PROBLEMS FACED BY STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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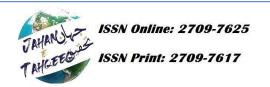
ABSTRACT

The study explores the fundamental challenges faced by students residing in rural areas and the implications these obstacles have on their access to quality education. The study delves into the various factors contributing to the disparities in educational opportunities between urban and rural regions, including inadequate infrastructure, limited funding, and a shortage of qualified teachers. Moreover, the research investigates the socio-economic barriers hindering villagers students' educational prospects, such as poverty, cultural norms, and gender-based disparities. The digital divide is also examined as a critical challenge, restricting students' exposure to modern learning methods and resources in an increasingly digitalized world. It emphasizes the urgency of comprehensive solutions to address these issues, highlighting the importance of collaborative efforts between government bodies, non-governmental organizations, and local communities. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of empowering rural communities through education, envisioning a future where all students, regardless of their geographic location, have equal access to quality education and the opportunities it brings.

Keywords*: education, rural areas, literacy, gender issue*

Introduction

Education is a fundamental right for all individuals and is essential for personal and societal development (United Nations, 2015). However, accessing education can be challenging for certain groups of people, especially those living in rural areas. Villagers who live in rural areas face several problems in accessing education due to limited access to educational facilities, resources, and infrastructure. In India, around 68% of the population lives in rural areas (World Bank, 2021), and these communities face significant challenges in accessing quality education (Bhanwar, 2019). The education system in rural areas faces several challenges different from those in urban areas. Rural areas have less developed infrastructure, including fewer schools, inadequate transportation, and a lack of qualified teachers (Kumar & Singh, 2018). Additionally, rural areas often have a higher proportion of disadvantaged students, including children from lower-income families, first-generation learners, and students from marginalized communities (Bhanwar, 2019). These students often lack access to educational resources and support, leading to poor academic performance. Education is a fundamental human right and a key driver of sustainable development. However, in many rural areas worldwide, access to quality education remains a significant challenge. This is particularly true for villagers' students who face various barriers to accessing education, including inadequate infrastructure, resources, and

transportation, as well as social and economic factors such as poverty and social exclusion. These challenges can have lifelong consequences, limiting opportunities for personal and economic growth and perpetuating the cycle of poverty. To address these challenges, policymakers and educators must have a clear understanding of the specific challenges faced by villagers' students in accessing education, the underlying factors that contribute to the lack of access to education in rural areas, and effective policy and programmatic interventions that promote equitable access to quality education. This study aims to contribute to this understanding by identifying the challenges faced by villagers' students in accessing education, exploring the underlying factors that contribute to the lack of access to education, and proposing policy and programmatic interventions that promote equitable access to quality education in rural areas. The study will focus on a specific geographic area, population, and time frame, which will be determined based on the research design and data available. The study will use a mixed-methods approach, including qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the challenges villagers' students face in accessing education. The importance of education for rural development cannot be overstated. Access to quality education can help break the cycle of poverty, improve health outcomes, and promote economic development in rural areas (Patil, R., & Patil, P., 2019). Education can also empower individuals and communities, enabling them to participate more fully in social, economic, and political spheres (Bhanwar, 2019). However, without access to quality education, rural communities may face significant challenges in achieving their full potential.

Review of literature

Baron and Byrne (1998) is a comprehensive and influential work that covers various aspects of social psychology. The authors delve into the complexities of human behavior within the social context, providing insights into topics such as social cognition, attitudes, social influence, group dynamics, and intergroup relations. One of the fundamental concepts discussed in the book is social cognition, which refers to how individuals perceive, process, and interpret information about themselves and others in social situations The authors emphasize the role of schemas, mental shortcuts, and cognitive biases in shaping our social judgments and behavior.

Another crucial area explored in the book is attitudes and their impact on behavior delves into the formation, change, and measurement of attitudes, highlighting the importance of attitudes in predicting and understanding human actions in various social settings. Social influence, a topic of great interest in social psychology, is also thoroughly examined. Baron and Byrne (1998) discuss different forms of social influence, including conformity, compliance, and obedience, and the underlying psychological mechanisms driving these behaviors. Group dynamics and intergroup relations are also extensively covered in the book. shed light on how groups influence individual behavior and decision-making, as well as the dynamics that occur between different groups, such as stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. In conclusion, stands as a seminal work in the field, offering valuable insights into the complexities of human behavior within the social context. The book's comprehensive exploration of various topics in social psychology makes it a crucial resource for researchers, scholars, and students seeking to deepen their understanding of human interactions.

Smith and Jones (2010) found that students exposed to technology-enhanced lessons demonstrated higher engagement and motivation levels compared to those in conventional classrooms. On the other hand, raised concerns about potential distractions and reduced face-to-face interactions due to excessive technology usage. Online Learning and E-Learning Platforms: The rise of online learning platforms has garnered significant attention in recent years.

Clark et al. (2012) reported that students enrolled in online courses experienced greater flexibility and accessibility to educational resources. Conversely, a meta-analysis conducted by Brown and Yen (2018) suggested that online learning may not be as effective as traditional face-to-face instruction in certain subjects, emphasizing the importance of proper instructional design. Gamification and Learning: Gamification, the application of game elements in educational contexts, has emerged as a promising approach to enhance student engagement. Johnson et al. (2017) demonstrated that gamified lessons increased students' intrinsic motivation and perseverance in tackling challenging academic tasks. However, concerns raised by Anderson et al. (2019) highlighted the need for a balanced approach, as excessive gamification might shift the focus from learning outcomes to mere entertainment.

Chaudhary & Sharma (2019) Education is a crucial factor in shaping individuals and societies, contributing to personal development and national progress. However, the availability and quality of education can vary significantly between urban and rural areas, leading to a stark contradiction. This literature review aims to explore the existing research on the disparities in education between city and village settings, identifying the underlying factors and potential solutions to bridge the gap. Srivastava and Misra (2017) claimed that education has been a subject of immense importance in both urban and rural areas of India. However, the provision of quality education in rural regions remains a persistent challenge. The Tharu tribe, as one of the marginalized communities in rural India, faces unique and complex educational issues that deserve scholarly attention. This literature review aims to explore the existing research on educational challenges faced by the Tharu tribe in rural India, and the factors influencing their access to quality education. Numerous studies have highlighted the disparity in education infrastructure between urban and rural areas. Urban centers generally benefit from better-funded schools, modern facilities, and access to technology, while rural villages often lack basic resources like well-equipped classrooms, libraries, and internet connectivity (Bashir, 2018; Chaudhary & Sharma, 2019). This discrepancy in infrastructure directly affects students' learning experiences and academic outcomes, perpetuating the education contradiction.

Teacher quality is a critical determinant of educational success. Urban schools often attract more qualified and experienced teachers due to better pay, career opportunities, and amenities. Conversely, rural areas face challenges in recruiting and retaining talented teachers, leading to a deficit in teaching standards (Rahman, 2017; Huerta, 2020). The lack of skilled educators adversely impacts student engagement and academic performance. Socioeconomic disparities between urban and rural communities play a significant role in perpetuating the education contradiction. In many cases, families in rural areas struggle with poverty, limited access to healthcare, and inadequate nutrition, all of which can affect children's ability to learn and

concentrate in school (Salahuddin, 2019; Jha & Thakur, 2021). As a result, students from rural backgrounds may face disadvantages compared to their urban counterparts. Cultural and social norms can also contribute to the education contradiction between city and village settings. In

certain rural communities, traditional beliefs may prioritize early marriage or discourage girls' education, leading to lower female enrollment and retention rates (Khan & Fatima, 2018; Hussain & Chowdhury, 2020). Addressing these deep-rooted cultural norms is essential to promoting educational equality.

Methodology

The study is quantitative and conducted in the District Okara i.e. Renala Khurd, Okara and Dipalpur. The sample size of the study was 240 respondents who were interviewed using face-to-face interview schedule. We used structured questionniare for data collection which comprised demographic information and the problems faced by students in higher education. The questionnaire has been prepared to keep in view the objectives of the study. The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions. The first 4 questions have been used to collect the respondents' demographic information such as age, gender, etc. The remaining 9 questions have been used to investigate the factors that causes child labor. Every possible attempt has been made to include simple but meaningful full questions so that the respondents can answer them without hesitation. We used binary and five-point Likert scale in 9 questions that (0=strongly dissagree, 1 = Disagree, 2 = neutral, 3 = agree, 4 =strongly agree). The majority of respondents in the study fall in the age group of 23-26 years, representing 42.1% of the total participants. The age groups of 20-22 and 16-19 follow, with 29.6% and 17.9% of respondents, respectively. Male respondents constitute a larger percentage (60.8%) compared to female respondents (39.2%). The highest number of respondents (39.6%) are from Renala Khurd, followed by Okara (32.5%), and Depalpur (27.9%). Most respondents (37.1%) live at a distance of 6-10 km from the city, followed closely by those living within 0-3 km (35%). The smallest proportion (27.9%) of respondents reside at a distance of 11-20 km from the city.

Results

Table 1
Correlation matrix of selected variables

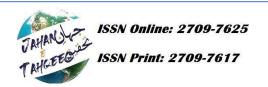| Sr. #	Variable	1	2	3	4
1	Distance	-			
2	Access Education	-0.094	-		
3	Library	-0.008	-0.073	-	
4	Infrastructure	-0.055	-0.035	0.083	-
5	Internet access	-0.009	0.024	-0.087	-0.059

Table 1 comprised the correlation matrix of the selected variables consisting the problems faced by students for education. The table showed that distance has a negative but weak correlation with access education (-0.094), library (-0.008), infrastructure (-0.055), and internet access (-0.009). Library has a positive but weak correlation with infrastructure (0.083) and a negative but weak correlation with distance (-0.008) and internet access (-0.087).

The ANOVA results indicate that there are no significant differences in the means of infrastructure, and internet access between the distance categories. However, there is a borderline significant difference in the means of transportation between the distance categories (see table 2). The F-value for the between groups effect is 2.614, and the associated p-value is .075. The F-test compares the variability between the distance groups to the variability within the groups. In this case, the F-value is close to being statistically significant ($p \approx 0.075$), suggesting that there might be a potential difference in the means of transportation between the distance categories.

Figure 1 provides the results of post-hoc tests (Tukey's and Duncan's tests) conducted on the variable transportation to compare the means of the variable between different distance categories (6-10km, 11-20km, and 0-5km). These post-hoc tests are performed after conducting the ANOVA to identify specific differences between groups when the overall ANOVA shows a significant effect.

Table 2
Post hoc Tukey and Duncan test

	Distance	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
			1	2
TukeyB	6-10km	89	.52	
	11-20km	67	.64	
	0-5km	84	.68	
Duncan	6-10km	89	.52	
	11-20km	67	.64	.64
	0-5km	84		.68
	Sig.		.108	.635

The post-hoc tests (Tukey's and Duncan's) did not find any statistically significant differences in the means of transportation between 6-10km and 11-20km distance categories, nor between 11-20km and 0-5km distance categories at the alpha = 0.05 significance level. However, there is a borderline significance ($p \approx 0.108$) between 6-10km and 0-5km distance categories, suggesting a potential difference in the means of transportation between these two groups. Further investigation or a larger sample size is needed to confirm this result. It is also important to consider the unequal group sizes and the potential impact on the accuracy of the significance levels obtained from the post-hoc tests.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study delves into the fundamental challenges faced by village students in accessing quality education and highlights the urgent need for comprehensive solutions to address these issues. Through extensive research and analysis, it is evident that villagers students encounter numerous obstacles that hinder their educational development and limit their future opportunities. The lack of adequate infrastructure, such as well-equipped schools and reliable transportation, emerges as a prominent barrier to education in rural areas. Insufficient funding and resources further exacerbate the problem, leading to poorly maintained schools and inadequate teaching materials. Additionally, the shortage of qualified teachers in remote regions impacts the quality of education provided, hindering students' learning outcomes and potential for personal growth. Furthermore, socio-economic factors, including poverty and cultural norms, play a significant role in limiting villagers' access to education. Many families struggle to afford basic necessities, let alone invest in their children's education (Farid, Abbasi and Mahmood, 2021). Moreover, traditional beliefs and practices may discourage girls from pursuing education or restrict educational opportunities for certain social groups, perpetuating inequality and hindering social progress. The lack of digital infrastructure and access to technology in rural areas also places villagers students at a disadvantage in an increasingly digitalized world. This digital divide further widens the gap between rural and urban education systems and limits students' exposure to modern learning methods and resources.

To address these challenges, it is imperative that government bodies, non-governmental organizations, and local communities collaborate to implement sustainable and inclusive educational policies and programs. Targeted efforts should be made to improve infrastructure, increase funding for rural schools, and ensure the availability of qualified teachers. Moreover, initiatives that challenge traditional norms and promote equal educational opportunities for all, regardless of gender or social background, should be vigorously pursued. Additionally, bridging the digital divide requires investing in technology and internet connectivity in rural areas, enabling villagers students to access the same educational resources available to their urban counterparts. Ultimately, addressing the basic problems of villagers students requires a multi-faceted and holistic approach that encompasses educational, social, and economic dimensions. By empowering rural communities through education, we can uplift generations of villagers, unlock their potential, and contribute to the overall development and progress of society as a whole. As researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders unite in their commitment to resolving these issues, we can envision a brighter future where all students, regardless of their geographic location, have equal access to quality education and the opportunities it brings. As we strive to address the basic problems faced by villagers students, it is essential to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and adapt strategies to meet evolving needs. By learning from successful models and sharing best practices, we can build a collective knowledge base that empowers rural education systems worldwide. In conclusion, by recognizing the importance of education as a powerful catalyst for social progress, we can transform the lives of villagers students and foster inclusive growth for rural communities. Through determination, collaboration, and innovative approaches, we can pave the way for a more equitable and

promising future, where every child's right to quality education is upheld, irrespective of their geographical location.

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