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Gender Inequality In Educational Attainment : A Case Study Of Pachrukha Village, Purba Champaran, Bihar

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Abstract: This paper analysed the gender inequality in educational attainment in Pachrukha Village of Purba Champaran in Bihar based on the field survey. Gender inequality in educational attainment happen in the name of tradition, patriarchy, early marriages and proximity to school. After examining the gender inequality in educational attainment in study area it has been demonstrated that majority of female have to face various issues like less preference to their education, dropouts from school and they have less decision-making participation in the house.

Key words: Early Marriages, education attainment, work participation, poverty and decision making.

Introduction- Prosperity of women means prosperity for all, as the objective of a literate society and strong economy can be attained, if both men and women are empowered equally with better education and employment opportunities. As women occupy 49.6 percent of world population in year in 2011 (World Bank, 2013), developmental activities will receive asset back without their proper education. Illiteracy and unemployment are some of the major problems our society is facing and gender inequality in terms of literacy is very high. Although gap is gradually decreasing, but the pace is very slow to reach equality (World Economic Forum, 2015).

Education not only leads to a progressive society and overall development of a nation, but also imparts social values which enhance the thinking and earning power of its citizens thereby eliminating poverty and social discrimination. Gender inequality in literacy is one of the important concerns of most developing countries as it is the biggest obstacle in overall development. According to Radhakrishnana (1948), there cannot be an educated society without educated women and if education was limited to either men or women, then the opportunity should be given to women as from them it would surely pass on to the next generation. According to King and Hill (1993), education enriches the overall capacity and capability of women leading to their active economic and political participation protecting them from all forms of discrimination, disparity and biasness and resulting in increase in their social status and overall well-being of female child and mother. A nation prospers with increase in female education, as work participation increases; infant, child and maternal mortality decreases; and also leads to decline in population growth as small family becomes the norm and also with late marriages.

Data Base and Methodology- According to McKinsey Global Institute Report by Woetzel et al., (2015) on gender parity, Bihar has performed worst on the Gender Parity Score (GPS) and in another study by Dilshi (2018) Purba Champaran has performed worst in Bihar. On the basis these two studies Purba Champaran has been selected for the field survey and although it had 1293 villages, but the one with the maximum population (Pachrukha) in 2011 was chosen for the primary survey which was conducted in 2017 of 400 married women by random systematic method. 200 married respondents were surveyed from both the major religious communities of the region i.e. Muslim and Hindu. Certain hypotheses were tested with the help of Chi-square test as it was applied to examine the extent of relationship between the dependent variable (early marriage) and independent variables (education, work participation, health, violence and decision making). This was done on the basis of primary data generated through field survey.

Chi-square test:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

χ^2 = the test statistic \sum = the sum of

O = Observed frequencies E = Expected frequencies

If the p-value is less than the significance level 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis.

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If the p- value is more than the significance level 0.05, null hypothesis will not be rejected.

Study Area- Pachrukha under Banjaria C.D. Block is the most populated village (39,140 persons) in Purba Champaran District of Bihar and has also the largest area in the district i.e. 3823 hectares. The literacy rate of male and female in the Banjaria C.D. Block is 62.95 percent and 43.88 percent respectively. The sex ratio and child sex ratio of Banjaria C.D. block is 890 and 958 respectively (Census, 2011).

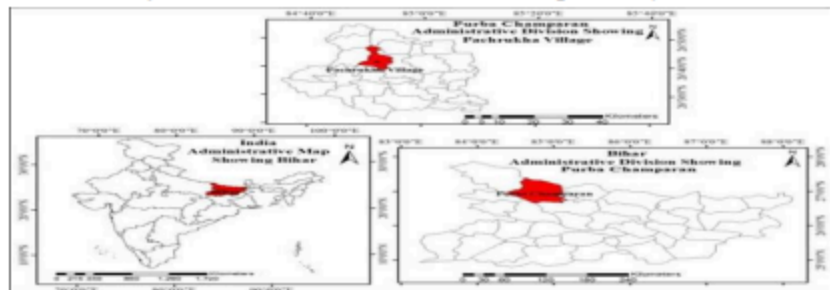
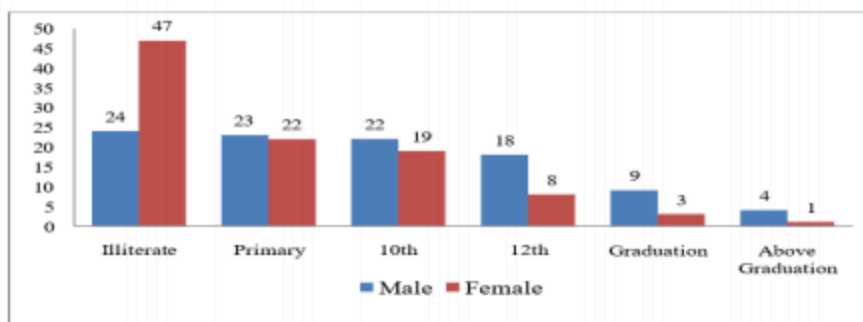


Fig: Showing Pachrukha Village

Result and Analysis- Educational status of Respondent Literacy is an important tool for the overall development of the society. Of the total 200 respondents, 35.5 percent were illiterate of whom 66 percent were female. On analyzing the educational attainment of the respondents, it was found that 23 percent male and 22 percent female studied up to primary level and 22 percent male and 19 percent female up to 10th and 18 percent male and only 8 percent female up to 12th. Only 9 percent male and 3 percent female had graduated and 4 percent male and 1 percent female above graduation (fig. 5.9). Thus, it is concluded that the educational attainment among female is quite low in comparison to males for it was seen that at every level the reduction in the percentage of female is more thereby implying the fact that less importance is given to their education. According to various scholars educational attainment among male and female take place at different rates because of parental educational status, family income, family size, residential place and infrastructure (Akhtar,1996; Brown and Park, 2002; Connelly and Zheng, 2003; Desai and Kulkarni, 2008; Husain and Chatterjee, 2009).

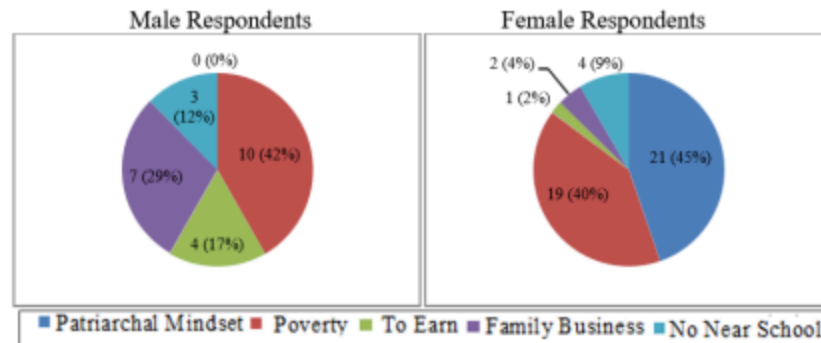


Source: Field Survey, 2017 Figure: Educational Status of Respondents

Causes of Illiteracy- The causes of illiteracy among the male and female respondents were not the same in Pachrukha village. Among the male illiterates (24), the major cause was poverty for 42 percent, 29 percent as they joined the family business while 17 percent due to their involvement in other activities to earn money and the remaining 12 percent because of distance from school. No male was illiterate because of traditional mindset (fig. 5.10).

Patriarchal mindset led to illiteracy among 45 percent female illiterates. According to Leung and Zhang (2008), patriarchal mindset leads to discrimination between male and female in education and the latter are not allowed to achieve it. Second most important reason behind illiteracy among female respondent was poverty which caused around 40 percent female to be illiterate. Several scholars stated that poverty leads to illiteracy amongst female everywhere (Brown and Park, 2002; Hunter and May, 2003; Lloyd et al., 2005). The remaining 15 percent were illiterate because of distance from school, family business and involvement in other activities to earn money. Thus, the major reasons of illiteracy among female was

patriarchal traditional mindset followed by poverty and due to the former they were not even allowed to go out to attain education.

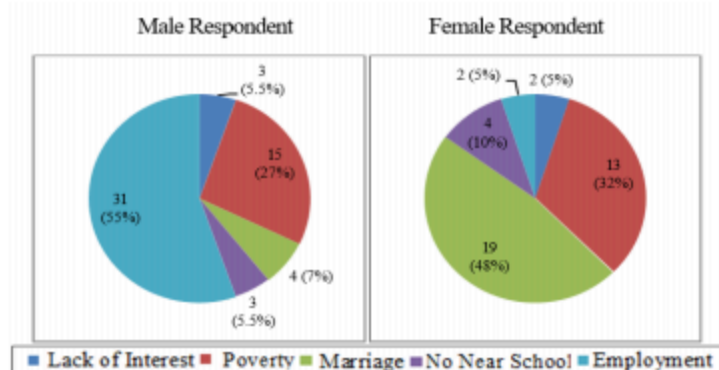


Source: Field Survey, 2017 Figure: Causes of Illiteracy Among Male and Female Respondents

Reasons for school dropout 51 males dropped out of total literate respondents (76) and this was mainly because of employment (55 percent) followed by poverty (27 percent) and the remaining 18 percent due to marriage, lack of interest and distance from school (fig. 5.11).

Among female respondents, marriage was the major reason for their dropouts (48 percent). Early marriages led most of the girls to leave school midway (The Probe Team, 1999; Ackers et al., 2001; Mansory, 2007; Holcamp, 2009; Shahidul, 2012). The probability of girls completing secondary education decreases with decrease in age of marriage and for every one year decrease from 18 there is 4 to 6 percent more probability that they will not complete secondary education (Field and Ambrus, 2008; Nguyen and Wodon, 2015a). Second most important reason for female dropout was poverty (32 percent) and several scholars too stated that it is one of the major reasons which inhibit women from attaining education (Fuller and Laing, 1999).

10 percent girls drop out due to the distance factor as parents restrict them for safety and security purpose. Many of the young girls drop out their because of the vulnerability of sexual harassment if schools are at a distance (Colclough et al., 2000). The remaining 10 percent were unable to finish school due lack of interest and employment. Thus majority of the girls dropped out due to marriage (48 percent) followed by poverty (32 percent) and distance (10 percent). Although males too dropped out due to distance but in the case of female safety and security was a significant issue.



Source: Field Survey, 2017 Figure: Reasons of Dropout Among Male and Female Respondents

Some of the hypotheses were tested to examine the gender inequality in educational attainment.

H1 Gender inequality in education in the society is because of patriarchal mindset

H0 Gender inequality in education in the society is not because of patriarchal mindset

From the chi-square test to analyse the interdependence between gender inequality in education and patriarchal mindset, it was found the value to be 13.4523 with 4 degree of freedom and significance level .05. The p-value is .0099265, which is less than the significance level (.05), so we reject the null hypothesis thereby indicating the significant association between the two variables and are strongly interdependent. The

association between gender inequality in education and patriarchal mindset in the society is verified, as 72.5 percent respondents agreed with the statement that it is because of patriarchal mindset.

Gender Inequality and Patriarchal Mindset

Category	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Male	29	32	10	17	12	100
Female	43	41	4	7	5	100
Total	72	73	14	24	17	200
	145 (72.5%)		14 (7%)	41 (20.5%)		

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The Chi Square Value is 13.4523

Degree of Freedom – 4

Significance level - .05

p-values - .009265

According to Pilcher and Whelehan (2004), patriarchy means “rule by the male head of a social unit” which leads to one or the other form of gender inequality as decision regarding the women are taken by male in the family. According to Ruthven (1984),

Patriarchy gives power to males which results in their dominance over female leading to gender inequality. According to Hooks (2000), males take benefit from patriarchy and thereby lead females resulting in gender inequality. Walby (1990), discussed the association of patriarchy with gender inequality and identified six structures related to the former i.e. male violence, paid work, household dominance, sexuality, state and culture. According to studies conducted by Jha (2004), rigid patriarchal society led to the inferior status of women in both lower and upper caste families.

H2 Education is an important tool to remove gender inequality in the society

H0 Education is not an important tool to remove gender inequality in the society

From the chi-square test to analyse the interdependence between gender inequality and education as a tool to remove it, it was found that the value to be 13.695 with 4 degree of freedom and significance level .05. The p-value is .008335, which is less than the significance level (.05), so we reject the null hypothesis thereby indicating the significant association between the two variables and are strongly interdependent. The association between gender inequality and education as tool to remove it is verified as 70.5% respondents agreed with the statement that education is an important tool to remove gender inequality in the society.

Gender Inequality and Education

Category	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Male	30	29	7	18	16	100
Female	42	40	5	8	5	100
Total	72	69	12	26	21	200
	141 (70.5%)		12 (6%)	47 (23.5%)		

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The Chi Square Value is 13.695

Degree of Freedom – 4

Significance level - .05

p-values - .008335

According to United Nation Agency for International Development(2008), providing education to girls not only helps in minimizing gender inequalities, but also lead to various socio-economic gains, for the well-being of the society, with increase in economic productivity, delayed marriages, higher income of the family, reduction in fertility rates, better health and improved survival rates of infants and children. According to King and Hill (1993), education of female increases their active economic and political participation and protects them from biasness and discrimination, increases mobility, improves social status ultimately leading to the well being of both mother and child. UN Chronicle (2013) regards education as the path towards gender equality.



Conclusion-Gender inequality in education is one of the major problems in two largest religious communities in Pachrukha village out of the total 200 respondents, 35.5 percent were illiterate of whom 66 percent were female. Major reasons behind their inequality in education in both the communities are patriarchal mindset, early marriages and proximity to school. After testing the hypothesis the following has been discerned that the gender inequality in educational attainment is because of patriarchal mindset and education can help to eradicate gender inequality.

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