

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY GIRLS' PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SINDH, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

This research tends to probe the challenges and obstacles faced by girls at an early stage of education, including rural and urban parts of Sindh province of Pakistan. Selective cities of Sindh, Pakistan, were selected from where the data was taken and treated as a sample for data collection and the elected cities were Hyderabad, Dadu, Jamshoro, Badin, Matiari, Tando Allahyar, and Shahdadpur. Interviews, as an instrument for the collection of data, were conducted from a sample size of 200 respondents. The respondents were fabricated into two divisions. The first division was parents of girls' students and the second division was primary school teachers. 120 responses were collected from the parents and the remaining 80 responses were collected from primary school teachers. Structured interviews were conducted to collect the responses, having a total of 13 questions. The interview consisted of 13 dichotomous questions based on the "yes" and "no" scale and was closed-ended. After conducting interviews, the results were interpreted to identify the problems and hindrances that the girls at the primary level are going through. Results show that girls face more challenges and problems compared to boys. Empirical evidence also shows that the hindrances that are mostly encountered by girls are societal attitude, school distance, negative psyche of parents about education of their daughters, outdated curriculum, poor infrastructure, illiteracy of parents, shortage of girls schools in rural, meagre implementation of educational policies, and absence of teachers' training. As a result of these impediments, the enrolment of girls in primary schools is adversely affected and hence very low. Based on empirical findings, it is recommended that qualified teachers ought to be recruited and trained accordingly, alter the attitude of parents and society regarding girls' education, provide efficient and proper infrastructure, transportation facilities must be provided to curb distance-related hindrance, introduce up to dated and quality curriculum, and proper implementation of policies at primary level.

Keywords:

primary education, girls' enrolment, social attitude, primary schools.

Introduction

Education plays a very important role in the development and progress of any society. Education lays the foundation that leads the nation to progress. It enables people to distinguish between right and wrong. Not only this, education also broadens empty minds with innovative skills, ideas, and creativity. Primary education in Pakistan is the most overlooked, poorly financed, and poorly managed sector (Hussain et al., 2011). There is political intervention in public primary education, which results in corruption, favoritism, and nepotism. The infrastructure for teachers' training is weak, ineffective, and disorganized. Poor implementation of policies, accountability, and transparency has drastically destroyed the primary education system. In such an environment, it is hard to bring positive changes to the education system. The primary education curriculum is outdated and doesn't meet the standards of students' and parents' expectations; it hinders students' critical thinking and creativity. The outdated public primary curriculum also fails to meet national and international standards. The major pitfall of the primary education system is its valuation and assessment, which is measured by students' remembrance rather than performance, resulting in students lacking in knowledge and learning skills (Vazir, 2003).

Since independence, Pakistan has given the least importance to the education system, especially primary education, which is the backbone and an important pillar of the economic development of a country. There are three tiers of education, namely: primary, elementary, and higher education. These three tiers go parallel to each other if one tier is disturbed other tiers cannot move ahead. So the basic tier of education is primary education. In order to run a sound education system, primary education must be given top priority. Proper and effective utilization of funds must be given to primary education, which will have a strong effect on elementary and higher education (Ameen, 2007).

Due to negligence of primary education Pakistan is ranked low in terms of literacy rate which stands at 50 percent. The male literacy rate is 68 percent and female has a 57 percent literacy rate which is the lowest literacy rate compared to other countries like Sri Lanka and India (Ahmad et al., 2013).

Program for International Students' Assessment (PISA) report ranks countries on the basis of quality education. PISA report (2012) indicates that all the top six slots are achieved by Asian countries. These countries in ranking order are Shanghai, Singapore, Taiwan, Korea, Macau, and Japan respectively. Chinese educational system is one of the largest educational systems in the world. In 1986, the People's Republic of China publicized compulsory educational law. According to law, the government made nine years of compulsory education, which resulted in a boost in the economy. According to official statistics, primary school enrolment stood at 98 percent in 2002. China has become the fastest-growing economy in the world. China has made career progression for teachers on a competitive basis. High-performing principals and teachers are promoted and given rewards. According to the national statistics bureau of China, expenditures on education have continuously increased since 2006 and have reached 20,772 billion Yuan, which is 4 percent of GDP. The Ministry of Education sanctioned an outlined national action plan for both medium and long-term education reform and development 2010-2020, which has the purpose of changing China into a leading knowledge and technology-based country. According to Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) in 1995, 1999, 2003, and 2007, Singapore's students are ranked top in the world. Singaporean students were ranked 4th in literacy in 2006 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), 2006. Singapore's education system was rated the best-performing education system in McKinsey, 2007 study of teachers. Singapore was also placed 1st in the 2007 International Institute for Management Development (IMD) world competitiveness yearbook for making an educational system that meets the needs of a competitive economy. The Singapore government spends 3.3 percent of its GDP on education. As a result of massive investment in education, Singapore's GDP registered 14.7 percent growth in 2010. In 1965 Singapore's per capita GDP was US\$516 and increased

to US\$43,867 in 2010. The phenomenal growth in per capita GDP has also been attributed to the country's highly skilled labor force and female participation in the labor market (Gurría, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Pakistan's education system's problem may be seen from the perspective of the pre-partition education system that it adopted at the time of its independence. The pre-independence education system was already weak and poorly managed. After the partition, the government failed to reform the education system, which could have met people's needs (Ahmad et al., 2013). Due to no change in the pre-partition education system, Pakistan is still having a low literacy rate even after 69 years of its existence. With this background, this research mainly focuses on the determinants of girls' primary education in Sindh.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives include:

- To find out the reasons for poor primary education in public schools of Pakistan.
- To recognize the aspects that increase the level of quality of primary education.
- Provide awareness about the importance of education to the lower class who avoid sending their girls to school.
- Find out the relationship between community participation and the quality of schooling.

Research Questions

The following are research questions to be answered:

- What is the role of gender in primary education in Pakistan?
- What is the importance of the Professional Development of primary teachers in education?
- What are the factors responsible for increasing dropout rates at primary schooling?
- How important is parental education in children's primary schooling?
- What is the role of curriculum in primary education?
- What is the role of culture in primary education?
- How financial resources are utilized at primary schools?
- Are formulated policies implemented in primary schools?

Literature Review

Ahmed and Neman (2013) argued that there is a vital role of mothers in their daughters' education and their socialization. This research is qualitative and was conducted in rural areas near Peshawar. Primary data was collected by taking semi-structured interviews with a sample of mostly uneducated mothers. The results show that the factors which influence primary education most in Pakistan are cultural, socio-economic, parental illiteracy, and poverty. Based on these findings, they conclude that due to a lack of education girls face discriminatory attitudes and gender disparity.

Ahmad et al. (2013) critically examined the difficulties faced by primary education in Pakistan. They reviewed the relevant literature and analyzed that the primary education sector is the most neglected, poorly financed, and poorly managed sector. There is widespread political interference that leads to corruption, nepotism, and favoritism. Other factors responsible for poor primary education in Pakistan are poor training of primary school teachers, lack of accountability and transparency, outdated curriculum, and underpayment of teachers. The study further revealed that primary education is the most ignored sector in the entire education system of Pakistan. Poor performance at the primary level is mainly

attributed to mismanagement of allocated funds, lack of allocation of funds, parent illiteracy, poverty, outdated curriculum, corruption, no training for primary teachers, poor educational policies and their implementations, accountability, primary teachers are less paid and less motivated.

Ali (2013) shed light on the reasons that affect the performance of primary schools in Mardan District. He targeted 20 primary-level schools of the Rustam Union Council, District Mardan. The research was descriptive in nature. A closed-ended questionnaire was established and administered among the primary school teachers at Rustam Union School. The study determined a lack of facilities and the presence of political meddling in primary schools. Other factors that have influenced education include the unavailability of teachers, a poor system of assessment, no reward or punishment for teachers' achievements, weak supervision, and poor educational policies. Based on the empirical findings, the author recommends that in order to provide quality education, teachers should be motivated, corruption should be eliminated, and the quality of the curriculum must be improved.

Anjum et al. (2012) explored the hindrances of heads of teacher education institutes to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Their study was based on qualitative tools, and it was conducted through semi-structured interviews with all the lead heads of teachers' education institutes of Punjab. Through the sampling technique, 20 heads of teacher education institutes were selected. This study found that the problems faced by the heads of teacher education institutes are social (parents' attitude toward their children), administrative problems (lack of qualified teachers), political problems (appointments and transfers are based on a political basis), and financial. This study suggested that the education system should be transparent in every aspect.

Chohan and Qadir (2013) argued about the academic failure at urban public primary schools of Rawalpindi. They selected a sample of 12 teachers from urban public primary schools to collect relevant information. Open-ended and semi-structured interviews were conducted during school hours. The Ground Theory was used to analyze the data. Teachers were of the view that these factors had not only contributed to academic failure but also they had influenced it at different stages. Other factors contributing to academic failure in the target area are no universal primary education, poverty, illiteracy, low payment of primary teachers, and a matriculation requirement for primary teachers.

Farooq (2013) argued the reasons for dropouts at the primary level. The objective of the research was to find out the reasons for dropout by children in primary schools and to design a prevention model for this cause. Primary data was collected in the form of questionnaires and interviews with dropout students, teachers, and parents. 781 respondents participated in this research. The reasons that were found behind dropouts at the primary level were parental carelessness, poor health economic condition, students out of school, teachers' absenteeism, illiteracy of parents, students' poor health, psychological problems, and child labor. The study concluded that parents play a very significant role in the grooming of their children. Secondly, primary school teachers are the ones who build the future of children; therefore, they should be provided training in pedagogical skills. Thirdly, there should be child-responsive schools so that children can get a learning environment.

Habib (2014) emphasized the role of the school council in student performance at the primary level. The study divided schools between Community Model Schools (CMS) and Government Girls Primary Schools (GGPS). The accessible population was 350 schools, containing 175 Community Model Schools and 175 Government Girls Primary Schools. A sample of 350 headmistress, 700 teachers, 350 administrators, 3500 parents and 3500 students were randomly selected from 350 schools in 35 districts of Punjab. The likert scale was designed to collect data. The study found that Community Model Schools (CMS) have good performance in comparison to Government Girls Primary Schools (GGPS) in Punjab. It was also recommended that Government Girls Primary Schools (GGPS) should be funded.

Jabeen et al. (2014) emphasized the role of gender discrimination in the Punjab curriculum at the primary level. For this, the national language was selected. The purpose was to probe gender stereotypes and gender roles that create gender discrimination. Punjab province was selected for this study, and both latent and manifest analyses were made. Punjab textbook board books, both in English and Urdu, were selected. They found that gender discrimination exists in primary-level textbooks. It concluded that male seems to be aggressively patriotic towards their culture, whereas females' role in textbooks seems to be low or limited compared to males. This study found that 33 percent of stories gave higher status to males and confined females' role to the home. 4 percent of stories treated both males and females equally. This study further found that there are low or limited roles for females, poor health care, low education, low economic status of girls, and girls are only limited to serving men.

Jawad and Waheed (2014) argued about the gender-based dropout at the primary level in rural areas of District Rawalpindi. The objective of the study was to identify the reasons for girls' school dropout in Tehsil Kotli of District Rawalpindi at the primary level and compare it with boys' dropouts at the same level of education. 10 government primary schools out of 180 were elected through a simple random technique. A total sample size of 100 participants consisted of 25 boys, 25 girls, 25 parents of dropout students, and 25 teachers of dropout students. An open-ended and closed-ended questionnaire was developed for collecting relevant information. The conclusions showed that females encounter more obstacles in terms of enrolment and continuation of primary education compared to boys. It also found that the dropout ratio of females was higher than the dropout ratio of boys at the primary level because of family, school, society, uneducated parents, school distance, lack of basic facilities, and toilet facilities for girls. It was recommended by the study to decrease the gender gap in primary education. It was also recommended by researchers that we should not only change infrastructure, curriculum, teaching training, but also we should change the perceptions and mindset of family and community to encourage girls' education. Quoting researchers' phrase "An increased girls' education is one of the most powerful tools to empower women in family and society".

Khan (2010) emphasized the complications of the universalization of primary education in Pakistan. This research was conducted in Islamabad. A Likert scale questionnaire was designed for this study. 100 primary school teachers in total from rural areas of District Bahawalnagar were selected (50=Males, 50=Females). The questionnaire was analyzed by chi-square. The study found that poverty, ignorance, lack of awareness, cultural values, and low-quality teaching are responsible for the failure of the universalization of primary education in the targeted area. Based on these findings, Khan recommended that awareness should be created, public schools should play a vital role in decreasing dropout rates, teachers should be appointed in distant areas, and the local community should be involved.

Khan (2012) argued for the effectiveness of a primary education certificate program that is designed for teachers' new knowledge, skills, and attitude, which is obtained from this program and its execution of their novel learning in their corresponding classrooms. A sample of data was collected through semi-structured questionnaires, interviews, classroom observation, document analysis, and focused group discussions with the students. The study found that, as a result of training, teachers' attitudes towards their students shifted from a non-reflective to a reflective one. The study further found that reflective practice, learner-centered instructional strategies, changes in assessment practices, effective classroom management, teachers' pedagogical creeds, and a conducive classroom environment affect the delivery of lectures. The study further found that newly appointed teachers are inexperienced and need more content-specific training.

Lloyd et al. (2005) argued about the effects of gender variances and the role of access to primary school, kind, and excellence of education on the decision to enroll at primary schools in rural Pakistan. Three districts were chosen from each province (Punjab and N.W.F.P, nowadays known as Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa). Researchers found that girls face different problems for schooling such as distance, type and quality even in the same village. Researchers concluded that rural primary education needs more attention, parents want separate schools for girls and boys hence public girls' schools should be increased to bring efficiency, and quality of education in villages and can have an advantage on primary enrollment of girls.

Niazi (2012) emphasized on the impact of leadership (principal) behavior toward teachers on two-way learning. The data was collected using two instruments, namely the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) and the School Professional Staff as a Learning Community (SPSLC). The sample size of this study comprised 20 government schools and 20 private schools in Karachi. The constraints faced by the leadership to administer effectively are the unfavorable attitude of teachers towards co-curricular activities, the dictatorial attitude of both leadership and teachers, and the lack of teaching resources, resulting in lousiness and bizarre attitudes among the staff members. The study further found that if the principal of the school realizes his/her sense of responsibility to eradicate the above-mentioned problems, then the staff will automatically bring efficiency and productivity in their work.

Suleman and Gul (2015) put attention to major components subject to affect the superiority of primary education in Kohat Division, Pakistan. The motive of the said was to search for the elements that impact the value of primary education in Kohat Division, Pakistan. 240 primary schools and 800 teachers were selected as a sample by using a simple random sampling technique. Descriptive and interviews were conducted, and data were analyzed through Chi-Square and simple percentages. The finding shows a lack of educational amenities, lacking competent staff, meagre management and supervision, political meddling, unpleasant pays, unsatisfied evaluation and examination criteria, poor implementation of policies, low allocation of funds, inadequate budget for education, deficiency of coordination between schools and community, low social status, negative parental attitude, parental illiteracy and lack of training programs for staff were held responsible for meagre excellence education given to the students of the targeted area. The study further found that primary schools' education needs to be improved, adequate funding should be provided, the curriculum should be redesigned, and proper checks and balances must be taken into account for improving standards of education.

Vazir and Hussain (2008) emphasize the current practices of supervisors in government primary schools in Karachi. The sample size consisted of two supervisors, two head teachers, and four primary school teachers. The instruments used to collect data were semi-structured interviews, informal discussions, and document analysis. The study found that the practices of supervisors are influenced by their qualifications and hangs between supervision and monitoring. They are neither fulfilling supervisory requirements nor monitoring and evaluation. The study suggested that there should be a reconceptualization of supervision as a moral practice.

Vazir and Meher (2010) emphasize how mentoring improves the performance and level of teacher education in Pakistan, particularly in rural areas. The sample size consisted of 1 male and 1 female teacher; they were the participants in the mentoring program held by the Agha Khan University. The program concentrated on redefining the role of teachers as mentors and developing their skills through critical thinking and reflective practice. The data was collected through participant observations, structured and unstructured interviews in classrooms and fields, and reflective journals. The study showed that the program helped the participants to shift from traditional to liberal approaches that are not only helpful in personal development but also improve the whole school.

Zakar et al. (2013) focused on issues of universal primary education, which is also one of the Millennium Development Goals in Pakistan. The study used secondary data. The study found that inadequate educational amenities, incompetent and untrained teachers, and meagre excellence of education, an

underprivileged educational environment, poverty, lack of community participation, illiterate parents, lack of political commitment, and good governance are major issues in accomplishing universal primary education in Pakistan. The study suggests that teachers should not be appointed on a political basis; they should be given training that builds their creativity and critical thinking. The training should be given by modern teaching-learning techniques.

Zarif (2012) discovered the justifications for the increasing dropout rates of the students in grades 5-6 at the public school of district Kashmore during 2010-11. The author collected data on the school dropouts from 30 schools of three Talukas of District Kashmore. The author used open-ended questionnaires and interviews with teachers, the community, and parents of dropped-out students to conduct the study. The results show that lack of basic amenities, non-availability of books and learning material, lack of parents’ interest, teachers’ absenteeism, poverty, and discrimination are responsible for high dropouts at grades 5-6 in the target area.

Research Methodology

This study is an “Explanatory Research” and aims at finding out the major determinants of low female enrolment at primary schools in Sindh, Pakistan. Primary data was used for conducting the research. The data was gathered from different areas of Sindh, including Hyderabad, Dadu, Jamshoro, Badin, Matiari, Tando Allahyar, and Shahdadpur. Interviews containing closed-ended questions were developed and asked from 120 parents and 80 primary school teachers. A convenience sampling technique was employed for selecting the respondents. Table 1 shows the details of the schools we visited for data collection purposes. It also shows the number of students enrolled in each school. Hence, 60 percent of the respondents are parents, and 40 percent of the respondents are primary school teachers.

Table 1: Name of school, student enrolment and school addresses

S. No	Name of school	Enrollment	Address
01.	Government Girls Primary School	200	Old Wahdat Colony
02.	Government Boys Primary School	402	New Wahdat colony
03.	Government Boys Primary School	150	Old Wahdat colony
04.	Government Primary School Sindhi	265	Bengali Colony, G.O.R, Latifabad #1
05.	Government Primary School Urdu	350	Bengali Colony, G.O.R, Latifabad #1
06.	Government Primary School, Pirjhando	155	Pirjhando, District Matiari
07.	Government Boys Primary School, Panj Moro	385	Panj Moro, District Matiari
08.	Government Boys Primary School, Masoodabad	114	Masoodabad, District Matiari
09.	Government Boys Primary School, Jamal Khan Chang	95	Jamal Khan Chang, District Matiari
10.	M. Budhal Memon, School	120	District Matiari
11.	Pir Bux Jamali school	140	District Matiari
12.	Pir Salah-Din school	65	District Matiari

Results

In this chapter, results obtained from the data analysis are presented.

Table 2: Question 01: Does parental illiteracy hinder girls’ education?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	70	50	65	15
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

From 120 parents, 70 parents agreed that parental illiteracy hinders girls’ education whereas, 50 parents rejected it. Out of 80 teachers, 65 agreed that parental illiteracy is a major cause for low girls’ enrolment at the primary level while 15 teachers’ response was negative. They did not agree with the statement that parental illiteracy has any role in low girls’ enrolment at the primary level.

Table 3: Question 02: Does mothers’ education matter the most in girls’ education?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	109	11	74	6
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

109 parent respondents believe that mothers’ education matters the most in girls’ education while 11 of them disagreed with the statement. 74 teacher respondents response was affirmative while 6 teachers told that they do not see any role of mothers in girls’ education.

Table 4: Question 03: The education system in rural areas of Pakistan is poor compared to urban areas.

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	90	30	68	12
Sub Total	120		80	

Grand Total	200
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90 parent respondents view the rural area’s education system in Pakistan as poor compared to that of urban areas, while 30 parents refuted the statement. 68 teacher respondents consider rural area’s education system as poor while 12 teacher respondents do not agree with the statement. Based on the data analysis, we conclude that the majority of both parent and teacher respondents consider the rural education system poor compare to urban areas in Pakistan.

Table 5: Question 04: Poor governance is responsible for the lack of quality education at primary level.

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	116	04	65	15
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

116 of 120 parent respondents agreed that poor governance is responsible for the lack of quality education at the primary level while 4 parents refused it. 65 teacher respondents responded yes whereas 15 teacher respondents disagreed with the statement. Hence, we conclude that the majority of parents and teacher respondents hold poor governance responsible for the lack of quality education in rural areas of Pakistan.

Table 6: Question 05: Do you think the curriculum taught at public primary schools is up to the standards?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	45	75	39	41
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

45 out of 120 parent respondents agreed that the curriculum taught at public primary schools is up to the mark and 75 parent respondents disregarded the statement. 39 out of 80 teacher respondents agreed that the curriculum taught at public primary schools is up to the mark and 41 percent disagreed.

Table 7: Question 06: Does culture affect girls’ primary school enrolment?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	84	36	73	7
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

Here, 84 parent respondents believe that culture affects girls’ primary school enrolment while 36 parent respondents rejected it. And on the other side, 73 teacher respondents accepted that culture affects girls’ primary school enrolment, while 7 percent rejected the statement. Thus based on empirical analysis, we conclude that culture is a major stumbling block in girls’ enrolment in primary schools in Pakistan.

Table 8: Question 07: Does primary school administration affect the environment of public schools?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	100	20	72	8
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

100 parent respondents agreed with the role of administration in the school environment while 20 parent respondents did not agree with the statement. On the other hand, 72 teacher respondents and parent respondents agreed with the role of administration in the school environment while 8 teacher respondents disagreed with it.

Table 9: Question 08: Does teachers’ training affect their attitude?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	117	03	76	04
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

In this question, 117 parent respondents accepted that the training program affects teachers’ attitudes while 3 parent respondents rejected it. 76 teacher respondents accepted the role of training in teachers’ attitudes while 4 teacher respondents disagree. Hence we conclude that the majority of both parent and teacher respondents consider training important in teachers’ attitudes towards their students in primary schools in Pakistan.

Table 10: Question 09: Should the Ministry of Education of Pakistan restructure primary-level educational policies?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	115	05	68	12
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

115 parent respondents accepted that the Ministry of Education of Pakistan should restructure primary-level educational policies, whereas, 5 parent respondents rejected it. On the other hand, 68 teacher respondents agreed with the statement while 12 teacher respondents rejected it. Hence based on the data, we conclude that the Ministry of Education of Pakistan should restructure primary-level educational policies.

Table 11: Question 10: Does distance hinder girls’ education?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	80	40	69	11
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

In this question, 80 parent respondents accepted the statement that distance hinders the girl’s education and 40 parent respondents rejected that distance hinders girls’ education. On the other hand, 69 teacher respondents agreed with the statement and 11 denied it. Thus based on empirical data, we conclude that distance is a major stumbling factor for hindrance in girls’ education.

Table 12: Question 11: Is poverty a main factor for low primary education?

	Parents	Teachers
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	Yes	No	Yes	No
	65	55	60	20
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

65 parent respondents agreed that poverty is a main factor for low primary education and 55 parent respondents do not consider poverty as a determinant for low enrolment of girls at primary level. 60 teacher respondents consider poverty as a main factor for low enrolment while 20 refuted the statement. On the basis of this finding, we conclude that poverty is a major cause for low girls’ enrolment in target areas.

Table 13: Question 12: Does infrastructure affect the standard of primary education?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	115	05	68	12
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

115 parents agreed that infrastructure affects the standard of primary education and 5 parent respondents disagree with the statement. On the other hand, 68 teacher respondents accepted the statement, while 12 denied the statement. Based on this empirical finding, we conclude that infrastructure affects the standard of public primary education in Pakistan. Because of the low quality of education, parents prefer their daughters to stay home than go to school for education.

Table 14: Question 13: Do parents think about the opportunity cost of child education in rural areas?

	Parents		Teachers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
	106	14	70	10
Sub Total	120		80	
Grand Total	200			

106 parents accepted that they think about the opportunity cost of child education in rural areas, whereas, 14 parent respondents do not consider the opportunity cost of sending their children to school in rural areas. On the other hand, 70 teachers out of 80 teacher respondents agreed that parents think about the opportunity cost of child education in rural areas, however, 10 teacher respondents rejected the statement. Based on this finding, we conclude that the majority of the respondents agree with the statement that parents do consider the opportunity cost of sending their children to school.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This piece of work focused on discovering the arguments of girls’ enrolment at the primary level, both in urban and rural areas of Sindh. A questionnaire was developed and administered among 120 parents and 80 teachers to collect the data. Outcomes show that girls face more challenges and problems as compared to boys. The hindrances that are mostly encountered by girls are societal attitude, school distance, negative psyche of parents about the education of their daughters, outdated curriculum, poor infrastructure, illiteracy of parents, shortage of girls' schools in rural areas, meagre implementation of educational policies, and absence of teachers’ training. The collective impact of all these factors is low girls’ enrolment at primary schools in both rural and urban areas of Sindh, Pakistan.

Recommendations

Based on empirical findings, it is recommended to:

- Highly qualified teachers must be hired in rural areas whose professional development must be high.
- Parents’ negative perceptions of girls’ education should be eliminated and they should be encouraged to send their daughters to schools.
- Proper infrastructure should be provided in the schools.
- Transportation facilities should be provided to overcome the distance from home to school problem faced by girls.
- The curriculum taught must be frequently updated and must be up to world standards
- Education policies must be implemented in earnest at primary schools.
- Society must be aware of the importance of girls’ education.

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