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Assessing the Impact of Educational Status on Poverty Alleviation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Abstract

The core purpose of this study was to assess the impact of educational status on poverty alleviation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The major hypothesis developed for this study was that higher literacy rate among people had greater potentials to combat poverty. The nature of the respondents was male both literate and illiterate falling in the age group of (18-60) years and above from the slum areas of four randomly selected districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa namely Mardan, Kohat, Haripur and Chitral respectively. A sample size of 800 respondents was drawn out from the target population. Interview schedule, designed on Likert Scale was used as tool and interview as method for data collection. Chi-square test was used to measure the association between two variables i.e. dependent variable (Poverty Alleviation) and independent variable (Educational Status). A relationship was measured among occupation ($P = 0.000$), monthly income ($P = 0.000$), per capita income of the educated respondents ($P = 0.000$), per capita income of the illiterate respondents ($P = 0.000$), house condition ($P = 0.000$), possession of property ($P = 0.000$), type of property ($P = 0.000$), size of land ($P = 0.000$), affordability of medicines ($P = 0.000$), specialist doctor and hospitalization ($P = 0.000$) with educational status. Free education, investment in education and improvement of existing formal education system were forwarded as recommendations in light of the study.

Keywords: Educational status, Poverty Alleviation, Association Measurement

Introduction

Formal education system has an important role in the building of economy and overall social development strategy of any country. The global impact of formal education on postindustrial society has been so extensive that it can be argued that mass education leads social revolution and expedite the process of modernization (Parsons, 1971). Education serves as a tool for the individual's psycho-social and socio-economic development and educated individuals can lead their nations to the beacon of development (Kant, 1971). Education and schooling are instrumental in creating social reforms on the global level (Dewey, 2009).

However, the people of third world countries have no access to education and still they follow their traditional thinking to reforms socio-economic institutions. The low level of education in third world countries has significant influence on the life style of the local inhabitants and they are unable to develop their socio-economic condition. Similarly, the condition of education sector in Pakistan is very miserable. As a result of low education ratio poverty has been increasing in Pakistan. More than 40% people in Pakistan are leaving under the poverty line. Resultantly, they are unable to afford quality education for their children. In addition, the government's negligence is frustrating the situation further. The primary education completion rate in Pakistan given by UNESCO (2012) is 33.8 % for females and 47% for males, which shows that people in the 6th populous country of the world are unable to get the basic education (Mehbub-ul-Haq Human Development Center Report, 2012).

The education ration can be increased by providing free education to the people and it can also be reduced the poverty level. Particularly, investment in formal education is considered a key to an increase the overall income of the population and hence to reduce the poverty (Arif and Iqbal, 2009). Education offers many benefits for both individual and societies. The Center for Research in Chronic Poverty (2008) highlights the importance of level of education that, "formal education is strongly associated with the decreased possibility of chronic poverty.

The idea behind the selection of my research topic was to highlight the problem of poverty, which is a growing social problem, with reference to its alleviation through reliable & sustainable means of. Education as we know is a well-known developmental approach applied globally, but ironically, not in Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Education sector shows a devastating state of affairs in terms of access, quality and quantity. We have committed on the forum of EFA in 1990 and then in 2000 to enhance the literacy ratio to 100% completion rate of primary education and 86% in secondary education in this year of 2015, but failed to do so.

Keeping into account the above facts for different attempts on part of the scholars, the present study was designed to know into the relationship between educational status and poverty alleviation in KP, Pakistan. This study is focused on the education importance and its role in the alleviation of poverty and also on the leaving standard of the people.

Literature Review

Education has got importance especially in term of development on the global level. Various research studies indicate that low level of education increased poverty, slavery, crimes, underdevelopment, communal riots, societal disharmony, lack of coordination, disintegration, economic setback in a human society (John, 1975; Kant, 1971; Dewey, 2009). Poverty can be reduced by effective education. Education is considered one of important capital and play pivotal role in development. The knowledge based economy is the product of education process to generate human capital. The promotion of human capital is essential for the utilization of changed economy in the age of globalization (Ozga, Seddon, Popkewitz, 2006). People have much higher levels of formal education than ever before around the world at the age of globalization. In 1990, a widespread progress was reported in education sector by the first Human Development Report HDR, as average years of schooling have raised by two years and gross enrolment ratios by 12 percentage points and literacy rates have raised from 73 percent to 84 percent (United Nation Development Programme, 2010).

The importance of formal education takes central point in discussion of social and economic development of the people with reasons by Stern (2001), that First, the quantity and quality of education influences strongly the overall governance, skilled workforce and other developmental institution of the country. Second, universal access to basic education is essential for ensuring that all segments of society will benefit from socio-economic development (Stern, 2001).

However, this study will fill the gap in the existing literature. Various studies discussed the importance of education on the global and national level, while this study will specifically focused on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is focused on to see the impact of education specifically on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The existing gap in the available literature rationalized the importance of this study.

Methodology of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to know and explore the role of formal education in poverty alleviation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, This is a comparative study of literate and illiterate research respondents from the slum areas of the targeted 4 districts (50% coverage the area by lottery method) i.e Kohat, Haripur, Mardan and Chitral districts with 15-20% sample size through purposive and snow-ball techniques. Keeping in view Pakhtun lives in a patriarchal structure. Normally, the household earning members of families are males, so males have an influential role in the poverty alleviation. For this purpose 50% literate and 50% illiterate male (respondents) within the age group of (18 -60) years and above to compare their socio economic status on the basis of education.

From the total population of slum areas of four districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a sample size of 800 was taken according to the criteria of Sekaran and Bougie (2003) where a sample size not less than 500 is considered appropriate for most of the studies having large population size. This is also in line with Warwick & Linger (1975) formula;

$$f = n / N \quad f = \text{required sample size in the data}$$

$$f = 4/24 = 1/6 \quad n = \text{total sample size}$$

$$N = \text{total population size}$$

$$\text{Percentage} = 1/6 \times 100 = 16.7 \% \quad (\text{ideal sample is 15-20\%})$$

Furthermore, the interview schedule (designed in Likert scale) was used as a tool for collecting primary data from the field. To test the association between dependent variable and independent variable at bi-variate level (χ^2) test statistics was used (Taj-1978)

$$X_{\text{obs}}^2 = \sum_{j=1}^r \sum_{k=1}^c (O_{jk} - Y_{jk})^2 / Y_{jk}$$

However, in some cases, the basic assumption of chi-square (χ^2) i.e. a cell must contain frequency not less than 5 was violated. To overcome this problem, Fisher Exact Test was also applied (Baily-1982). As shown below.

$$\text{Fisher Exact Test Probability} = \frac{(a+b)!(c+d)!(a+c)!(b+d)!}{N!a!b!c!d!} \quad (\text{II})$$

Table-1: Conceptual framework

Independent variable	Dependent Variable
Educational status	Poverty Alleviation

Results and Discussion

This section indicates the relationship between the educational status and poverty alleviation in the light of different indicators. It is analysed in the light of the primary data to see the impact of education on the living standards of the respondents as shown in Table- 2.

Indicator-1 presents the research respondents occupations i.e. government servant, semi government servant, private servant, farmer/ daily wager, businessmen, landlord, or jobless and retired. It also shows the comparative status occupation wise of the literate and illiterate respondents. The table-2 analysis shows that there is a clear difference with comparison to significance ($P < 0.05$) in the occupation of the literate and illiterate respondents. The literate respondents were significant majority having government jobs while majority of the illiterate respondents were dependent doing farming and earning on daily basis.

Indicator-2 presents the comparative status of monthly income from all sources of the literate and illiterate research respondents with chi square value of significance. The analysis with ($P < 0.05$) shows that literate respondents were in significant majority in high income groups than that of illiterate respondents which strengthen their status to combat poverty.

Indicator-3 presents the research respondents, living standard regarding house condition (made of concrete or mud). The analysis with ($P < 0.05$) shows that there is a clear difference in the living condition of the literate and illiterate respondents. Majority of the literate respondents were living in *Pucca*(concrete) houses while majority of the illiterate respondents were living in *Kacha* (Muddy) houses.

Indicator-4 presents the status of owning of house of research respondents comprised on factors of own house, rented and provide by master with no rent, with chi square value of significance.

The analysis shows that in factors of owning of house, majority of the literate respondents had their own houses with ($P < 0.05$) while majority of the illiterate research respondents were in rented houses provided by their masters with no rent.

Table -2: Association between Educational Status and Poverty Alleviation

S. No	Indicators	Factors	Education Status		Chi-Sq Value	P. Value
			Literate	Illiterate		
1	Occupation	Government Servant	121(30.3%)	0(-)	435.172	.000
		Semi Government	66(16.5%)	18(4.5%)		
		Private	94(23.5%)	123(30.9%)		
		Farmer/Tenant/Daily Wager	18(4.5%)	225(56.5%)		
		Retired	4(1.0%)	0(-)		
		Land Lord	2(.5%)	0(-)		
		Jobless	86(21.5%)	0(-)		
		Business	9(2.3%)	34(8.5%)		
		Total	400(50%)	400(50%)		
Grand total		800(100%)				
2	Monthly Income	5000, 10000	132(33.0%)	278(69.6%)	217.721	.000
		10001, 15000	25(6.3%)	56(14.0%)		
		15001, 20000	50(12.5%)	51(12.8%)		
		20001, 25000	58(14.5%)	9(2.3%)		
		25001 and above	135(33.8%)	6(1.5%)		
		Total	400(50%)	400(50%)		
Grand Total		800(100%)				
3	House condition	Kacha (made of mud)	127(31.8%)	301(75.3%)	152.125	.000
		Pucca (made of concrete)	273(68.3%)	99(24.8%)		
		Total	400(50%)	400(50%)		
		Grand total	800(100%)			
4	Owning of the House	Own House	347(43.4%)	141(17.6%)	242.134	.000
		Rented	46(5.8%)	111(13.9%)		
		Provide by master with no rent	7(.9%)	148(18.5%)		
		Total	400(50%)	400(50%)		
		Grand Total	800(100%)			
5	Possession of Property	Yes	326(81.5%)	130(32.5%)	195.920	.000
		No	74(18.5%)	270(67.5%)		
		Total	400(50%)	400(50%)		
		Grand Total	800(100%)			
6	Type of Property	House	250(72.0%)	70(49.6%)	22.286	.000
		Land	-	-		
		Vehicle	97(28.0%)	71(50.4%)		
		Total	347(50%)	141(50%)		
		Grand Total	800(100%)			

7	Diet	Full Time	373(93.3%)	122(30.6%)	333.835	.000	
		Skipped	27(6.8%)	278(69.5%)			
		Total	400(50%)	400(50%)			
		Grand Total	800(100%)				
8	Affordability of medicines, specialist doctor and Hospitalization	Medicines	Yes	318(79.5%)	102(25.5%)	233.865	.000
			No	82(20.5%)	298(74.5%)		
			Total	400(50%)	400(50%)		
			Grand total	800(100%)			
		Specialist Doctors	Yes	268(67.0%)	122(30.0%)	106.647	.000
			No	132(33.0%)	278(69.5%)		
			Total	400(50%)	400(50%)		
			Grand total	800(100%)			
		Hospitalization	Can Afford	268(67.0%)	124(31.0%)	103.721	.000
			Cannot Afford	132(33.0%)	276(69.0%)		
			Total	400(50%)	400(50%)		
			Grand total	800(100%)			

Indicator-5 presents the research respondents status on possession of property and the comparison of literate and illiterate respondents with chi square value of significance. The analysis revealed that the majority of literate respondents were having significant position with ($P < 0.05$) regarding possession of property than those of illiterate respondents.

Indicator-6 presents the status of research respondents on type of property comprising of factors of house, land and vehicle with chi square value of significance. The analysis revealed that the literate respondents were in significant majority in ownership of houses and vehicles in comparison with illiterate respondents with ($P < 0.05$) in ownership of type of property.

Indicator-7 presents the research respondents availability of diet comprising on factors of full time and skipped. The analysis shows that the literate respondents were in significant majority in availability of diet with ($P < 0.05$) with educational status than that of illiterate respondents.

Indicator-8 presents the affordability of medicine, the affordability of specialist doctors and the affordability of hospitalization, where the analysis shows that literate respondents were in significant majority than the illiterate respondents with ($P < 0.05$) with educational status.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The problem of poverty continues to be a pervasive one and it remains an instrumental obstacle to balance growth and development of the country. This study gives a clear picture of the association between education and poverty alleviation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. It is an acknowledged fact that education plays a vital role in the poverty alleviation. This study revealed facts about the relationship between educational status and poverty alleviation. It was found that significant majority of literate respondents having government jobs. They have a high income and most of them are living in *Pucca* (concrete) houses. The educated people have all facilities such as houses, possession of property, vehicles and availability of diet. However, it is found in the field that poor people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are uneducated and they have no access to all those facilities which available to the educated masses. It is concluded that poverty can be reduced to increase investment in education sector. Further, education can improve the condition of the low income people.

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