

FACTORS AFFECTING PERCEPTIONS OF RURAL PARENTS TOWARDS EDUCATION OF GIRL CHILD IN MEHSANA DISTRICT-A GENDER ANALYSIS

* Dr. Santosh Ahlawat, **Shastri Hasumati D

Persistence in gender inequality in education is an important dimension of human deprivation, which is mainly attributed to some economic and cultural factors. In rural areas, girl's education is still given low priority because primary concern of rural people is livelihood. Siddhanta and Nandy (2003) in their study found wide disparity in educational level of males and females in Gujarat and indicated that both in rural and urban sectors gender gap in education development was largely due to gender gap in average years of schooling. They revealed that economic prosperity alone can not ensure gender equality in education in Indian rural society. In urban areas economic prosperity can combat gender disparity in educational attainment but in rural population economic prosperity has significant positive relationship with gender gap in education. So, improvement in average years of schooling for female is an effective policy prescription.

Table : 1 Gender Gap in Literacy Rates, 2001

Sr. No.	Level	Total	Rural	Urban
1	All India	19.00	21.00	12.20
2	Gujarat	21.90	26.50	13.70

(Source : Siddhanta and Nandy, 2003)

To study the existing situation of perceptions of rural parents towards Girls education, the present study was conducted with the following objectives:

Objectives:

1. To study the perceptions of rural parents towards gender discrimination with regard to education of girl child. 2. To find out the difference between rural parents perception with regard to girl's education. 3. To find out the relationship if any between rural parents characteristics and education of girl child.

Research Methodology—Research methodology is the chasis of research problem. Because quality of scientific research if judged on the basis of its methodological approach.

Present study was conducted in Visnagar and Unjha taluka of purposively selected Mehsana district on 200 rural parents.

A Pre-Structured and pre-tested interview schedule was used for collecting data. Data were collected by personal interview technique. Statistical Analysis was done by computing frequencies, percentage, mean standard deviation, correlation coefficient ('r') test and 'z' test.

Result & Discussion:-

Data presented in above table-3 portrays that majority of rural parents (60%) showed positive perceptions towards girls education. Only 24% parents showed negative perception towards girls education and 16% parents were found neutral in their perception regarding girls education. The findings of study are in contrast of the finding of Bhardwaj and grower (2002), Arokiasamy and Pradhan (2003) and Siddhanta and Nandy (2003). This kind of positive change in rural parents perception may be helpful in improving the educational status of rural girls in future.

From the 'Z' value given in above table, it is clear that there was significant difference in the perceptions of rural parents. Mean values showed that perceptions of rural fathers were comparatively more positive than rural mothers towards education of girl child.

It is evident from the 'r' values given in table-5 indicate that age and family size showed significant but negative correlation at 0.01 percent level with perception of parents towards girl's education. Whereas, family type was found to have significantly negative correlation at 0.05 percent level of significance. Education, annual family income, mass media exposure, social participation, urban contacts as well as localiteness-cosmopoliteness and conservatism-liberalism was showed significant correlation at 0.01 percent level of significance. Other attributes namely. caste, occupation, land holding as well as change proneness showed non-significant relationship with perceptions of rural parents towards education of girl child.

* Professor and Head Deptt. of Extn. & Communication Management SDAU, S.K.Nagar, Gujarat

** Lecturer in Home Science at Smt. A.S. Chaudhary Mahila Arts & Home Science College, Mehsana

Conclusion—It can be concluded that though rural parents have positive perceptions toward girl education and also understand value of girl's education but girls are discriminated against boys due to limited economic resources, non-availability of educational facilities at vil-

lage level and due to various socio cultural reasons. Statistically too, significant difference between fathers and mothers perception was found. Fathers had more positive perception than mothers. So rural mothers needs to be sensitized more intensively about the importance of girls education.

Table No.-2 Educational level of Females and males in Mehsana district. (Gujarat)

Sr. No.	Talukas	Female(%)	Male(%)	
1	Unjha	72.30	89.60	
2	Visnagar	69.96	88.89	
3	Mehsana	67.82	88.53	
4	Vijapur	66.80	87.14	
5	Bechraji	53.25	83.08	
6	Kheralu	52.06	79.92	
7	Satlasana	44.03	77.36	
8	Vadnagar	55.62	84.31	48
9	Kadi	61.91	85.65	32
10	Gujarat	58.60	80.50	120

(Source : Population Cencus, 2001)

Table-3 : Perception of rural parents (father&mother) towards education of girl child. (n=200)

Table-4 :Significant difference in the perceptions of rural parents (father & mother) towards education of girl child. (n=100; n₂=100)

Rural Parents	Mean	Mean Difference	Standard error of mean difference	'Z' Value	Result
Fathers	29.0000	2.6600	1.0474	2.5397	*
Mothers	26.3400				

* Significant at 0.05 percent level.

Table-5 :Association between dependent and independent variables

Sr. No.	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables Co-efficient of correlation 'r' value
1	Age (X ₁)	- 0.1859**
2	Education (X ₂)	0.5435**
3	Caste (X ₃)	0.1269 ^{NS}
4	Family Type (X ₄)	- 0.1512*
5	Family Size (X ₅)	- 0.2669**
6	Annual Family Income (X ₆)	0.2190**
7	Occupation (X ₇)	- 0.0658 ^{NS}
8	Land Holding (X ₈)	0.0658 ^{NS}
9	Mass Media Exposure (X ₉)	0.4069**
10	Social Participation (X ₁₀)	0.3262**
11	Urban Contacts (X ₁₁)	0.3425**
12	Change Proneness (X ₁₂)	0.0634 ^{NS}
13	Localite Cosmopolitaness (X ₁₃)	0.1935**
14	Conservatism - Liberalism (X ₁₄)	0.3137**

* = Significant at 0.05 level

** = Significant at 0.01 level

NS= Non-Significant

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