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CAUSES FOR GENDER DISPARITY IN ACCESS TO SCHOOL EDUCATION IN DISTRICT MALAKAND, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Education is essential for all human beings however, at school levels girls have continued to be deprived in comparison to boys in many parts of the world concerning education attainment, participation and performance. Due to the fact girls have limited chances to reach and obtain higher education learning. The purpose of the study is to highlight the causes of gender disparity in school education in Malakand District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan by primary and secondary data analysis. Relevant data was collected in the form of structured interviews and questionnaires from natives, schools administration, education department and Government officials. 48 household questionnaire were filled during survey. Lack of schools, poor infrastructural facilities and limited number of admission seats for females found to be the main cause of gender gap in the study area. Other causes are poverty, cultural issues, lack of resources and early marriages. There remains a need of awareness to native community about early marriages prevention along with providing financial incentives and improved educational infrastructure to promote female education.

Keywords: Gender, Disparity, Education, EMIS, Community survey, Malakand Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

Education influences mind, character, and human physical ability. It's a process to share collective knowledge in a society and pass on values from one to other generation. Education is one of the biggest challenges to Pakistan since independence. "Despite the various developmental plans and measures, the overall improvement in Pakistan's literacy rate since its independence (1947) is 45 % e.g. 56.5 % for males and 32.6 % for females (Government of Pakistan, 1998)." Education is important for women, as it serves as room for extension of education even among men (Sharma and Sharma, 2004). It helps to promote empowerment of women by enhancing women negotiating

position with domestic cycle (Mishra, 2005). Access to education for women serves as an influential factor for women status in any society (Verma, 2006). In Pakistan women education is at lowest level, as thousands of females having talent, capability are deprived to get education because of several reasons (social, economic, traditional etc.). That is why they are unable to participate in up gradation of society (Nayak and Nair). In Pakhtun culture women face hurdles in every walk of life than any other culture (Haider, 2014).

Women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) are restricted within the four walls of their house, there are physical barriers to women's education (Naz et al, 2012). Traditional and conventional approach towards female education adversely affect women's enrollment in institutions (Kabeer, 2003). Women education is necessary for any nation's economic, political and social liberty (Human Development in South Asia, 2000). Gender disparity in education exist due to several reasons which vary from society to society. Though women are respected and held in highest-esteem everywhere in KPK, but unfortunately they are deprived of their basic rights, i.e. education, on one pretext or another. Furthermore, women are facing traditional, economic and social problems, poor health conditions and low education. Issues related to women development are very complex. "Islam and constitution of Pakistan, both, not only guarantee equal rights of women and prohibit discrimination against them on the basis of gender but also provide for fuller participation of women in all spheres of life.

In order to improve girls attendance different sets of textbooks for boys and girls and for urban and rural population by keeping in mind the ethnic, languages and cultural sensitizes will have to be developed till such time that the radical difference between the urban and rural society and the male and female worlds get minimized. The current foreign aided projects, especially United States Agency For International Development (USAID) and World bank, in all the four provinces have started working on development of teaching material and upgrading the teachers training along with a move to involve the local community in the new concept of community-school. The purpose of the study is to highlight the causes of gender disparity in school education in Malakand District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), In order to achieve this goal, the existing situation of educational facilities in schools will be inquired from teachers and the causes responsible for gender disparity in education will be determined through perception

and awareness of local inhabitants about female education in Thana Khas.

The Directorate of Primary Education, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa established a computerized Education Management Information System in 1990 for up keeping and management of educational data at Primary Level Schools only. "However it extended it functioning to cover Secondary Schools in 2002 after the merger of Primary & Secondary Education under the control of Director Elementary and Secondary Education (E&SE)." Up till now total 25 Annual Statistical Reports, i.e. 21 Reports of Government Schools, 03 Reports of Private Schools and 01 Report of Deeni Madaris has published by E&SE. The Schools data discussed in this study is also obtained from E&SE for Malakand District (EMIS, 2015).

District Malakand is divided into two sub divisions namely; Swat Rani Zai sub division and Sam Rani Zai sub division with 27 Union Councils (Fig. 1). The prominent tribes of district Malakand are Baizai and Rani Zai, Yousafzai/Afghan, Utmankhel, Piran-Syed and Gujar tribes. The literacy ratio in district Malakand was 39.5 % in 1998. The literacy ratio for male was 55.2 % as against 22.7 % for females. The ratio is much higher for male in rural areas and for female in urban areas when compared with their counter parts in rural and urban areas. The enrollment ratio was 27.9 in which enrollment ratio of male was 34.8 while that of female was 20.6 in both urban and rural areas. There are less schools to fulfill the need of population. New schools are required as in Uttar Pradesh new schools were built in 1993 to achieve complete enrollment for toddlers (UNESCO, 2007, 2004). While where schools were enough the improvements were made to enhance education quality e.g. in Kerala (Gul, 2006). The present study was confined to UC Thana Khas as it is the largest town of Malakand and has lowest literacy rate in District. Out of the total economically active population 91.1 % were registered as employed in 1998. Nearly a half i.e. 45.5 % were self-employed, 25.5 % Private employees and 16.4 % Government employees. Unpaid family helpers were recorded as 8.9 %. The difference in proportion of employed population was significance between the genders and urban and rural residences.

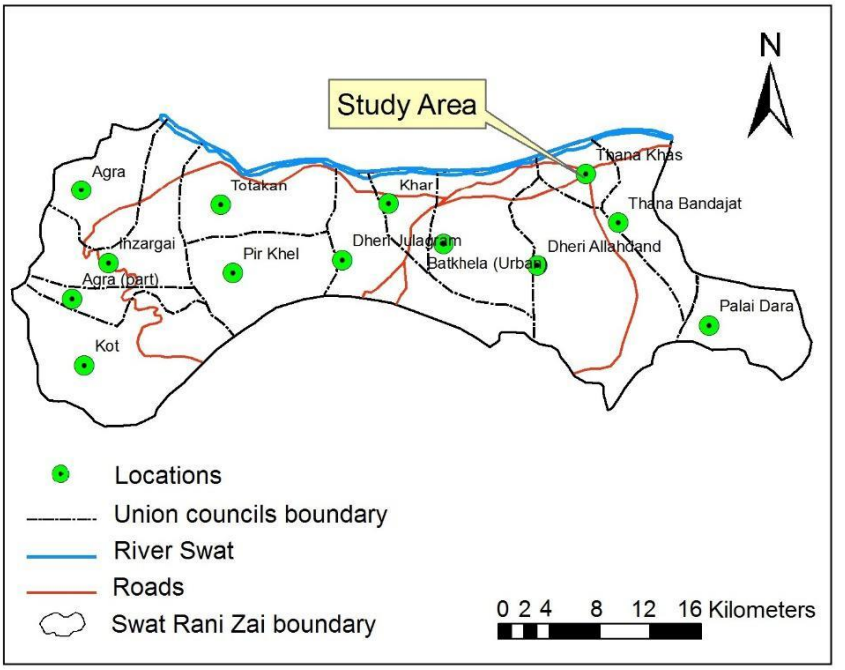

Figure. 1: Location of the study area

Materials and methods

Design and data collection

Both primary and secondary data was collected from various sources. Primary data was collected by means of field survey with the help of structured questionnaires and personal interviews (Fig. 11). A household questionnaire for community survey, and a key informant questionnaire for educational institutes were prepared. The key informant questionnaires were filled by the school's teachers. The household sample was selected through random sampling in the study area, 48 household questionnaire were filled during survey from the total 1200 households which consists some 4% of the sample size. Secondary data was collected from Peshawar Secretariat Education Management Information System (EMIS) section and District Census Report (DCR) for population status. Various research articles and reports were consulted for information about Malakand education situations. The data were tabulated in MS Excel software. The analysis was done in SPSS to calculate % ages and create graphs of data.

Results and discussions

Number of schools and students enrollment

There are total 705 Government Schools in District Malakand out of which 414 are for boys and 291 are for girls. This data clearly indicate that the number of girls' schools are less as compared to boys' schools in every level i.e. primary, middle, and higher/secondary (Table 1; Figs. 2,3). Enrollment by class and gender in Government Schools of Malakand also indicate that the number of girls' enrollment is considerably less than boys' enrollment and girls' enrollment is also decreasing towards higher levels of classes (Fig. 4).

Table 1: Total Number of Government schools, student enrollment and number of teachers in District Malakand.

Level	**Primary**			**Middle**		
Gender	School	Enrollment	No. of Teachers	School	Enrollment	No. of Teachers
Boys	335	55007	1201	30	3795	192
Girls	228	35861	815	32	4103	193
Total	563	90868	2016	62	7898	385
Level	**High**			**High/ Higher Secondary**		
Gender	School	Enrollment	No. of Teachers	School	Enrollment	No. of Teachers
Boys	45	19034	756	4	2972	113
Girls	29	13141	365	2	2568	59
Total	74	32175	1121	6	5540	172

Source: EMIS (2014-2015)

Figure 2: Map showing location of Primary, Middle, High and Higher Secondary Schools for boys and girls in District Malakand.

(http://www.kpese.gov.pk) Gender wise distribution of Schools in District Malakand year 2013-14.

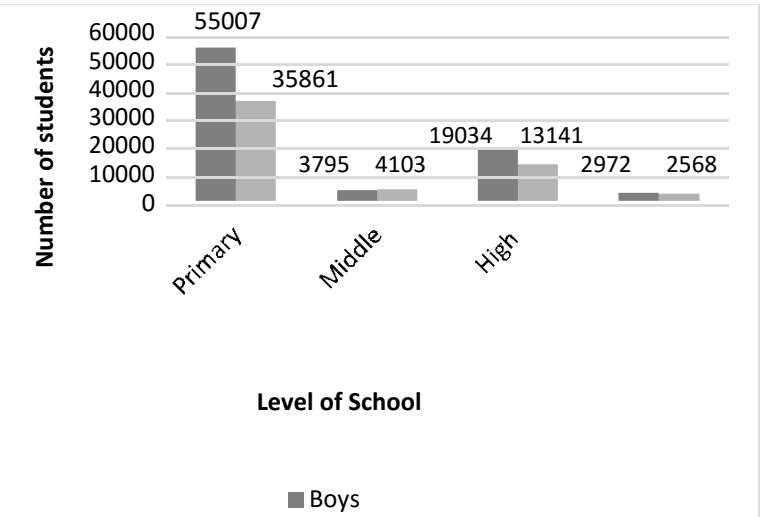

Figure 3: Gender wise student enrollment in District Malakand

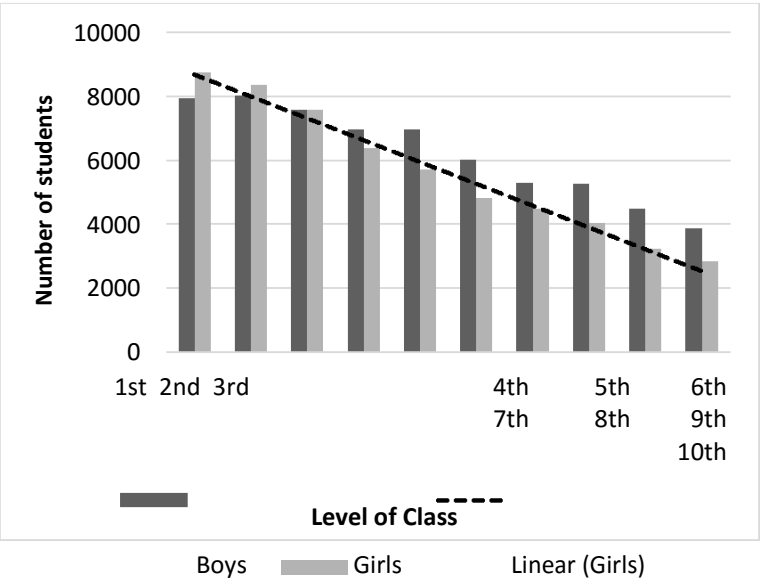

Figure 4: Class and gender wise enrollment in District Malakand

Linear trend showing that girls enrollment is considerably decreasing in higher levels of classes. Source: EMIS (2015)

Physical and infrastructure facilities

Table 2: Availability of physical facilities in Government schools of District Malakand

Level	Primary				Middle			
	Boundary Wall	Water Supply	Electricity	Toilet	Boundary Wall	Water Supply	Electricity	Toilet
Boys With	255	242	227	261	28	25	29	29
Without	55	68	33	49	2	5	1	1
Girls With	228	164	207	226	32	31	28	32
Without	0	64	22	2	0	1	4	0
Total With	483	406	483	487	60	56	57	61
Without	55	132	55	51	2	6	5	1
Level	**High**				**Higher/Secondary**			
Boys With	44	45	45	44	4	4	4	4
Without	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Girls With	27	27	27	26	2	2	2	2
Without	2	2	2	3	0	0	0	0
Total With	71	72	72	70	6	6	6	6
Without	3	2	2	4	0	0	0	0

Source: EMIS (2015)

Proper infrastructure and physical facilities play an important role in quality of education and improved teaching and learning outcomes. The physical facilities are insufficient in all schools of Malakand especially in case of female schools at primary, middle, high and higher secondary levels (Tables 2, Fig. 5).

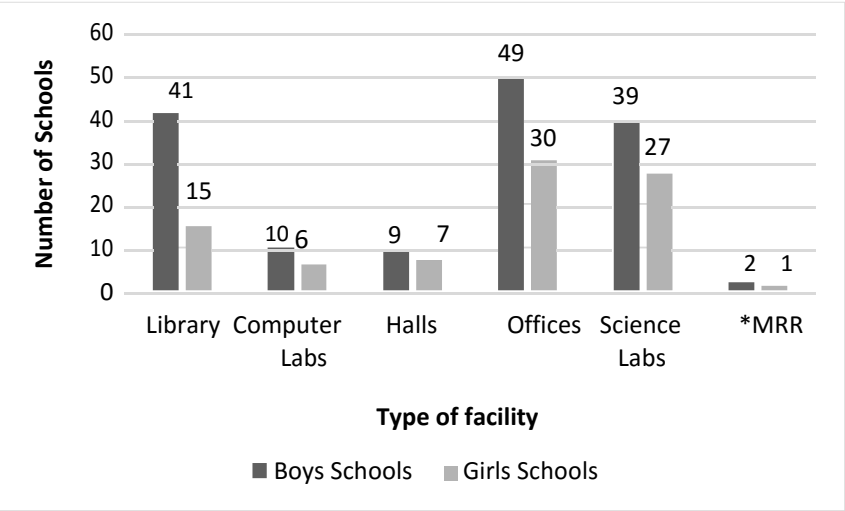

Figure 5: Number of Middle, High and High/Secondary Schools in Malakand where the physical facilities exists. Source: EMIS (2015) *MRR: Math Resource Room(s). Source: EMIS (2015)

Gross enrollment ratio (GER)

Gross enrollment ratio (GER) is the total number of students enrolled in a given level of education, irrespective of age. The GER for males and females are calculated separately. GER is represented as a percentage of the population in the theoretical age group for the same level of education. It is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled in each level of education to the population of official school age for that level of education, and the result is multiplied by 100. The GER in district Malakand for boys in Primary Government Schools is 66% which is comparatively less than girls GER i.e. 72%. However, in Private Schools the boys GER is more (i.e. 29%) than the girls GER (i.e. 19%). The GER in district Malakand for boys in Middle, High and Higher Secondary Government Schools is 43% which is comparatively more than girls GER (i.e. 37%). Also in Private Schools the boys GER is more (i.e. 29%) than the girls GER (i.e. 24%) (Tables 4, 5)

Table 5: Gross Enrollment Ratios in Government and Private (Primary) Schools of Malakand (Based on population age group 5-9)

Government Schools			Private Schools			Government Schools (GER)			Private Schools (GER)		
Enrollment (*Kachi to 5)			Enrollment (Prep to 5)								
Boys	***Girls***	***Total***	***Boys***	***Girls***	***Total***	***Boys***	***Girls***	***Total***	***Boys***	***Girls***	***Total***
46802	47010	93812	20738	12295	33033	66%	72%	69%	29%	19%	24%

Source: EMIS (2015) *Kachi refers to Prep in Government Schools.

Table 6: Gross enrollment ratios in Government and Private (Middle, High and H/Sec.) Schools of Malakand (Based on population age group 10-14)

Government Schools			Private Schools			Government Schools (GER)			Private Schools (GER)		
Enrollment (6 to 10)			Enrollment (6 to 10)								
Boys	***Girls***	***Total***	***Boys***	***Girls***	***Total***	***Boys***	***Girls***	***Total***	***Boys***	***Girls***	***Total***
24925	19423	44348	8759	3100	11858	43%	37%	40%	15%	6%	11%

Source: EMIS (2015)

Gender parity index (GPI)

Gender Parity Index (GPI) promote gender equality and empower women. The GPI, commonly used to assess gender differences in primary, secondary and tertiary education. It is the ratio of girls to boys and calculated by dividing the female GER by the male GER for the given level of education. A GPI of 1 shows parity between boys and girls; a GPI between 0 and 1 usually means a disparity in favour of boys; while a GPI greater than 1 shows a disparity in favour of girls. Gender parity is considered to have been attained when the GPI lies between 0.98-1.01. Table 7 clearly indicate that GPI value for both Primary (GPI=0.93) and Secondary (GPI=0.74) levels is in favour of boys.

Table 7: Gender Parity Index (GPI) at Primary and Secondary level

Primary Level			Secondary Level		
Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)		Gender Parity Index (GPI)	Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)		Gender Parity Index (GPI)
Boys	***Girls***		***Boys***	***Girls***	
99%	92%	0.93	59%	43%	0.74

Source: EMIS (2015)

Student enrollment in Thana Khas

A total of 15 Government and Private Schools are present in Thana Khas. 5 Schools are primary, 2 middle and 8 are high. Fig. 6 shows the enrollment of boys and girls in Government high schools. The highest enrollment is found in class sixth for both boys and girls. The boys are above 350 and girls are about 250. From sixth to tenth in every class for both boys and girls, the enrollment is above 150 students. In primary level in each class for both boys and girls the girls' enrollment is more than boys. However the girls' enrollment decreases in middle and high classes in comparison to boys which can be related to certain causes (lack of facilities, family restrictions and other problems).

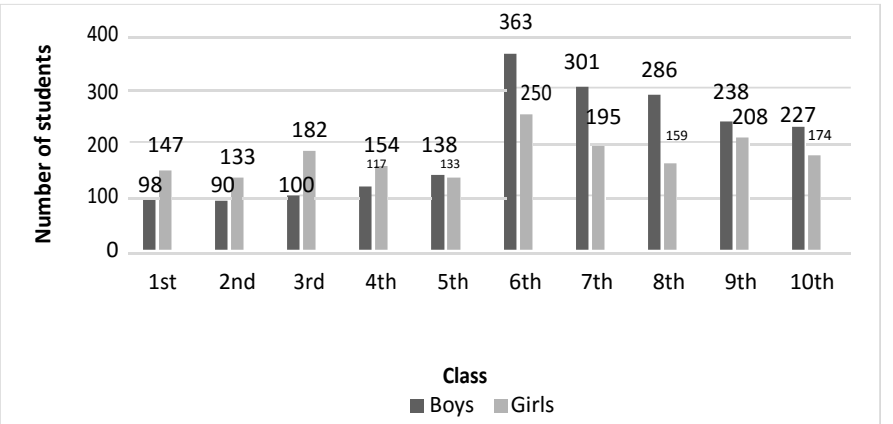

Figure 6: Class wise enrollment of boys and girls in Government Schools of Thana Khas.

The enrollment data of boys and girls in Private schools shows that boy's enrollment is significantly higher than girls at all levels. Also in primary levels number of boys are more than in middle and secondary levels. The highest enrollment of girls is found in 1st and 5 th class. Overall the enrollment of the students is decreasing towards middle and secondary levels because majority of them get admission in Government Schools (Fig. 7).

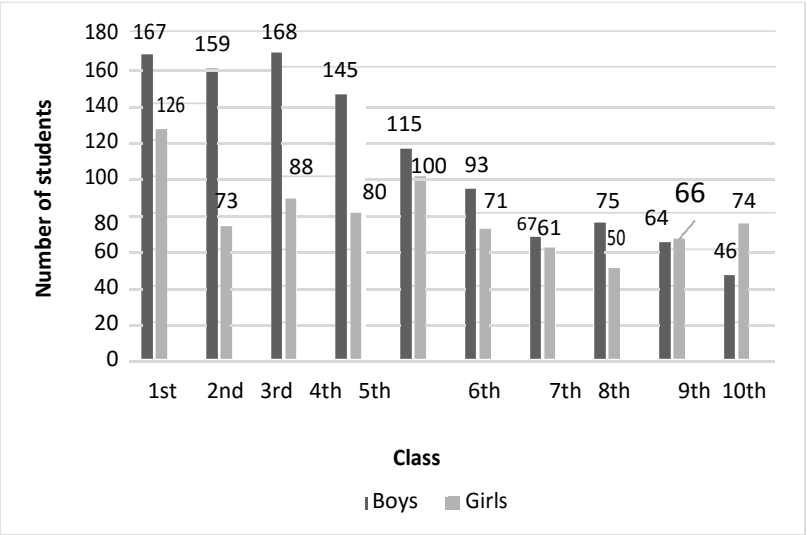

Figure 7. Class wise enrollment of boys and girls in Private schools of Thana Khas.

The student-teacher ratio (SCR) measures the number of students per teacher. It reflects the workload of the teacher and its availability to the students. The low value of the student-teacher ratio represents higher availability of teacher services to students. This ratio has implications for the cost as well as quality of education. SCR is calculated by dividing the number of students who attend a school or university by the number of teachers in the institution. The student teacher ratio in primary schools is 28 and in high and higher schools is 31. The teacher student ratio is more in higher level as compared to primary level, showing overcrowding at high and higher level (Table 8).

The student-teacher ratio in middle schools is 12, and in high school is 29 students per teacher. The teacher student ratio is more in high level as compared to middle level which reflects decreased teaching staff in the high schools and increased number of students (Table 9).

Table 8: Student-Teacher Ratio (TSR) in Government schools of Thana Khas.

Primary			High /Higher		
No of Teachers	No of Students	TSR	No of Teachers	No of Students	TSR
73	2062	28	102	3259	31

Table 9: Student-teacher ratio in Private schools of Thana Khas.

Middle			High		
No of Teachers	No of Students	TSR	No of Teachers	No of Students	TSR
35	414	12	53	1561	29

The student-teacher ratio in Government schools is 59 and in Private schools is 41. The teacher student ratio is more in Government schools as compared to Private schools because poor people cannot afford the expensive education of private institutions therefore, they get admission in the Government schools (Table 10, Fig. 8).

Table 10: Student-teacher ratio in Government vs. Private Schools of Thana Khas.

Government			**Private**		
No of Teachers	No of Students	TSR	No of Teachers	No of Students	TSR
175	5321	59	88	1975	41

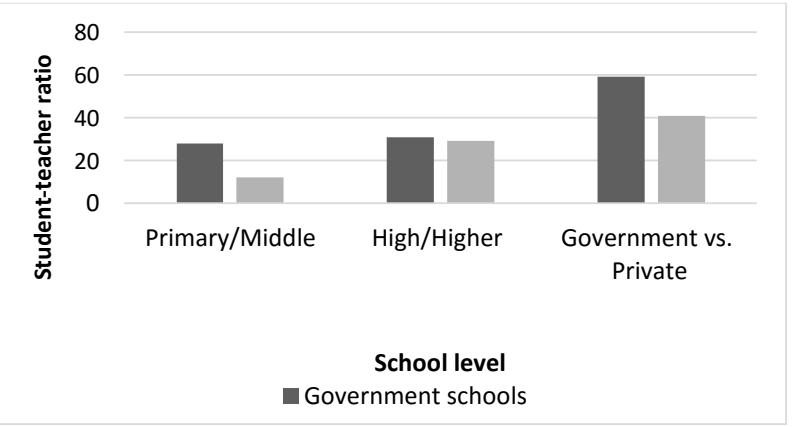

Figure 8: Student-teacher ratio in Government vs. Private schools.

Student-classroom ratio (SCR) is the number of students per classroom during the reporting period. It is calculated by dividing total school students by the number of classrooms in the institution. The SCR in Government primary schools is 41, in high schools is 46 and in higher schools is 44 (Table 11). The student classroom ratio is satisfactory in all level of education.

Table 11: Student classroom ratio (SCR) of Government schools of Thana Khas.

Primary			High			Higher		
No of Students	No of Classroom	SCR	No of Students	No of Classroom	SCR	No of Students	No of Classroom	SCR
1299	32	41	2401	52	46	528	12	44

The student classroom ratio in Private middle schools is 15 and in high schools is 31. The student classroom ratio is more in high schools as compared to middle schools of Private sector which indicate more student enrollment in higher levels (Table 12).

Table 12: Student classroom ratios of Private schools of Thana Khas.

Middle			High		
No of Students	No of Classroom	SCR	No of Students	No of Classroom	SCR
414	28	15	1561	50	31

The overall student's classroom ratio in Government schools is 44 and in Private schools is 25. The high SCR in Government schools reflect that there is lack of Government institutions in the study area especially for females (Table 13, Fig. 9).

Table 13: Student classroom ratio of Government vs. Private schools of Thana Khas.

Government			**Private**		
No of Students	No of Classroom	SCR	No of Students	No of Classroom	SCR
4228	96	44	1975	78	25

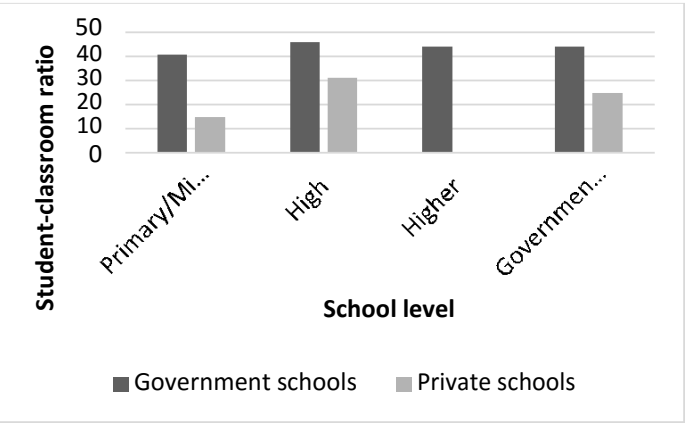

Figure 9: Student-classroom ratio in Government vs. Private schools.

Socio-demographics and economic profile

The age distribution of respondents indicated a relatively young population mainly in the age group of 18-30 years (Table 14). Respondents were predominantly married (52.1 %) while 43.8% were unmarried. 45.8% of respondents were students so they don't work while 43.7% were working in Government and Non-Government organizations. The majority of the respondents were family head (52.08%). The maximum educational attainment of the respondent was Master (35.4%) following Higher Secondary (25%) and high school (18.8%). 50% of the households reported a medium-low level of income. Regarding household composition, 52.1% of the surveyed individuals lived in a household with more than five persons in the house.

Community response about female education in Thana Khas

Most of the families (89.6%) are in favor of female education which reflects the parents' awareness and interest towards the importance of education for women. 89.6 % of respondents think that boys and girls should be given equal chances of education while only 2.1 % do not think that boys and girls should be given equal chances of education. 79.2 % of the respondents are willing to send their girls to school which is a good sign for promoting female education in the area. 50 % of respondent said that education is their priority in spending money while 50 % said their priority is not education because they have to fulfill other basic needs of life. 47.92 % of the families send their children to school by transport while 45.83 % do not use any types of transport because they have not enough money to pay the fare. 91.7 % of the respondents are satisfied from the quality of education while only 8.3 % are not satisfied. 77.1 % of the respondents are satisfied from the Government facilities to promote female education in the village however 22.9 % are not satisfied due to the fact that in some girls' primary schools no sufficient space is available to get admission. People take their girls to schools but due to lack of infrastructure and shortage of admission facilities they have to bring back their children. Also they cannot afford the fees of Private schools, so they decide to keep their daughters at home (Fig. 10).

Table 14: Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents:

Response	***Frequency***	***%***	***Response***	***Frequency***	***%***
Age:			**Occupation:**		
Under 18	5	10.4	Government	10	20.8
18 to 30	17	35.4	Non-Government	11	22.9
31 to 42	10	20.8	Farmer	1	2.1
43 to 55	10	20.8	Student	22	45.8
56 and above	6	12.5	Not working	4	8.3
Total	***48***	***100***	***Total***	***48***	***100***
Marital Status:			**Place of Work:**		
Married	25	52.1	Within the study area	31	64.6
Unmarried	21	43.8	Within the district	9	18.8
Widow	2	4.2	Inside the country	8	16.7
Total	***48***	***100***	***Total***	***48***	***100***
Family Role:			**Monthly income**		
Household	25	52.08	No Response	6	12.5
Other	23	47.92	Under 10,000	2	4.2
			10,000-25,000	*11*	*22.9*
			25,000-50,000	13	27.1
			50,000+	16	33.3
Total	***48***	***100***	***Total***	***48***	***100***
Education:			**Number of children (age 5 to 16 years)**		
Primary	1	2.1	Not Applicable	20	41.7
Middle	2	4.2	1-3	21	43.8
High school	9	18.8	4-6	6	12.5
Higher	12	25	7+	1	2.1
Graduation	7	14.6			
Master	17	35.4			
Total	***48***	***100***	***Total***	***48***	***100***
Household Composition:					
Up to 5	22	45.8			
5 to10	19	39.6			
10 to 15	6	12.5			
15 to 19	1	2.1			
Total	***48***	***100***			

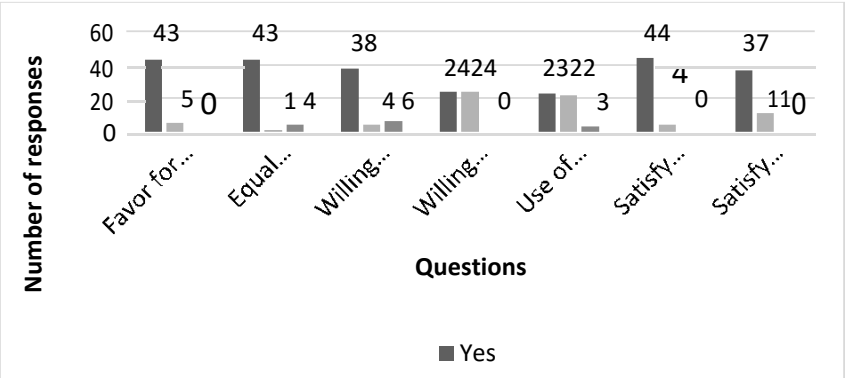

Figure 10: Community response about female school education in Thana Khas.

Community response about gender disparity in school education

41.7 % of the respondent said that good behavior and awareness are the main benefit of education, 14.6 % said that due to education we are able to get good jobs, 25 % said due to education our society can be improved and 18.8 % of the respondent said that due to education everyone will respect you in the society. 33.33 % of the respondent said that lack of female institutions is the major hurdle in the way of female education, 29.17 % of the respondent said that early marriages, 22.92 said poverty and 14.58 % said that culture and awareness is the major hurdle in the way of female education in the study area. 29.1 % respondents said that the lack of facilities for females are the main cause of gender gap in education, 22.9 % respondents said that early marriages, 22.9 % said culture and poverty and 25 % said that poverty are the main reason for gender gap in education in the study area. For the uplift of female education people discussed their views from which it was clear that peace safety and security (33.33 %), Government attention (27 %), separate institutions (26 %) and awareness raising programs (14.5 %) are necessary for the uplift of female education (Fig. 10).

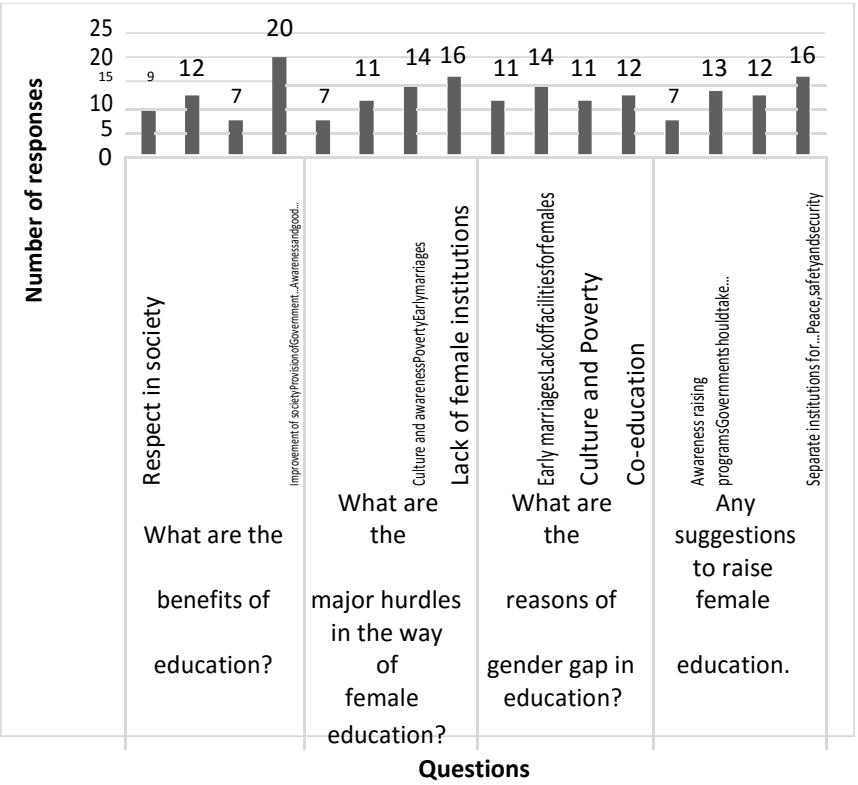

Figure 10: Community response about gender disparity in school education

Discussion

The number of boys' schools is more than that for girls in both primary and higher level in district Malakand. Results show that 77.1 % of the people are satisfied from the Government facilities for female education while the 22.9 % are not satisfied from the Government facilities for female education. In some of the girls' primary schools when more students come to get admission, they don't find any space for admission and they cannot afford the fees of Private schools, so they left the school. Gender gap in education is quite lower in Union Council Thana Khas as compared to the rest of the District Malakand.[13] However, the female schools are highly overcrowded all over Malakand division. Steps should be taken to construct new schools for females. Cheap and easy transport should be provided especially for female students. Poverty seems to be the main cause of gender gap in education in the study area. Due to poverty parents are not able to afford the expanses of education. Therefore, financial support should

be provided in the form of scholarship, fee concision, free books, uniforms and accommodation. Other major causes of disparity are early marriages, co-education, lack of female institutions and lack of transport facilities which are effecting the female education.

The people of the study area are aware of the importance of female education, and they want their females to be educated. There is a need for efforts to promote education in Thana Khas as well as over Malakand district and resources are required for betterment of future generations. The awareness for education is also effortless until the early marriages are not prevented. Teachers should be appointed on merit and the old teachers should be trained to improve the quality of education.

Figure 11: Photos taken during field survey to highlight current situation of Schools in Thana Khas.

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