

An Analysis of the State of Female Education in Sindh and Role of Television in Increasing Literacy Rate

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Abstract

The core purpose of this study is to analyze the state of education in Sindh and to elucidate the role of television in bringing awareness about women education. According to world fact book sex ratio in country is 1.06 male(s)/female (2013 est.) and according to Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement Survey (PSLM)-2012 literacy rate of Pakistan is 58%, male 70% and female 47%. Women comprise half of the population of country but female literacy rate is negligible. Various policies are formulated to achieve the considerable literacy rate. But still country is unable to achieve the goal of universal education due to various problems and hurdles. This study deals with the problem of lack of awareness among women about education as their basic right. Television is medium of communication that informs, educates and propagates about rights and duties of society including education. In this paper researcher examines the state of education in Sindh and how television can be used in better way to deal with this problem. This study uses the secondary data analysis method. Secondary data analysis method is technique of reviewing and using authentic data already available on subject. Statistical data and reports on television viewing trends are reviewed. Various studies carried on the impact of television educational programs on audiences at national and international level are reviewed. Conclusion is drawn on the basis of reviewed literature that state of female education in Sindh is not good. Study also concludes that TV in most widely existing and influencing medium of communication. It should be used as a tool to eradicate female illiteracy.

Keywords: Educational Programs on TV, Female education and awareness.

1 Introduction

“Seek knowledge from cradle to the grave” Holy Prophet (PBUH). Socialization is a process of learning social norms to fit in society, education and television are important agencies of socialization.

Television is an important and widely existing medium of communication. Television admires and influences more to its audiences than any other medium of communication. Television educates, informs, and entertains. In Pakistan 12.5 Million population owns television sets, 77% in urban areas and 33% in rural areas (Gallup TV Rating, 2009). Studies carried on by sociologists and media practitioners revealed the influences/ Impact of television on its audiences.

Indicators of women empowerment show that very less attention and importance is given to female in society. Female population is more than half of the population but in education female literacy rate is lesser than male. Scholars, educationists and literate community suggest and insist women education. Literacy rate in Pakistan is 57%, in urban areas 73 % and in rural areas 50 %. That means almost half of the population in Pakistan is illiterate. Education is must to combat with poverty, ill- health and gender discrimination.

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Especially female education is necessary to ensure food security and deal the problem of poverty. Educating a female is educating a family. (WFP, 2013)

There are various reasons that a woman cannot get education; purdah system, conservative thinking regarding co-education, less importance to female child, and non-availability of educational facilities are some of them. According to Johnsons, 2000, television can change the conservative thinking. Its audio and visual presentation makes it easy for audiences to understand its programs. Television is more affective in forming public opinion and bringing societal change than any other medium of communication. There is hardly any home which does not possess TV set.

In Sindh increasing number of local language channels has increased the television viewership. Cable and satellite channels are viewed with great interest. This increasing trend motivated researcher to empirically analyze the state of female education and role of television in increasing literacy.

1.2 Research Questions

This study deals with the problem of female education in Sindh, and focuses on role of television in increasing awareness of female education. Following questions are set out by researchers to answer and clarify the research topic.

1. What is state of female education in Sindh?
2. What role TV is playing/can play to boost up female literacy rate?
3. What measures should be taken to increase the use of television to educate females and motivate them for education?

1.3 Research Objectives

Low literacy rate of female and low social status of female derived researchers to conduct this study. Television is the most viewed amongst electronic media in most of the houses. Main purpose the present study is to Sociologically Analyze Role of Television in the Female Education.

1. To find out the role of television in awareness of women education.
2. To recommend the government and media practitioners to unearth the better ways to bring awareness about the importance of getting education in society in general and female in particular.
3. To forward recommendation to media groups to use television in better way to increase awareness about education.

2. Research Methodology

The present research paper is basically based upon analysis of secondary data available on topic. In this secondary research researchers have reviewed reports showing the educational trends of female in Sindh and impact of watching television on female audiences. To analyze the impact of watching television on female various researches conducted at national and international level are reviewed.

2.1. Review of the Studies showing the State of Education in Sindh, Pakistan. Gender Wise Literacy rate of Pakistan & Sindh - 2012

Region	Male	Female	Total
Pakistan	70	47	58
Rural	64	35	49
Urban	82	68	75
Sindh	72	47	60
Rural	58	23	41
Urban	85	70	78

Sources: *Pakistan Social and Living standard Measurement Survey 2012*

PLSM survey results show a complete picture of educational status of Pakistan and Sindh. In Pakistan total literacy rate is 58% that means still 42% of population is illiterate in country, if we see in table female literacy rate is 47% while literacy rate of male counterpart is 70%, that clearly shows the gender discrimination existing in region. Rural areas are again showing a worst condition than urban areas, where male members have attained literacy rate 64% and female 35%. Comparatively in Sindh only 2% total literacy rate is higher, it is 60%. In Sindh we find 40% of population is uneducated. Again male literacy rate is higher than female literacy rate, in urban areas of Sindh literacy rate is 85% male and 70% female and in rural areas 58% of male and 23% of female. In rural Sindh comparatively we find more ignorance on the part of education.

According to UNESCO (2008) definition of literacy varies from region to region and time to time. In Pakistan definition of literacy used in 1998 census is, "A Person, of above the age of ten years, who can read and write a simple letter, of any language and can read a newspaper".

That is minimum level of standard of education, a person who can only read and write a simple letter is considered literate. Means if we look at the ratio of persons who have at least attained school and got education only five years, the literacy rate will further drop down. With this literacy rate and standard we cannot tackle the ignorance and social issues. World Bank Report analyzes the enrollment of girls in rural areas of Pakistan. This study focuses the two variables, first is Purdah system and restriction on mobility as a cause of low enrollment and second is differentiation in enrollment among social groups and concept of high caste. Study findings support the first cause as a hurdle in female education. Ratio of enrollment of girls in school is low in High caste than low caste. (Jacoby & Mansuri, 2011)

2.2. Studies on the Status of Women and Role of Television

In Sindhi Society women are deprived of their rights, they are working twenty four hours at their homes but do not get any reward in exchange. In Sindhi society, especially in villages women cannot go outside the homes to get education or do a job.

Studies conducted by (Wassan & Agha, 2010) and Soomro, Shah, Jamali & Shah, 2012 have analyzed the status of women in Sindh and found very disappointing results. Domestic violence, low literacy rate, unawareness and no recognition of women rights, low participation in economic, political and social life are clearly unearthing the position of women in society.

Education is very important to make woman useful member of society. Women cannot be informed about their rights until or unless they get education. Education is not limited to formal institutions only. Where women cannot get education due to various factors television can be used as a source of teaching and learning. In is need of time that man and woman should be informed about new laws, legislatures, conventions, and organizations

working on different issues for them. Gender discrimination could also be eradicated by education (Demiray, 2014).

Educational television programs (ETV) are source of learning for those who cannot take classes in AIOU. Findings of this study are that mostly the students were satisfied with ETV programs and teachers who deliver lecture on ETV. But, they pointed out some weak points of ETV, such as, the timings, recording difficulties and unawareness of program timing and schedule. Researchers suggested that teachers should speak slowly and repeat the main points, students should increase their writing skills, and schedule of programs should be published in newspapers (Akhter, October-2011).

A study conducted to analyze the use of television for distance learning. Allama Iqbal Open University (IIOU) used television and other forms of mass media for distance learning. Comparatively, the use of television than radio, workshops and seminars is more and influential (Siraj, 2001).

Lecture programs that are telecasted by Allama Iqbal Open University and Virtual television to educate their students and other television channels and programs as dramas, NEWS, talk shows motivate and promote the education in society. These programs are good source of education and knowledge for viewers. According to Shamsheer & Mohammad (2012) there is great role of television in changing attitude and forming public opinion on increasing importance of education. Public especially women are aware of importance of getting education; television motivates and convinces to get more education.

Similar results were revealed by Johnsons (2000) in his study titled to analyze the impact of television on rural India, study found that viewers were aware and educated on social, political and economic issues. Rural life of India, which was simple and traditional more focused on primitive culture of society, was changing. Changes were noticed in all spheres of life of rural people, and television was considered as driven force of that change. Attitude towards education, status or social position of female in house hold and outside, preference for less number of children and change in nourishment and rearing of children were mainly investigated in the study.

According to Abbasi & Saeed (2012) in rural Sindh female face number of problems and hurdles in the pursuit of education. Study found that dropout ratio of female candidates was comparatively higher than male candidates, enrollment ratio was lesser, and girl students were irregular in schools. Population growth, economic problems of parents, and lack of awareness were found major reasons behind female education problem. Research stressed the role of media, especially television to start campaign for female education and found that mass media could play a key role in promoting female education.

Television provides the environment in which audiences are learnt, educated, and are informed. It is very powerful in affecting social life of audiences. Majority of respondents that is 80.2% considered that electronic media produces negative behavior. It helps students in curricular activities but produces negative traits such as smoking and delinquency (Azeez, et al., 2014).

Investigation found that after the inception of cable television in India, the status of Indian women is positively changed. Preference for male child and domestic violence are reduced. Female enrollment in schools is increased. Females were more aware and informed. Television is very potential to change the life of women in society and can be used as an agent change (Jensen & Oster, 2008).

3. Discussion and Findings of the Study

From the analysis of data on educational status of women in Sindh, Status of women in Sindh and studies of television impact, present study finds that women in Sindhi society is neglected from the right to get education. Lack of education is one of the important factors of

lower female social status in society. In order to empower women and develop women society will have to increase the literacy rate in true sense, by increasing the horizons of literacy definition. Ability of writing a word of any language is not enough to enlighten the human thinking. But, education should be made universal and necessary at least up to matric or intermediate.

Studies conducted by Zia (2008) and Sheikh, (2007) found that woman watches more television and gets influenced by watching television. According to their findings subjects highlighted more frequently on television and they successfully form the public opinion which is desired direction. Television changes the attitude of man and woman towards education.

Role of television in increasing awareness of female education depends upon the television content, what is shown on television and how frequently. In Pakistan, AIOU and VU telecast their educational programs on Pakistan Television Networks, (Zia, 2008 and Sheikh, 2007. et al) revealed that women like to watch entertainment programs, especially dramas. Satellite and cable television channels are preferred to watch, they diffuse the culture of other countries, where women are shown in liberal, educated and working style and such programs have positive impact on women awareness of their rights and social mobility of women.

4. Conclusion

Education prepares members of society to achieve societal goals. Education in its all forms, whether it is formal or informal helps to develop personality and skills to fit in society. Pakistan is Islamic country; Islam makes it obligatory on all Muslims to get education. But veil (Purdah) system restricts the free mobility of female. In traditional society, and in villages where there is no availability of schools women is unable to receive formal education. Illiteracy becomes destination of female and begets domestic violence and honor killing. Television as a medium of communication can be best used to inform women about women human rights and organizations working for women good; through educational and informative programs telecasted on TV channels women can get basic knowledge of math, language and science technology. News, talk shows, dramas and other programs not only provide entertainment but information. Working, independent and educated woman shown on television can motivate woman to get education and work for their good.

4.1 Recommendations

- ETV programs are telecasted only on PTV and Virtual television. PEMRA should make compulsory to all private and cable and satellite channels to telecast educational programs at least two hours a day.
- Timing for those programs should be convenient for women.
- Basic subjects such as language, basic mathematics, general knowledge, women rights, organizations working for women rights, health awareness should be included in television content.
- Researchers call scholar to conduct further research on use of television for educational purpose.

4.2 Limitation of Study:

Television and education are always remained the topic of discussion among social scientists. Various researches are conducted at national as well as international level to reveal the impact of educational TV programs on audiences. But this study only focuses the women audiences. This study analyzes the role of television in female education. Study is also limited in sense that it does not analyze the television content, or educational programs

telecasted per day on different channels and their viewership. Opinion of women regarding the impact of educational programs and their satisfaction are also not included. Therefore, further research work can be done to deeply dig out the role of television in bringing awareness about female education.

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