

Inter-Generational Attitude (Mothers and Daughters) Towards Education and Employment

Neeru Sharma, Sumati Vaid and Laila Khalid

*P.G. Department of Home Science, University of Jammu, Jammu 180 006,
Jammu and Kashmir, India*

KEYWORDS Education. Vocation. Attitude. Intergenerational differences

ABSTRACT The present study was conducted to find out the intergenerational attitude (mothers and daughters) towards education and employment. This study was limited to Muslim women in the Poonch city of Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir State. The sample size was 50 Muslim women in the Age group of 30-60 years and their 50 adolescent daughters in the age group of 12-22 years. Information was collected with the help of interview schedule. Result reveals that most of the respondent mothers are strongly inclined towards education and employment of their daughters but still restrictions are imposed in some areas like not going out without wearing a Burka or having male friends. Results also indicated that the views of mother are totally different from their daughters.

INTRODUCTION

Mothers have always been the closest friend and 'confidante' of an Indian girl. When the outside world is restricted, exploration of self happens with the help of mother. A daughter-mother bond was and is most enduring one.

Studying the belief of mothers, Sharma (1999) found that mothers want their daughters to be educated and professionally sound, because they feel that they themselves could not get such an opportunity. The most coveted profession for daughter was 'teaching', as mothers believe that only education and employment can enable a girl to be free from the shackles of the drudgery at home. Even the would be mothers-in-law wish their daughters-in-law to be employed, as they believe, it would be beneficial in avoiding 'jhak-jhak' (squabbles) (Sharma, 1999).

With such beliefs as a background, the present study was conducted to understand Muslim mothers views about their daughters education and employment. Due to the beliefs in 'Purdah', Muslim women have been denied the benefits of education and employment. Census of India (2001), the total literacy rate was 54.46% out of which 65.75% are males and 41.82% females are illiterate. In Jammu and Kashmir the total literacy rates is 77.30%, out of which 84.92% males and 68.75% females are literates (Reflections, 2003). According to the Digest of Statistics (2000-2001), total number of main workers is 251472 out of which 238544 are males and 12928 are females and in marginal work the total rate is 120475 out of which 20454 are males and 100021 are females.

The present study was conducted to know the attitude of mothers from Poonch city of Poonch District of Jammu and Kashmir towards their daughter's education and employment. Poonch is a border town and the district too is named so. This district emerges as the smallest district of the state which comprises of 3 tehsils namely Surankote, Mendhar and Haveli (all presently terrorist infested); 5 blocks, 51 Panchayats, 168 villages commanding an area of 1,674 sq.km. The population of the district as per the Digest of Statistics (2000-2001) is 371561, out of which 193970 are males and 1777591 are females. The literates in Poonch district are 156208, out of which 104746 are males and 51462 are females. The 94.15% males and 81.91% females of urban areas are literate and 63.13% males and 32.22% females of rural areas are literate. According to Reflection (2003), the total literacy rates are 51.07%, out of which 65.41% males and 35.30% females are literates. In Poonch district majority of the population comprises of Muslims (89.06%). So the study was focused on Muslim women. This was done to know that whether gender bias exists among Muslim mothers attitude towards education and employment of their daughters and also to know the perception of Muslim daughters regarding the attitude of their parents on the same issue.

METHODOLOGY

Sample: The sample of the study was Muslim married women (n=50) and their unmarried daughters (n=50) living in Poonch city of the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir State.

Mothers were in the age group of 30-60 years and daughters were in the age group of 12-22 years. The criteria for sample selection was that the mother should be resident of Poonch city, at least matriculates and having children of both sexes. The families were randomly selected keeping in mind the criteria of sample selection.

The information required for the study was obtained by administering a close-ended interview schedule. The schedule has items seeking information regarding background information of the family, information about pre-natal period, birth, choice about particular sex of child, and then educational and vocational preferences of mother's viz-a-viz their daughter's.

Analysis: The responses obtained were coded, tabulated and percentages were drawn. Content analysis was done for the open-ended questions. Categories were generated from the responses obtained. Comparative analysis was also done for the responses of mother and their young adolescent daughters. Chi-square was also used for the analyzing the significance of differences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reveals that the median age of the most of the mothers is young adulthood (37.5 years) and most of them are housewives. The median educational level is matric and most of them live in nuclear families. The median family income is Rs 7,000/-and more, so the sample falls into the middle-income category and the median number of the children in each family is 4-5, indicating medium to large families. In sum, most of the families belong to the middle socio-economic strata.

Results reveal that majority (94%) of the mothers want to have son as their first issue. The reasons given are that the sons stay with parents and also provide benefits and support to the parents in the old age. Birth of sons and daughters

had been celebrated by most of the mothers (94%and 92%). In case of celebrating birthdays, most of the mothers (60% and 56%) do not celebrate the birthdays of their son as well as daughters. So the mothers do not seem to be biased for gender of the child.

Table 2 shows that more than half (52%) of the mothers want their daughters educational level

Table 2: Educational and professional opportunities for daughters (n=50).

S. No.	Responses	No.	%
1 Educational Opportunities			
<i>A Level of Education Preferred for Daughters</i>			
i	Graduation	4	8
ii	Post Graduation	26	52
iii	Vocational Courses	20	40
<i>B Kind of Freedom in Education Given to Daughters*</i>			
	Selecting subjects on her own	49	52
	Taking admission in any college that is out of the state	40	43
	Taking admission in any department of her interest	5	5
<i>C Reaction of Mothers Towards Higher Education of Daughters</i>			
i	Positive reaction	44	88
ii	Negative reaction	6	12
<i>D Ideas Behind Education*</i>			
i	Better equipped to be financially independent	45	74
ii	Better partner to husband	7	11
iii	Better equipped to become a mother	6	10
iv	Better help to mother	3	5
<i>E Schooling of Children of Both Sexes</i>			
i	Same	34	68
ii	Different	16	32
<i>F Girls Taking Care of Aspects of Home Life*</i>			
i	Administration	50	28
ii	Finance	49	27
iii	Attending to family members needs	55	24
iv	Attending social responsibility	37	21
2 Professional Opportunities			
<i>A Preferences of Sending Children for Training on Donation for</i>			
i	Daughter	38	76
ii	Son	12	24
<i>B Reactions Towards Daughter's Vocation</i>			
i	Positive	49	98
ii	Negative	1	2
<i>C Types of Profession*</i>			
i	Medicine	39	34
ii	Teaching	29	25
iii	Engineering	25	21
iv	Administration	11	10
v	Defence	11	10
<i>D Attitude Regarding Same Profession for Son and Daughter</i>			
i	Positive	41	82
ii	Negative	9	18

*Multiple responses

Table 1: Background information of the mothers

Variables	X (median)
Age	37.5 years
Educational Qualification	10 th
Occupation	Housewife
Type of Family	Nuclear
Number of children	4-5
Family income	7000 and above
Socio-economic status	Middle

to be up to post graduation and 95% of the mothers would allow their daughters to select subjects of their own choice and take admission in any college, even out of the state. Majority (88%) of the mothers show positive reaction towards sending their daughters for higher studies. 74% of the mothers are educating their daughters for making them better equipped to be financially independent. Majority (68%) of the mothers send their sons and daughters to the same schools. 55% of the mother's view that girls take care of the administration and finance of the home hence education makes them better equipped for those tasks. As far as professional opportunities for females are concerned, table no 2 reveals that 76% of the mothers are willing to send their daughters for training on donation if they are educationally better than their sons. Majority (98%) of the mothers prefer education in medicine for their children. Most of the mothers (82%) prefer similar profession for their daughters and sons. Hence mothers again show an unbiased attitude towards their daughters.

According to the table 3, the mothers do hold some traditional as well as modern attitudes. 80% of the mothers want their daughters to wear burkas and cover their heads and 76% of the mothers approve of modern trends in their daughters like dress, eating out in restaurants and going for viewing movies in theater.

Table 3: Accepting modern attitude towards female liberation (n=50)

S. No.	Responses of Mothers	n	%
A	<i>Views Regarding Sticking to Tradition*</i>		
i	Covering of head	49	54
ii	Wearing Burka	23	26
iii	Marriage within family	18	20
B	<i>Approval of Modern Trends in Daughters Behavior</i>		
i	Eating in restaurants	14	28
ii	Dressing	12	24
iii	Going to movies	12	24
iv	Listening to pop music	7	14
v	Having male friends	5	10

*Multiple responses

It is clear from the table 4 that the views of mothers and their daughters are different and chi square shows that the difference among mothers and daughters are significant. Hence it was found that there is still lot of difference in the attitude and views of the mothers as well as their daughters.

Table 4: Difference in the views of mothers (n=50) and daughters (n=50)

Responses	Mother		Daughters		χ^2
	n	%	n	%	
Permission to go for picnics with friends	14	8	44	18	38**
Liberty to choose the profession of one's own choice	49	28	44	18	84**
Permission of doing job outside home	49	28	32	12	95**
Permission to go for movies with friends	12	7	23	9	44**
Permission to have male friends	5	3	8	3	234**
Permission to go outside without burka	1	1	8	3	394.3**

*df(1), χ^2 (0.005) = 3.84

**Significant differences

DISCUSSION

The prosperity and growth of a nation depends on the status and development of its women. Women play modified role in the family as a mother, sister, wife, who socializes, educates, loves, feeds and supports individuals in the family. Mother plays an important and prominent role in the family. The present study shows that in our Indian society mothers still want to have a male child in the family so that they support and protect them in the old age. Kejing (1991) and Sinha (1993) have also reported that the preference of the son is still prevalent and deep rooted. Though mothers hold some traditional beliefs, yet they value education, equally for their children of both sexes. In the present study mothers are not biased towards education and vocation of their daughters. Khan and Noor (1984) found that there has been considerable change in the attitudes, values and actual performance of rural women in the field of education. Chaturvedi's (1984) reported that women feel the girl must learn household work and females are not suited for police and administrative jobs. Whereas in the present study it has been observed that the attitude of females towards work are changing and their participation in different occupations are modernize, as also reported by Singh (1985). The Muslim mothers of traditional orthodox background, have changed in their attitude and preference, but their daughters have shown more favorable attitude towards these changes.

REFERENCES

- Census of India: *Provisional Population Totals*. Directorate of Census Operations. Jammu and Kashmir (2001).
- Chaturvedi, P.: Impact of religion on the attitude of women towards women's status. *Indian Educational Review*, **4**: 84-89 (1984).
- Directorate of Economics and Statistics Planning and Development Department: *Digest of Statistics*. Government of Jammu and Kashmir. 9, 28, 29 and 371 (2000-01).
- Kejing, D.: The life experience and status of Chinese rural women from observation off three age groups. *International Sociology*, **6** (1): 5-24 (1991).
- Khan, M. A. and Noor, A.: *Status of Rural Women in India: A Study of Karnataka*. Uttal Publishing House. New Delhi (1984).
- Reflections on Jammu and Kashmir: *UGC Special Assistance Program*. Department of Political Science. Jammu, University of Jammu, **1(1)**: 7 (2003).
- Sharma, N.: *Nature, Sources and Consequences of Parental Beliefs*. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis. University of Jammu, Jammu, India (1999).
- Singh, M.: Change and Punjabi women: A Sociological Analysis. *Social Change*, **15**: 2 (1985).
- Sinha, A. M.: *The Girl Child in India. Women in Changing Society*. Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi. Pp. 113-119 (1993).