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Full Length Article

Analysis of Women Rights of Education and Inheritance in Ahmad Pur Sial, Jhang, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed for identification and analysis of the rights of education and inheritance which underpin other women rights. Rights of education and inheritance are in fact elixir to ensuring women rights and higher status as a whole. To assess the awareness regarding women rights a descriptive survey has been conducted to illustrate the real situation of women and their rights within the perspective of education and inheritance rights. The study was conducted in District Jhang, Pakistan. The study consists of the town "Ahmed Pur Sial". From this town 10 streets were selected randomly and amongst those streets, 10 random houses were selected, therefore, a sample of 90 female respondents from the locale was selected by using random sampling techniques. In study area literacy rate among females was very low which was due to less facilities for education in rural areas or poor people can't afford to send their daughters to far off places for education. © 2012 Friends Science Publishers

Key Words: Women rights; Education; Jhang, Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

Women's rights are entitlements and freedoms claimed for women and girls of all ages in many societies. In some places these rights are institutionalized or supported by law, local custom, and behavior, whereas in others they may be ignored or suppressed. They differ from broader notions of human rights through claims of an inherent historical and traditional bias against the exercise of rights by women and girls in favor of men and boys (Hosken, 1981).

In Islam, women are entitled the right of inheritance, but often a woman's share of inheritance is less than that of a man's. In general circumstances, Islam allots females half the inheritance share available to males who have the same degree of relation to the deceased in some (though not all) circumstances. For example, where the deceased has both male and female children, a son's share is double that of a daughter. Additionally, the sister of a childless man inherits half of his property upon his death, while a brother of a childless woman inherits all of her property. Islamic scholars hold that the original reason for this difference is the responsibilities allotted to spouses. A husband in Islam must use his inheritance to support his family while a wife has no support obligations. Also, men had to pay the dowry to women in marriage, while women did not have to pay anything to men (Sahih Al Bukhari).

Although men have traditionally held property in the name of the family, it is important to remember that wives, daughters and under-age sons have always been allowed to benefit from this property to guarantee their survival and wellbeing. As women were not allowed to own or inherit property themselves, this implied obligation on the part of male members of the family. Sons who inherited from their parents were supposed to take care of their sisters and allow them to use some of the land to secure their livelihood until they got married. Widows who were still of child-bearing age would remain in the family through the practice of widow inheritance. Elderly widows who were not expected to marry again were allowed life-time usage of the land that passed on to male heirs so that they could stay in their marital homes (Nicoletti, 2007).

In social context, the role and status of women is increasing, yet, there are certain sections of society in which, females are looked down upon, and their rights are denied on one pretext, or the other. Society, in such areas or communities, remains hostage to traditions and customs, which in some cases, are strong enough to bypass the law. Women are used as an object, to settle disputes. Centuries old tradition of "wanni" is such an example. In "wanni" women are used as a compensation for the bloodshed another individual or tribe.

This study, therefore is designed to identify the factors which were hampering women rights. To assess the awareness regarding women rights a descriptive survey has been conducted to illustrate the real situation of women and their rights within the perspective of education and inheritance rights. It is expected that the results of this study would be helpful in highlighting certain factors with

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consideration to women empowerment, which would facilitate the policy makers to formulate enhanced policies and strategies, the finding of this research will help how and why specific choices are made in development planning for women development, it may be useful as management tool for any women development organization.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in District Jhang. The study consists of the town "Ahmed Pur Sial". From this town 10 streets will be selected randomly and 10 houses will be selected randomly from each street, therefore, a sample of 90 female respondents from the locale was selected by using random sampling techniques. Pre-testing was done to check the workability of the interviewing schedule. The researcher went home to home and told them the purpose of study then the data were collected from the willing respondents. For the fixed category questions the data was presented in frequency distribution tables. Percentage for each response was calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data of present study reveal that most 24% of the respondents were in the lower age group of 18 to 25 years, 28% were in the category of middle age group of 25 to 35 years, 29% were in age category of 35 to 45 and only 19% were found in higher age group of 45 or above (Table I).

About 23% of respondents were illiterate, 20% had primary level education, 18% were matriculates, 18% of intermediate level education, 18% of them were graduates and only 3% of them had done another courses (Table II). Thus, educational level seems to be quite low in this area.

Data presented in Table III shows that 83% of the respondents had right to get education and only 17% of the respondents were deprived of getting this right. Similar data was reported by Timothy (2009).

Furthermore, about 73% f the respondents were aware regarding the law of inheritance about themselves and 27% of the respondents were not aware of the law of inheritance (Table IV). According to the data showed in Table 5 that 72% of the respondents had good impact of female education on her family and society, 20% had bad impact while only 8% of the respondents were those who had no impact.

The data also reveals that 47% of the respondents were mostly preferred by their brothers regarding their rights, 33% were sometimes and 20% were never preferred (Table VI).

The present study also indicates that 40% of the respondents were aware of the NGO who worked on women issues while majority 60% of the respondents were not aware of any NGO that provide information regarding women rights (Table VII). Moreover, 73% of the respondents had right to own family property, while 27% of the respondents had no right to ownered family property they were deprived of it (Table VIII).

The analysis corroborates with Mehdi (2002) expert study of gender and inheritance law in Pakistan, which finds that women's tendency to relinquish property inheritance to brothers stems from the expectation that brothers will continue to support sisters into adulthood and after marriage, as women traditionally have had few resources with which to support themselves and limited legislation with which to protect themselves.

Table I: Distribution of respondents according to different age groups

Response	Frequency	Percent
18 -25	22	24
26 -35	25	28
36-45	26	29
46 - above	17	19

Table II: Distribution of respondents according to their education

Response	Frequency	Percent
Illiterate	21	23
Primary	18	20
Matric	16	18
Intermediate	16	18
Graduation	16	18
Any other	3	3
Total	**90**	**100**

Table III: Distribution of respondents regarding rights to education

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	75	83
No	15	17
Total	**90**	**100**

Table IV: Distribution of respondents knowledge regarding Inheritance Laws

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	66	73
No	24	27
Total	**90**	**100**

Table V: Distribution of respondents regarding impact of female education on family and society

Response	Frequency	Percent
Good	65	72
Bad	18	20
Nothing	7	8
Total	**90**	**100**

CONCLUSION

Education is the key to acceptable and respectable jobs and careers. Lower middle class families in Pakistan would find it degrading to let their women take up jobs as domestic

Table VI: Distribution of respondents regarding preference given by brothers to their sisters' rights

Response	Frequency	Percent
Mostly	42	47
Sometimes	30	33
Never	18	20
Total	**90**	**100**

Table VII: Distribution of respondents regarding awareness of NGOs

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	36	40
No	54	60
Total	**90**	**100**

Table VIII: Distribution of respondents having right to own family property

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	66	73
No	24	27
Total	**90**	**100**

servants or to work on the factory floor i.e., jobs for which education is not a prerequisite. Therefore, the culture of the whole country is not similar. Almost 70% of Pakistan's population lives in the rural areas. Still there exist rural areas where there is lack of basic facilities like water supply, electricity, proper schools and colleges for basic education. The only purpose of people living in these areas is to earn basic livelihood for which men and women work together. People there still don't realize the importance of education for women. Religious education considered being enough for them. That's why most of the women in these areas are illiterate and they work with the males in fields. Social status of these women compared to men is negligible. In very remote areas of Pakistan, still women are treated as slaves. They have no decision making power. Even they cannot say a single word against the social setup in which they live. All the family matters are decided and settled by men, while women are considered to be ignorant and their suggestions have no worth. The women with some education have relatively higher social status compared with other women. These women mostly earn their livelihood by teaching in local schools and they play a bit role in decision making.

Education can provide a chance to women to work better not only for socialization of their children but for also engaging their selves in paid economic activities (Afzal, 2009).

SUGGESTIONS

- Government should take special measures to root out preferential treatment given to male members for education. Male children are normally preferred over females if the parents cannot afford education of both.
- Strict compliance of inheritance laws. Inheritance laws do exist but they are seldom complied with owing to dominant culture and traditions which treat unmarried females more as guest and less as family members and to married females as parts of that family where they are married. Even women prefer dowry on their marriage instead of inheriting native property.
- Empower women socially and economically. This may involve legal literacy campaigns, provision of credit, waive transaction costs for land registration, and provide market access.
- It is important for the United Nations and civil society to help individual countries to promote women's rights in compliance with the convention and fulfill their reporting requirements.
- There is need to respect the natural wisdom of the rural people. Therefore, community members in the study area in "Ahmed pur sial " including women, should participate in discussions and formulation of by-laws in relation to land issues and be involved in subsequent processes to build trust and confidence among one another and facilitate effective implementation of policies and proclamations.
- Women's and other civil society organizations need to be in solidarity with rural women whose land rights have been denied, by lobbying at different forums.

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