

Different challenges and vulnerabilities of married female students in higher education

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to explore the socio-cultural, financial and educational problems of married female students at higher education. To collect data, we adopted semi-structured interview of this study. Total 80 respondents from a group of married female students in the University of Dhaka were selected through purposive sampling technique. We found the main reasons of these challenges and suffering because of financial constraints and their double works and responsibilities as a housewife at home. As a result, married female students are giving little attention during class or lectures and they are doing low academic result rather than male students. They suggested that their higher education relies on family mentality, economic condition and partner cooperation.

Keywords: married women, socio-cultural problems, financial problems, academic problems and higher education

Introduction

Higher education helps women to become powerful and assists them to develop leadership skill in future. It also helps them to become expertise and can make their opinion socio - economic and cultural development or can easily contribute in family and society life (Shaukat & Siddiquah, 2014) [13]. We saw that there are many gender inequalities in Pakistani higher education that created inequity in education system for girls. Consequently, most girls are going down rather than boys in the facilities of education and in the admission to education available (Tembon & Fort, 2008) [16]. Sometimes, boys are allowed to get a high-quality of schooling around the world. Most time girls are educated to prepare for household works and trained how to be excellent mothers and housewives (Khan, 2007, Maqsood, & Raza, 2012) [8, 10]. Khalid and Mukhtar (2002) [7] described the main phenomena for little involvement of girls in higher learning is economic such as payment, textbooks and other things. It is also estimated that females must show their tasks in the home (Khalid & Mukhtar, 2002; Maqsood *et al.*, 2012) [7, 10]. Early marriage now has become a common problem for female married in the higher levels of education. Parent are sometimes thought girls as a burden of family due to managing dowry in early marriage and the need of income earning relies on males in the family and they try to invest for males education (Maqsood, *et al.*, 2012; UNESCO, 2010) [10, 17]. Every religions and civilizations have paid attention to the significance of education for both male and female. Education is essential for both male and female in Islam. It helps to achieve equality, harmony and gives chance to play fundamental responsibility in society (Adeel, 2010) [11]. Women education affects on the improvement of society and culture and economic development (Goldin, 2004) [5]. Girl's education plays many opportunities to the family and culture where mother education affects on their children education in future life (Bari, 2005) [2]. Higher education of women develops the culture of society in which they are regarded as

a excellent partner and intelligent mother (Chaudhry and Rahman, 2009) [3]. To get better health and job facilities for girls, it is necessary to achieve higher education. Some traditional families in Pakistan think them home-confine and reproductive commodity (Murray, 2009) [11]. Gender inequality and more priority of boys' plays an important role to the barriers of females in higher education. Most times they are suffering huge discrimination in social, economic and other fields of life as well than men in education (Daraz, 2012; Bari, 2005) [4, 2]. Diverse social and cultural factors play a vital role to stop female's education. They have to be busy at their household tasks and take care of children without going to university for studies (Goldin 2004) [5]. There is a restriction for married girls to go outside of home at the beginning of their husband house. They have look after husband and little baby but most of them are willing to carry their studies after marriage. They have to face security and safety problems due to going long distance to attend educational institutions and care about family tasks, job and learning (Kuperberg, 2009; Sathar, Lloyd & Haque (2000) [9, 12, 15]. The research objectives of the study are to explore socio-cultural, economic and educational problems of married female students at higher education of the University of Dhaka.

Methodology of Study

This study was conducted by qualitative method. The data was collected by following semi structure interview questionnaire of the total 80 married female students of the University of Dhaka. Besides, the secondary data were taken from books, reports, article and journal.

Population and Sampling

The aim of the study was to examine the troubles of married female students at higher education level in Bangladesh. So the target respondents of the study was married female students who were enrolled in the Universities of Dhaka.

Instrument of the Research

To know about the problems of married student we reviewed related literature to enlarge semi-structured interview for the information. The major categories of the interview were social, economic, academic problems of the married female students. All the items of interview questionnaire were open-ended.

Collection and Analysis of Data

After getting permission from university authority, interviews were done by individual visits in different hostel of the targeted university. Respondents were guaranteed that information; personality will keep secret It was also ensured in case of any kind of discomfort, they are free to leave from this study. The audio tapes were selected after getting permission of participants and we transcribed the record to

data analysis.

Result of the study

This section illustrates the major information of the respondents’ social-cultural, economic and educational problems of married female students at higher education. One of the respondents viewed: *“Completing higher education and talking proper support from family and husband is very difficult in my village, as they believe a woman doesn’t require an education. The only thing that she has to take care her baby and do domestic works. I believe that I was more talent than my brothers. To my father I was less valuable than the cow.”*

The following tables have been prepared on the basis of field study as well as primary sources of data collection.

Troubles and challenges of married female students

Table 1

Topic	Categories	Frequencies	Percentage
Problems and challenges faced by married female students	Studies coursework assignments	15	18.75
	Time management	10	12.5
	Permission of husband	17	21.5
	Household activities	26	32.5
	Child rearing and bearing	12	15.0
Social barriers faced by married women getting	Social attitudes	16	20.0
	Social beliefs	22	27.5
	Social behavior	25	31.25
	Society views	17	21.5
Economical problems of married women	Financial crisis	28	35
	Depend on parents	10	12.5
	Depend on husband	42	52.5
Direct costs of schooling	Fees	28	35
	Clothing and shoes	36	45
	Books/supplies	16	20.0
Poor quality environment	Poor condition of building	23	28.75
	Overcrowding	18	22.5
	lack of water or sanitation	14	17.5
	Violence (physical and psychological)	25	31.25

All respondents are above 20 years old and they are randomly chosen. Almost 33% respondents are doing household activities and about 22% of women are needed to take permission of their husband to go for higher study. One respondent viewed: *“I believe that well educated mother can enlighten the future of next generations. Women want to take training for higher education and going abroad, husband does not encourage them.”* For child rearing and bearing, almost 15% married women have to face several problems in higher education. They are to face challenges in time management (13%) and suffer to course work assignments (19%). One respondent said: *“Women are not permitted for education because sometimes they will be self-independent, arrogant in respect to their husbands and will not take care of relations. You have to promise your husband and family that conjugal life will not affect to do household work due to education. They face less cooperation from in-laws.”*

In terms of social barriers, the higher percentage in social behavior around 32% of married women and the lowest percentage in social attitudes almost 20% of respondents are facing such problems. Women are facing such problems because of having social beliefs (28%) and society views (22%) about not to educate married women. They should

play an important role in household works and cherish their baby. One respondent delivered: *“I try to deal with all the troubles but family thinks there may be some time management issues. I think social attitude is different for male and female. Cultural barriers are available in village for women.”*

Married women are to suffer to bear their educational cost due to dependency on their husband. 53% of married women are highly relied financially on their husband interest and eager to educate and they have to suffer financial crises almost 35 % of the respondent. Fess, clothing and books are necessary to continue their study but unfortunately, they have to spend almost 45% in clothing and 35% in fees. One Participant expressed: *“after marriage you have to consider interest of your husband, besides your husband is not well sufficient to support your education. They are prepared to spend money on their children and certain things which are not compulsory but will not give money to their wives.”*

Violence against women both from home and university are very common today. About 32% women are victim of violence by their friend, teachers and others. They have to face challenges due to lack of sanitation (18%) and poor condition of building almost 29% of the institutions. One of

the respondents explained: “some husbands have a preference their wife education even if they can help him financially in future. The quality of life is stronger if both partners are earning. Do my all course work at university hours sitting in my car. They have to manage it sacrificing their sleep.”

Conclusions

Education is very essential for gradual growth of country. The study explored that the number of Bangladeshi married female students are victim of several challenges and much gender discrimination and gender inequality in access to education. It is also exposed that many families in Bangladesh do not allow married female students in particular for higher education because of societal, religious, financial and learning factors. Cooperation for the education of married female relies upon family mentality, economic steadiness and husband opinion. Security, safety and education fee is also an obstacle in the way of higher education for married female. Married females have to work such as domestic wife and educational work.

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