. Sending daughters to coeducation is directly associated with family honor. Coeducation is not the sole reason for not sending girls to school. Hurdles in girl's education are show in Table 6.

Table 6. Hurdles in Girl's Education

No.	What are Hurdles in Daughters Education in Their Area	Frequency	Percentage
1	Coeducation	28	14.00%
2	Distance from school	39	19.5%
3	Family traditions	51	25.5%
4	Social Environment	79	39.5%
5	Lack of female teachers	8	4.00%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Base on Table 6 show the reason for not sending school only 14% rated coeducation a barrier to girls education. There are many other reason in which social environment was rated high by 39.5 % respondents. The social environment is not favorable for women mobility. An effect of patriarchal system on girl's education is show in Table 7.

Table 7. Effects of Patriarchal System on Girl's Education

No.	Effect of Patriarchal System on Girls Education	Frequency	Percentage
1	To great extent	159	79.5%
2	To some extent	31	15.5%
3	Not at all	10	5%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Base on Table 7, in view of majority 79% respondents patriarchal system effect on lower enrolment of girls. Male are dominating the society and given preference in school enrolment. For aspect of culture as obstacle to Girls education is show in Table 8.

Table 8. Culture as Obstacle to Girls Education

No.	Culture as Obstacle	Frequency	Percentage
1	Agree	126	63.0%
2	Disagree	74	37.0%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Base on Table 8 show 63% respondents said worst culture value of society create problems for girl education. These values included cultural, social, and political environments. The weak implementation of laws also deprived women of a supportive culture. Distance from home is show in Table 9.

Table 9. Distance from Home

No.	Distance from Home	Frequency	Percentage
1	Neighboring community	133	66.67%
2	Far from home	67	33.33%
	Total	**200**	**100.0%**

Base on Table 9, majority of respondents 66.67% want to send their girls to neighboring communities for education. This is safe besides being cost effective. This is safe because in locality people know each other and respect community fellows so there is no chance of harassment. Secondly other girls are accompanying them so they do not have to travel alone. In connection to social problems when they are asked sexual harassment as a barrier to less enrollment 75% of the respondent narrated it a major cause. When they were

further probed about perpetrators of harassment majority 78 % said its transports of public transport. Whereas 12% are peer students and only 10 % think that teachers and other staff members are involved in harassment.

Discussion

The parents who are illiterate they are more willing to send their daughters to school. According to them they do not want their daughters to suffer from same problems which they have faced. The major family became first barrier to education. Other social and political factors are of secondary importance. Previous study state that when parents allow their girls to study in coeducation it is taken as invasion to family dignity (Sadruddin, 2013). Respondents share that they will lose control on daughter socialization. If something bad happen it will ruin reputation of whole family. If they send their daughter than no one in family will marry that girl because she use to communicate with boys. Coeducation is sort of taboo by considering Islamic cultural values. Religion and culture are determining the causes of sexual harassment (Imtiaz & Kamal, 2021; Merkin, 2008). In big cities coeducation may not be a big issue but it is a barrier to women education in rural locality. It is also damaging for status quo by giving equal opportunities to girls and boys. Discrimination against female create hostile environment for women on the whole. The second major reason was family traditions of *Purdah* (veil) and early marriages. Family also does not want their female members to go out of home very frequently (Abdel-Raheem, 2022; Fakih et al., 2020). For many families higher education is considered as luxury. Rule of law and other social values contribute to wider culture. That is why in a society where laws are not implemented properly a sensitized culture could not flourish.

Long distance from schools rated as third big reason for fewer enrollments. Distance of Instructional establishments from residence was an additional most important barrier to female enrollment (Abdulai et al., 2021; Rocha et al., 2022). It is associated with safety and protection of female students. These issues are not as severe in big cities as in rural areas of small district. In country like Pakistan with Islamic values women interaction with men is itself considered inappropriate (Anwar et al., 2019; Jamil, 2020). Some respondents narrated that, they are not sending their girls to school because of presence male staff members. In rural areas they believe that female should be taught by female teachers. If there are all female teachers they have no issue in sending their daughters to school. In case of long distance they have to accompany male member of family for travel. Previous study state that female feel insecure in male dominated society (Syed, J., Ali & Winstanley, 2005).

Schools are considered a protected place. But currently these are not harassment free. Not surprisingly all female respondent said they discuss it with their daughters. They told them to be conscious about any form of verbal abuse, mental torture or threats. Unfortunately cases of sexual harassment mainly remain under reported of unreported at all (Anwar et al., 2019; Gillander Gådin & Stein, 2019). They encourage them to report them back in case of mishap without fear. If ever victim report such incidents they have to face negative consequences. People do not know about formal procedure of launching complaint. Despite of this positive indicator of family encouragement only 3% knew about law against sexual harassment (Maas et al., 2022; Mehmood & Li, 2018).

The implications of this study provide an overview related to the effect of Sexual harassment on girls' education along with the intensity of indicators of sexual harassment. Based on this research, it is known that women need to provide such an environment in which they feel socially secure. There is a need to increase awareness of the law regarding sexual harassment. This should be disseminated by government authorities. Every organization should follow government protocols against sexual harassment. The causes and indicators of sexual harassment need to be addressed. Even the educated lots do not recognize

this as an issue because of lack of sensitization. Female friendly transport and education institute should be promoted. Children should be encouraged confidence to report such incidents as the majority of cases remain unreported. Society members should provide a better environment for girls so they can get education easily. Students and education staff need to be sensitive to the severity of the issue so that no girls remain excluded from the mainstream education system.

4. CONCLUSION

In Pakistan, society plus culture, particularly in the rural areas cause low literacy of girls. These social and cultural boundaries create hurdle for women in social actions. Resultantly a majority of girls are limited to the borders of their house. They do not travel to schools because of long distances and fear of sexual harassment. People who want to send their daughters to school cannot do so because of these hurdles. The patriarchal systems of society promote it more. Majority of the respondents said that traditional cultural values effecting girl education. Major percentage of respondents prefer to send their daughters for education to neighboring communities only. People of community were not agree to send their daughters for jobs because of insecure environment. People feels them intimidated or humiliated in this environment.

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