



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Factors of Non-Achieving Universal Primary Education in South Punjab: A Sociological Study**

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
<b>Received:</b> January 08, 2020	Pakistan is a developing country and is far away from achieving the national and international educational targets. There are many stumbling factors in this regard like lack of educational funds; poor school facilities; poor management; absence of schools; unavailability of teachers; patriarchy and lack of awareness about the importance of education. The study explored the resisting factors in accomplishing the educational targets in South Punjab, Pakistan. Qualitative research was done to complete this study and data were taken from secondary sources, National and International organizations, newspapers, books and periodicals and other published material were also used for completing the research. It was found that structural as well as community level disparities were responsible in non-achieving the educational targets to enroll every child in the school in South Punjab. On the basis of secondary data it is recommended that the enrollment rate in primary level could be achieved by increasing the educational budget, making new and more advance infrastructure, providing scholarships to needy children, motivating the community members to interact with school administration, hiring well qualified new appointment on the urgent basis for achieving the primary educational targets in south Punjab
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**Introduction**

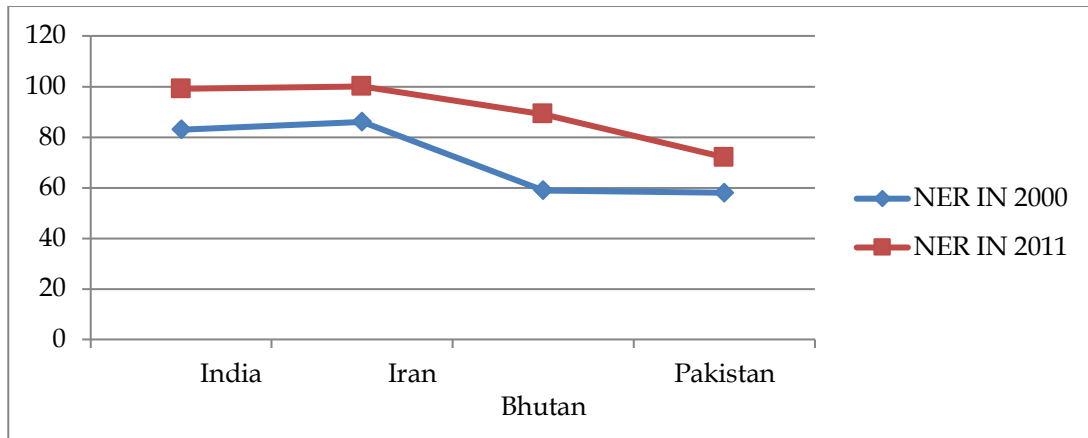
There were many hindering factors in achieving the universal primary education in Pakistan. Low educational budget was one most important factor among them. It was highlighted by Social Indicators of Pakistan 2016 that

government of Pakistan did not allocated a handsome amount in the domain of education. The educational budget of Pakistan was remained between 1.7 to 2.30 percent of its total budget (Social Indicators of Pakistan 2016, 2017). The allocation of low educational budget highly affected the quality and quantity of primary education. There was a shortage of educational facilities (classrooms, blackboards, pure drinking water, doors, school wall, playground, lights, fans, electricity shortage of teachers, shortage of schools in the developing countries (Zulfiqar, 2019; Hayes, 1987; Lloyd, 2007; Porter & McKibbin, 1988).

The second most prominent factor in the path of non-achieving the universal primary education was the patriarchal structure. Patriarchy created hurdles in empowering the female in every aspect of life. It could be argued that patriarchy dominates throughout the world and for its domination it used different tactics for capturing the people's mentality. It was generally stated that developed countries rooted out the gender biasness from the society (Azid & Ejaz, 2010; Kean & Sexton, 2009). Education was a basic tool of progress and prosperity. In 2005 Secretary General of United Nations' Kofi Annan stated that "unless the world will not achieve gender equality, maintaining peace and prosperity will be dream for them."

### **Asia: Gender Parity in School Enrolment**

There were many key issues confronted by Pakistan in accomplishing the national and international commitments (MDGs and SDGs). Gender discrimination was one most hindering factor in achieving the educational targets. It could be solved by legislation and institutionalization but unfortunately the majority of the policy makers and head of institutions were male and they disliked gender equality. It was highlighted by UNESCO that out of one hundred and seventy six accessible data of only fifty nine countries achieved the said target of equality in primary education. The condition of Asian countries was not satisfied because only twenty countries achieved the universal educational targets of primary education (UNESCO, 2009). The situation of Pakistan regarding enrollment in primary schools was also questioned mark. In 2011, 5.4 million children were out of school in Pakistan among them more than sixty percent were females. It was highlighted by Alif Ailaan that there were twenty five million children out of schools in Pakistan among them fifty five percent were girls. The report further indicated that fifty seven percent out of school children were from the poorest family background (Alif Ailaan, 2015). Whereas in India 1.7 million children were out of school among them more than half were female (Statistical yearbook for Asia and the Pacific, 2012). The enrollment of school age children was lower as compared to other Asian Countries that are showing in Figure number 1.



Statistical yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2012

According to the Pakistan Population Census 1998, the literacy rate of Pakistan was forty five percent and was lower than relative countries. There were many issues of this low percentage that affected the enrolment of primary schools especially at primary level such as lack of gender equality, lack of female institutions and lack of female teachers. The following chart represented the educational disparities from the period of 2002-2008.

**Table 1**  
**Total Number of Teachers, Education Institutions and Enrollment of public primary schools from 2002 to 2007 (In thousands) in Pakistan**

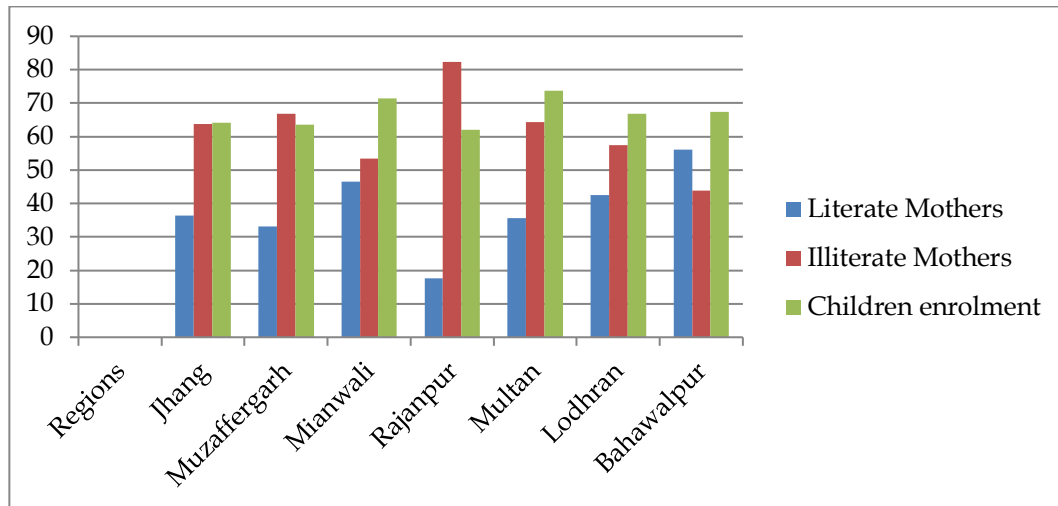
Years	Enrollment		Teachers		Schools	
	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
2002-2003	15094	6132	433.5	191.7	150.8	56.1
2003-2004	16207	8179	432.2	195.3	155.0	57.6
2004-2005	17258	9092	450.1	206.5	157.2	58.7
2005-2006	16834	10474	444.0	201.0	157.5	59.8
2006-2007	17043	11239	447.9	202.9	158.4	60.5

Source: Pakistan Economic Survey, 2007-08

Table number one depicts the clear picture of gender disparities caused by sexual identities in primary education in Pakistan. The number of female teachers and institutions in government primary schools of Pakistan were clearly showing the gender inequality and government preferences.

It was universally admitted that getting education was a fundamental right. The constitution of Pakistan Article 25-A, stated that "The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such a manner as may be determined by the law." Education was the first step towards empowering the humans but patriarchal structure was a hurdle in achieving gender-equality goals at primary level. It was evident that by educating the girls like infant persistence, healthiness and higher literacy was ensured (World Bank, 2001; Knowles et al., 2002) and 'lesser girls education has harmful impact on

economic development of society (Klasen,2002). It was generally viewed that gender inequalities in primary education resulted negative consequences. There was a liaison between poverty education, and inequalities (Oxaal, 1997; Chaudhry&Rahman, 2009). There is well renowned quotation of Napoleon Bonaparte about education "Give me good mothers...I shall give you a great nation!" The association between mothers' literacy and children's admission is shown in the following chart.



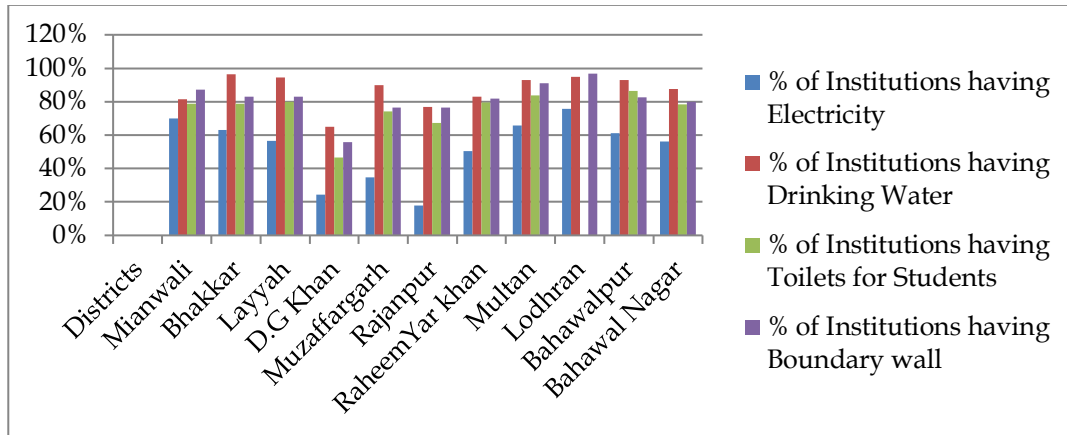
**Source: Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2011, Pakistan**

The above mentioned Figures show the positive relationship between mothers' literacy and children's enrollment in schools. It could be argued that we could achieve our said targets easily by enrolling girls in schools. The government of Pakistan also developed the school management committees to counter the issue of gender inequalities in primary education, but unfortunately these committees do not fulfill their vital role because community members did not know even their duties. The study conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa also identified (economic and gender disparities) constraints in achieving the admission target at Primary level (Lewin, 2009).

### **Condition of South Punjab towards Educational Facilities**

Punjab was on top regarding population. Its population was 73621 thousand in 1998 in which 48.26 percent was female, 51.74 percent was male in which 69.73 percent was rural population. The under 15 years Population was 42.52% in Punjab. 46.56 percent was literacy rate of Punjab in which 35.10 percent were women and the 57.20 percent male. The literacy rate of Punjab was quite better as compared to other provinces of Pakistan but again there was the division of upper Punjab and the southern Punjab. Southern Punjab faced many structural and normative deprivations. It is evident that the Punjab government always neglected these areas and not allotted the handsome budget for uplift the status of education. Ultimately, majority of the people belongs to these areas were facing the

patriarchal, non-scientific and illogical thinking. Karl Marx said well that conditions determine consciousness. The research conducted by District Education Profile (2011-12) highlighted the structural disparities faced by the districts of south Punjab in the following figure 3.



Source: District Education Profile 2011-12

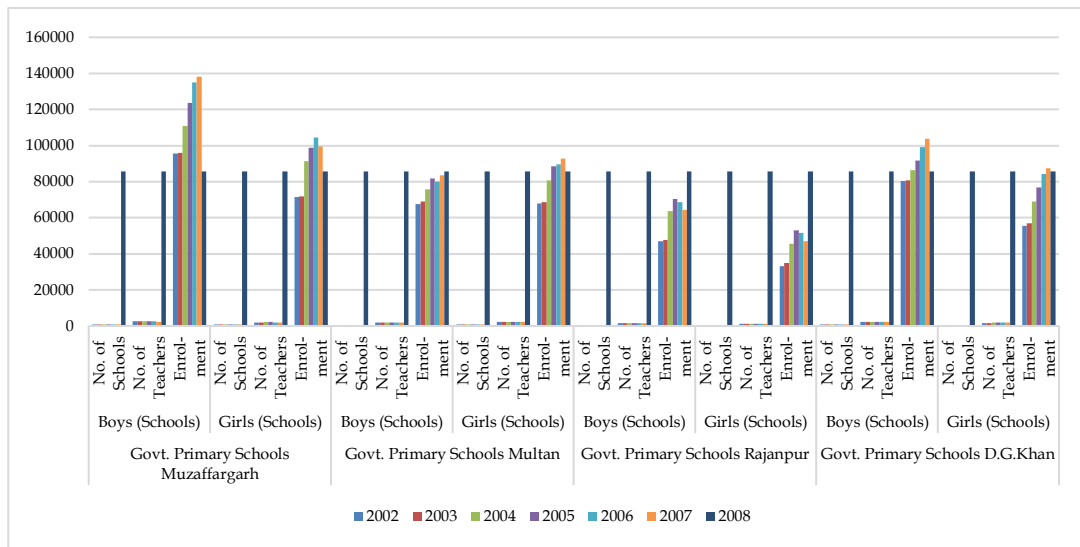
The Figure 3 mentioned that the educational institutions of South Punjab had missing the basic necessities of schools like pure drinking water, toilets and electricity. It showed that only 17.8% schools in Rajanpur had the facility of electricity; in Dera Ghazi Khan only 24.4% schools had electricity and the condition of Muzaffargarh regarding having the electricity is at least the same. These were the reasons that stopped the people to enroll their children in the government schools. So, the government should have to take some serious steps for the development of the educational infrastructure and guarantee the gender equality.

It was highlighted by UNESCO that 38% children in Asia were not attended school; 55 % girls did not enter in the schools (UNESCO,2009).So, in this way we could say that there was a clear relationship between the educational inequalities and patriarchy.

### **Structure of Education in Pakistan**

Pakistan had also its education structure in which there were the collaboration and chain of command among the provinces and the Ministry of education in the process of policy formation. The provincial governments took into account the instructions of the Federal government while performing certain type of actions. There were many educational plans launched in Pakistan among them one was Devolution Plan that was introduced in 2001 and the purpose behind the devolution plan was to empower at local bodies. The local authorities like Executive District Officers (EDOs) education with the coordination of District Coordination Officer (DCO) had the authority to supervise, monitor, transfer and recruit the teachers. The Secretary of education was the main authority at provincial level and further there are also two secretaries like special secretary for

schools and special secretary for higher education who were supported by additional secretaries and other staff.



### District Educational Management Information System (EMIS) Cell Multan

The above cited chart portrait the gender disparities in education in the 4 districts of Southern Punjab, Pakistan.

### Situation of Primary Education of Multan

The above mentioned figure portrays the situation of primary education in the district of Multan. It was usually stated that advance and new infrastructure should be launched with taking in view the growth of population for fulfilling the need of the coming time. But the condition of the district Multan was opposite. It showed that instead of increasing the schools and teachers, fifty girls and thirteen boys' schools were closed and other than this 139 female teachers and 27 male teachers were reduced in the period of 2002-2008. The data depicts the administrated flaws in the recruitment process of teachers; for example, in 2008 the female teachers were 2038 for 742 schools, whereas 1815 male teachers were performing their duties in 477 government primary schools Multan. The data showed that teachers, schools deficiencies affected the children in enrolment in South Punjab.

### Situation of Primary Education of Muzaffargarh

The overall picture of primary education in Muzaffargarh from the period of 2002-2008 was not satisfied. Even though only 1 additional boys school was increased in Muzaffargarh and 391 male teachers were also decreased. 56 girls' schools were increased and instead of increasing the female teachers' 44 female teachers were decreased. These types of unreasoned changes created serious problem of children admission in the schools. Additionally the adequate number of

teachers were not available in the schools ultimately it was affected the school enrollment in both the male and female schools.

### **Situation of Primary Education of Rajanpur**

In the case of Rajanpur the enrollment of students especially girls were highly affected from 2002-2008. Rajanpur was typically a traditional district in which female education was not motivated. The data showed that 38 girls' primary schools were added however in spite of female teachers' recruitment 6 were reduced. Same was the case with boys' schools; 25 boy schools were added, while 75 male teachers were decreased. In this way it could be stated that shortage of teachers highly affected the educational quality. Colclough et al. (2003) also endorsed that the availability of the teachers in the school play an important role in the decision making process of parents either they send their children in the school or not.

### **Situation of Primary Education of Dera Ghazi Khan**

It could be stated that the situation of primary education of Dera Ghazi Khan was not suitable due to the influence of patriarchal structure. The figure represented that from 2002-2008, 56 girls schools were added whereas teachers remained same. In the case of boys only 15 boys' schools were added whereas 229 male teachers were lesser in 2008 as compared to 2002. These types of illogical changes highly affected on the enrollment of the students. Instead of increasing the girls' schools in Dera Ghazi Khan the estimated results were not achieved due to the patriarchal values and social customs. The research conducted by Odaga and Heneveld (1995) in Africa stated that Africa was also in the grip of socio-cultural hurdles that highly affected the girl's enrollment in the primary schools.

### **Comparative Analysis of Four Districts of Southern Punjab**

The present study included 4 districts Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, and Rajanpur to understand the contributing factors of non-achieving the universal primary education in Southern Punjab. The comparative analysis highlighted the differences and similarities of study indicators from 2002 to 2008.

### **Comparative Analysis of Rajanpur and Multan**

The overall situation of girls' enrollment, female teachers and girls' schools were higher in Multan as compared to Rajanpur whereas the boy's schools were greater in Rajanpur. Rajanpur was marginalized area in which patriarchal influence was higher and affected on girls' enrollment. Lloyd et al.(2007) and Gulbaz et al. (2011) highlighted that the rural children especially girls were more excluded from basic schooling due to the patriarchal barriers, lack of school facilities and unavailability of schools.

### **Comparative Analysis of Rajanpur and Muzaffargarh**

The data depicts that enrollment, total number of teachers and public schools (boys and girls) of Muzaffargarh were greater than Rajanpur. But the gender inequalities and patriarchal supremacy was common issue that was found among these districts that resist the pace of development and females especially faced these issues. Shahidul (2012) also ratified that gender inequalities and structural constraints were the core issues faced by female children of rural areas.

### **Comparative Analysis of Rajanpur and Dera Ghazi Khan**

The above mentioned data depict the clear educational infrastructure difference between the Rajanpur and Dera Ghazi Khan. The patriarchy structure was hurdle in the children enrolment especially girls faced more in both districts. The study conducted by Zulfiqar, Shabbir and Ishfaq (2019) also verified that the patriarchal structure created hindrance in the education of children in South Punjab, Pakistan.

### **Comparative Analysis of D.G. Khan and Multan**

The figures showed the primary education differences and patriarchal influence between D. G. Khan and Multan. It was observed that there was more educational barrier in Dera Ghazi Khan than Multan. It was because Multan had better civic facilities than D. G. Khan.

### **Comparative Analysis of D. G. Khan and Muzaffargarh**

The data reflected some differences and similarities between the patterns of primary education and gender inequalities in the districts of D. G. Khan and Muzaffargarh. In both districts there were gender inequalities but the condition of Muzaffargarh was quite good. Children enrollment was higher in Muzaffargarh because the schools and population of Muzaffargarh was higher.

### **Comparative Analysis of Multan and Muzaffargarh**

The above mentioned data depicts the disparities and inequalities in the primary education. There were 2038 female teachers who were teaching in 742 government girls' primary schools, while in the male side there were 477 government boy's schools in Multan in which 1815 male teachers taught. In Muzaffargarh the situation of gender disparity was also reflected by data. In Muzaffargarh 734 male teachers taught in the government primary schools in the 2063 schools and 1976 female teachers taught in 853 government primary schools. The enrollment of girls in Multan was higher than boys, but in Muzaffargarh boy's enrollment was higher than girls. The reason for the low enrollment of students, especially girls, in Muzaffargarh was the shortage of teachers and patriarchal influence on the community thinking.



## **Discussion**

Education was the most fundamental institution that develops the atmosphere of gender equality, adaptability, socioeconomic and political stability in all spheres of life. The condition of women in Pakistan regarding the equality was not up to the mark. It was not wrong to say that development was a dream without women's participation and education was an institution that was the base for women empowerment. It was evident that the developed countries have focused their attention towards equal participation of both sexes and has been successfully achieved the gender equality targets especially in the domain of primary education.

Pakistan also committed to enroll every child from five years to sixteen in the primary schools since 2015 but there was a gap between our commitments and achievements. There were many problems behind this poor educational situation like lack of educational budgets, lack of gender equalities, patriarchal dominance, and gendered educational management, lack of awareness, lack of school facilities, schools and teachers. The education policies, plans and programs of Pakistan were decorated with idealistic words but the implications were far away. It was a common practice that every new program, policy or any initiative discards the previous one firstly and then makes commitments to remove the disparities and improve the poor education system and the problem sustained. The present condition of literacy ratio of Pakistan was far away from achieving the enrolment targets (Bengali, 1999).

## **Conclusion**

The current study aimed to highlight the resisting factors in achieving the educational targets in Southern Punjab, Pakistan. The secondary sources showed that the educational policies of Pakistan were beautified with philosophers and great ambitions, but its application was not observed. The condition of gender equality in primary education was not satisfactory and resultantly people considered it irrational to send their children to those schools where sufficient infrastructure and basic necessities were missing. The above mentioned figure represented that there was a serious issue of shortage of teachers and schools in the districts of south Punjab that were strongly hit in the achieving the universal educational targets. Other than the teachers and the schools the basic necessities of primary schools were also missing in these districts that compel the parents to exclude their children from schooling and involve them in the labor market. It was identified by District Education Profile 2011-12 that there were 82.2 percent schools in district Rajanpur; 75.6 percent in Dera Gahzi Khan, 65.3 percent in Muzaffargarh and in Multan 34.4 percent where there was non-availability of electricity. There were many other basic necessities missing in the districts of South Punjab like lack of drinking water, lights, play grounds, chokes, black boards, class room roofs, non-availability of the class rooms, washrooms security canteen, school boundaries etc. In the patriarchal society it is considered bad to educate their girls, but there

are few people who want to educate their daughter, but the barriers, including more distance from home, non-availability of pick and drop, co-education, school without boundary wall, lack of female schools and female teachers stop the path of girl's enrollment in the primary schools of Southern Punjab.

### **Recommendations**

There are many recommendations to tackle this issue among them some are discussing in the following lines

1. There is a dire need to enhance the educational budget, particularly in the primary level of education in south Punjab, so that the government may tackle the issue of lack of facilities in primary schools.
2. New schools should have to open on the urgent bases
3. New teachers should have to appoint without gender discrimination timely because shortage of teachers strongly affected the enrolment of both boys and girls enrolment at primary level schooling.
4. To reduce gender inequality, it is of paramount significance to conduct awareness campaigns on gender sensitization to the community, teachers and education managers, so that the gender inequality may be reduced.
5. The government needs to facilitate the poor and needy children in the shape of Stephens and scholarships.
6. Primary teachers must be given incentives so that not only enrollment, but access to educational services may increase to challenge existing gaps in primary education.
7. Misogynistic values need to be challenged thorough creative responses within the culture; this will bring a tangible change in the fabric of society for the reduction of gender inequalities that are the main hindrances to development.

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