



PARENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN EDUCATION IN SOUTH 24 PARGANAS DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL

Souvik Paul

Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Education, Raiganj University, Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal,
India, Email: souvikp208@gmail.com, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8346-9126>

Biswajit Chatterjee

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Raiganj University, Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur, West
Bengal, India, Email: 225biswajit@gmail.com, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-2876-0170>

ABSTRACT

The girl child of today will be the woman of tomorrow. We recognise that a mother acts as her child's first teacher. This present study's objective was to determine the parental attitude towards women education regarding gender, location and age group. A descriptive survey method was applied for this study. 281 parents were randomly selected from 'South 24 Parganas' district in rural and urban areas of West Bengal. A self-constructed attitudinal scale was used for data collection. 23 items were selected based on 4 dimensions. Data was collected through a field survey. This study utilised a 'stratified random sampling technique'. Expert validation and reliability of the items were determined. The findings indicated that no significant difference in attitude towards women education between 'male and female' parents across various age groups. Still, there was a significant difference observed in rural and urban areas. Although there were similarities and dissimilarities in the parental attitude in this study, it can be said that the parents of 'South 24 Parganas' need to be aware of women education.

Keywords: *Equal Rights, Parental Attitude, Social Transformation, Women Education*

Introduction

Education is the only medium capable of changing the entire structure of society. The growth and development of a nation can be measured by the success of its young generation, which primarily depends on education. Achieving this progress requires a fundamental social transformation (Das & Kar, 2018). A man's education primarily benefits himself, while a women education positively affects the entire family as she shares her knowledge with everyone (Saxena, 2023). A mother is a child's primary teacher and the family is their first learning environment, when she is educated and enlightened, she manages her household effectively and inculcates good behaviour in her children (Mishra, 2009). A good mother is more effective than a teacher. Our nation is a democratic state that ensures equal rights for all



genders, male or female (Mete et al., 2023). Women also have the same right to pursue education as per their choice (Reis & Seidl, 1989). There is a significant disparity in the education level of men & women in our country due to factors such as illiteracy, child marriage, veiling, socio-economic challenges, traditional attitudes, superstitious, parental ignorance, thinking of women as a curse, and generally poor standards towards women education (Yagan & Alabay, 2018). Secondary education is considered an important step in the educational journey, providing students with the support they need to progress to higher education and enter the job market. It primarily provides the foundation of knowledge, skills, and basic employability understanding for human capital development (Useem, 1992). However, our education policies mainly focus on research aspects of primary education and higher education (Krishnan & Bhat, 2023). Ironically, despite numerous policies established for secondary education, they are often ignored and not effectively implemented.

Need and Significance of the Study

Parental encouragement and support for home learning activities are essential for women education, along with their involvement in school (Mishra, 2009). A growing number of studies show that building strong relationships between parents, families, and schools improves women learning and results in better academic outcomes (Hilal, 2016). Parents can have a significant impact in the lives of women and guide their daughters to achieve behavioural and value changes (Mete et al., 2023). Generally, parents' involvement entangles collaboration between families, schools, and communities, raising parents' awareness of the benefits of investing in their women education, and equipping them with the necessary skills to support this investment (Bordhan, 2014). The investigators consequently agreed to conduct this study. Secondary education is considered an important step in the educational journey, providing students with the support they need to progress to higher education and enter the job market.

Review of Related Literature

Thakker (1994) found that parents in rural areas were less supportive of science education at home than their urban counterparts. In addition, parents with higher education levels demonstrated more positive attitudes toward domestic science education than those with lower education levels. Mohanasundaram and Kannan (2001) revealed that rural women generally have a positive attitude towards formal education for women. Families in these regions with



higher socio-economic status are more supportive of women education. Conversely, women with lower educational attainment often have a less favourable view of formal education for women. Lakshmi and Karimulla (2007) revealed that rural parents of both genders held a positive attitude towards girls' education. Moreover, no significant differences were observed between literate and illiterate rural parents in these positive attitudes. Furthermore, fathers generally had more favourable attitudes than mothers. Gupta (2010) revealed that the population of parents has favourable attitudes towards education in rural & urban areas. Samal (2012) investigated that the level of education of tribal & non-tribal parents was not significantly different. Gardia and Kaur (2014) indicated that parents' attitudes towards the education of their children are consistent across genders. However, there were significant differences in parental attitudes regarding wealth and education. Reshma (2014) demonstrated that parents generally hold a positive attitude towards the education of their daughters, with mothers displaying more enthusiasm than fathers. Parents who were highly educated and of better socio-economic status were particularly supportive and had favourable attitudes towards their daughters' education. Chaudhari (2015) revealed a noticeable difference between English and Gujarati parents. Additionally, there was a significant gender gap, with fathers generally having a more positive view of education than mothers. Parents in urban areas are more focused on the language of instruction. In their study, Deb and Ghosh (2015) delved into the impact of parental responsibility for the education of their children parental perceptions & dropout rates on the school learning process. They highlighted the influence of these factors on children's education. Similarly, Mor and Sethia (2015) uncovered that the attitudes of parents in 'rural & urban' areas towards the education of children were largely similar. They also found no significant difference between mothers' & fathers' attitudes toward their children's education. Sarkar (2019) found a significant variation in parental attitude towards women education across different age groups. The review of research indicated that attitudinal differences in women education are not only in West Bengal but across India. Studies showed that the position of women in our society highlights their ongoing struggle for empowerment within patriarchal structures. In the review of past research, the present researchers did not explore the parental attitude towards women education in South 24 Parganas district during their research. There was a gap in this area, which led the researchers to consider this study.



Objective of the Study

The objective of the current study was as follows:

O₁: To investigate the parental attitude towards women education regarding their gender, location and age group in the said study area.

Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the objective, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H₀₁: There exists no significant difference in the parental attitude towards women education between male and female in the said study area.

H₀₂: There exists no significant difference in the parental attitude towards women education between rural and urban areas in the said study area.

H₀₃: There exists no significant difference among the age group (30 years and below, 31 to 40 years, 41 to 50 years and 50 years & above) for parents regarding their attitude towards women education in the said study area.

Delimitations of the Study

The following delimitations were observed:

- I. Parents of secondary level students.
- II. Sonarpur, Baruipur, and Diamond Harbour I blocks in South 24 Parganas district.

Methodology of the Study

The descriptive survey method was used for the present study and a 'quantitative research design' was utilised for conducting the study.

Population and Sample: All of the parents in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal were considered for population of the study.

For this present study, 281 parents (142 male & 139 female, 151 rural & 130 urban) were randomly selected from three blocks in South 24 Parganas of West Bengal.

Sampling Technique: A 'stratified random sampling' technique was applied for this study.

Variables: Two types of variables were considered by the researchers here. These are given below:

- **Major Variable:** Parental attitude towards women education
- **Categorical Variables:** 1) Male & female which represent gender



-
- 2) Rural & urban which represent location
3) 30 years and below, 31 to 40 years, 41 to 50 years and 50 years & above which represent the age group

Data Collection Procedure: A self-structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions was used to collect data for the study. The researcher was done through a field survey.

Instrument Used: To obtain the data, the researchers employed a standardized tool namely, Parental Attitude Scale towards Women Education (PASTWE), which they themselves developed. The tool included 23 items measured on a five point Likert scale and covered 4 dimensions: Building a strong nation, Education as an investment, Personality & social values, and Economic independence. The scale used for responses ranged from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. The item scoring was based on 15 positive and 8 negative items.

Validity and Reliability: The items in the scale were validated by subject matter experts. The reliability of the scale was assessed using the test-retest method, yielding a reliability coefficient of .73, indicating a high level consistency. Cronbach’s Alpha was also calculated to evaluate the overall reliability of the scale.

Procedure of Data Analysis: In this investigation, data analysis was carried out using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, tested at a .05 level of significance. The statistical computations were performed using SPSS 20, while bar graphs were generated with MS Excel 2007 for visual representation.

Results and Discussion

Testing of H_01 : There exists ‘no significant difference in the parental attitude towards women education between male and female in the said study area’

Table 1: Mean Comparison of Parental Attitude towards Women Education: Regarding Gender								
Gender	N	M	SD	Mean Difference	SED	t(279)	p	Result
Male	142	70.80	7.69	0.31	0.93	0.33*	.74	*Not significant at .05 level
Female	139	71.11	7.90					

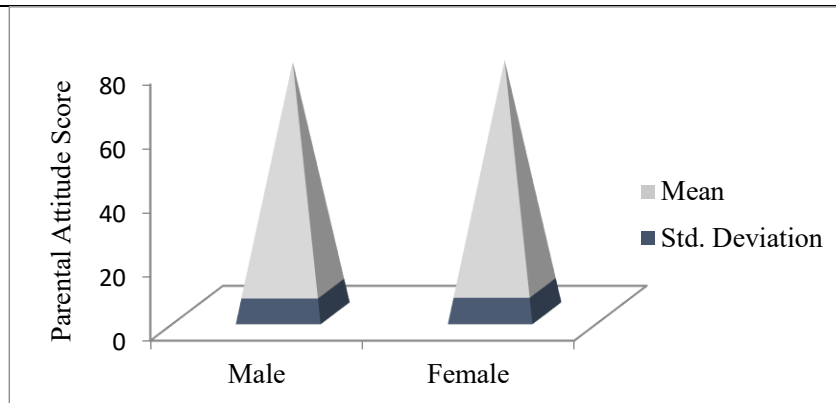


Figure 1: Bar Graph for Mean & Std. Deviation Score for Male & Female Parental Attitude towards Women Education

Table 1 indicated that the difference in mean between the male and female was not statistically significant in the parental attitude towards women education with $t(279) = 0.33$, $p > .05$. Table 1 and figure 1 showed that male parents exhibited lower attitude scores on women education ($M = 70.80$, $SD = 7.69$) as compared to the female parents ($M = 71.11$, $SD = 7.90$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was not rejected.

The investigators observed only a minor difference in the 'mean value of male and female parental attitude' between male and female. This indicated that both gender held similar attitude towards women education. These findings aligned with the results reported by Mohanasundaram and Kannan (2001); Lakshmi and Karimulla (2007). On the other hand, Reshma (2014) explored that mother showed positive and pleasing attitude towards the education of women to their counterparts of fathers. However, the findings of Chaudhari (2015) revealed that fathers have favourable attitude towards education than mothers. Both the findings were indicated a significant gender gap in the parental attitude towards education.

Testing of H_0 2: There exists 'no significant difference in the parental attitude towards women education between rural and urban areas in the said study area'

Table 2: Mean Comparison of Parental Attitude towards Women Education: Regarding Location								
Gender	N	M	SD	Mean Difference	SED	t(279)	p	Result



Rural	151	69.73	7.19	2.27	0.92	2.46*	.02	*Significant at .05 level
Urban	130	72.00	8.12					

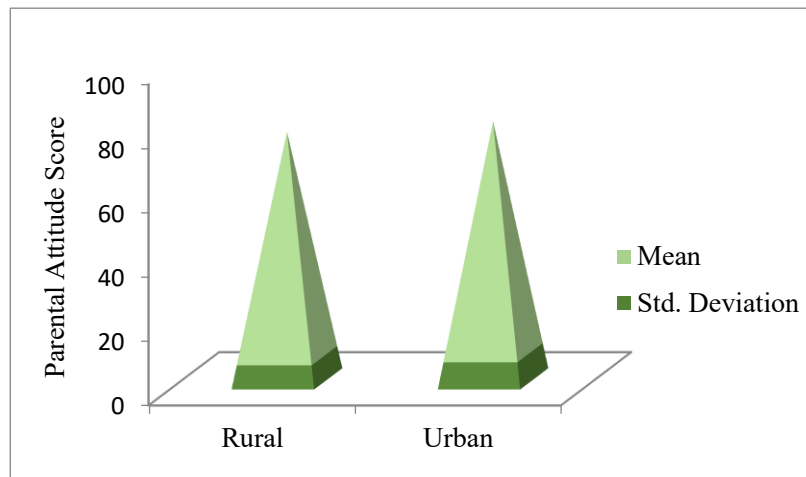


Figure 2: Bar Graph for Mean & Std. Deviation Score for Rural & Urban Parental Attitude towards Women Education

Table 2 displayed a statistically significant difference in mean between the rural and urban parental attitude towards women education with $t(279) = 2.46, p < .05$. It was obtained from table 2 and figure 2, rural parents exhibited lower attitude scores on women education ($M = 69.73, SD = 7.19$) as compared to the urban parents ($M = 72.00, SD = 8.12$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected.

The mean attitude score of urban parents was higher than that of rural parents, indicating that urban parents held a more favourable view towards women education compared to rural parents. Similarly, Gardia and Kaur (2014) investigated that there was significant difference observed in parental attitudes towards wealth and education. Likewise, Thakker (1994) revealed parents in rural areas showed unfavourable attitude in science education as compared to urban. However, this was contradicted by the findings of Mor and Sethia (2015), where the study expressed that there existed no significant difference observed in the rural & urban parental attitude towards the education of children.



Testing of H_03 : There exists 'no significant difference among the age group (30 years and below, 31 to 40 years, 41 to 50 years and 50 years & above) for parents regarding their attitude towards women education in the said study area'

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of the Scores on Parental Attitude towards Women Education: Regarding Age Group

Age Group in Years	N	M	SD
30 and below	52	72.54	7.40
31-40	92	70.37	7.85
41-50	86	70.53	7.86
50 and above	51	71.08	7.91
Total	281	70.95	7.78

Table 4: Mean Comparison of Parental Attitude towards Women Education: Regarding Age Group

Source of Variances	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square Variance	F	p	Result
Between Groups	177.86	3	59.29	.98*	.40	*Not significant at .05 level
Within Groups	16783.44	277	60.59			
Total	16961.30	280				

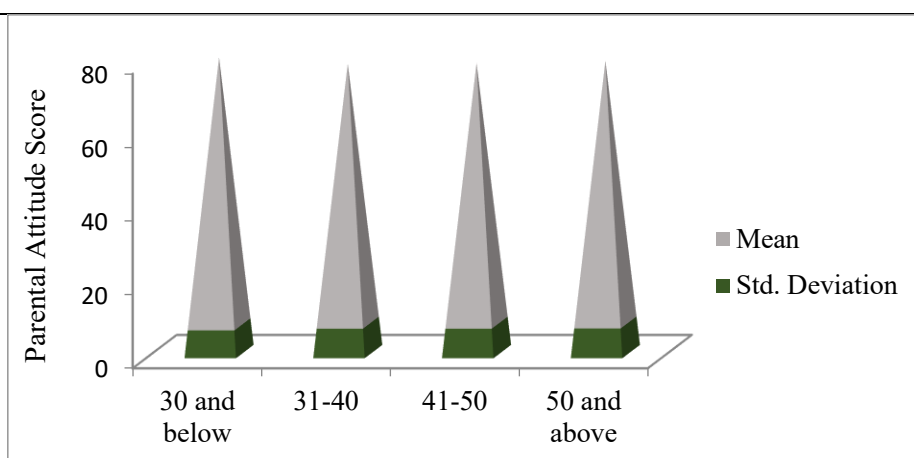


Figure 3: Bar Graph for Mean & Std. Deviation Score in different age groups (30 years and below, 31 to 40 years, 41 to 50 years and 50 years & above) for Rural and Urban Parental Attitude towards Women Education

Table 4 revealed a insignificant mean difference among the parental age group (30 years and below, 31 to 40 years, 41 to 50 years and 50 years & above) on their attitude towards women education with $F(3,277) = .98, p > .05$. Table 3 and figure 3 showed that 30 years and below age group of parents exhibited higher attitude score on women education ($M = 72.54, SD = 7.40$) as compared to 31-40 years ($M = 70.37, SD = 7.85$), 41-50 ($M = 70.53, SD = 7.86$) and 50 years and above ($M = 71.08, SD = 7.91$) age group. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) was not rejected.

Most of the parents aged 50 years and above showed a moderate, fair, and reasonable attitude towards women education. A smaller number of parents aged 31–40 years and 41–50 years displayed a low and unfavorable attitude, while the remaining parents aged 30 years and below demonstrated a high and very favorable attitude towards women education. It was similar to the findings of Gupta (2010). But contradicted the findings of Sarkar (2019), where the study showed that a significant difference was observed in parental attitude towards women education of different age groups. On the other hand, Deb and Ghosh (2015) expressed that school education for children and dropout rates are influenced by parental responsibility and perception. However, it was contradicted by the findings of Samal (2012), where the study analysed that the parents of tribal & non-tribal did not differ in their attitude towards level of education.



Limitations of the Study

Although the study provided valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations.

These were given below:

- The study was limited to the structured questionnaire.
- The qualitative data was not collected for the study.
- No electronic gadgets were used to measure the parental attitude.
- Due to a shortage of time the researchers were not cover the more blocks in South 24 Parganas district.

Conclusion

Education is an important and powerful apparatus to nurture and enhance the comprehensive development of individuals especially women (Dinesh & Chandrashekar, 2015). This study showed the differences in parental attitude towards women education, which was reflected by the society. Young aged parents (31-40 years) were showed their responses about women education at higher than other age group. Maximum parents were asserted their attitude towards women education at a moderate level. Male and female parents were kept similar attitude towards women education, and it was also manifested in different parental age groups. Although the literacy rate of women education is increasing, according to this study the parental attitude in rural areas was lower than in urban. It was clearly understood from the overall discussion of this study, although at present it has been noticed that there has been some progress regarding the attitude of some parents to rate of women education in the blocks (Sonarpur, Baruipur, and Diamond Harbour I) of the said study area, there is still a need for more awareness among parents of secondary level students.

References

- Bordhan, S. (2014). Parental attitude towards schooling of their children. *Journal of All India Association for Educational Research*, 26(1), 1-13.
- Chaudhari, M. (2015). To study the parents attitude towards medium of education in Gandhinagar district. *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(2), 38-40.



-
- Das, C., & Kar, S. (2018). Parental attitude towards girls' education: In relation to community and gender. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 8(2), 282-293.
- Deb, P., & Ghosh, G.S. (2015). Socio-cultural and geo-problems in scheduled caste and Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal. *International Journal of Current Research*, 7(2), 13062-13069.
- Dinesh, N.A., & Chandrashekar, E. (2015). Parent's attitude and perception towards primary education in rural Karnataka. *ISOR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 20(12), 20–26.
- Gardia, A., & Kaur, N. (2014). A study of parental attitude towards schooling. *International Journal of Basic and Advanced Research*, 3(2), 8-23.
- Gupta, M. (2010). Study on the attitude of parents and teachers towards population education (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, V.B.S. Purvanchal University, Uttar Pradesh, India).
- Hilal, H. (2016). Parents attitude toward education among Muslim. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 3(65), 199–209.
- Krishnan, P., & Bhat, S. (2023). Parental education and attitude of young adults towards their oral health - A cross-sectional study. *International Journal of Oral Health Dentistry*, 9(3), 185-190.
- Lakshmi, L.B., & Karimulla, S. (2007). Attitude of rural parents towards girls education. *Edutracks: A Monthly Scanner of Trends in Education*, 7(2), 31–32.
- Mete, J.K., Chowdhury, A., Rumi, N., Biswas, M., Khatun, N., Rakshit, S., Datta, R., & Bose, P. (2023). Attitude of tribal parents towards the higher education of girls in India. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, 23(4), 14-25.
- Mishra, R. C. (2009). *Women Education*. New Delhi: A.P.H publishing cooperation.
- Mohanasundaram, K., & Kannan, R. (2001). Socio-economic status and attitude of parents towards women education. *The Educational Review*, 44(6), 13–16.
- Mor, K., & Sethia, S. (2015). Parent's attitude towards girls education in Haryana. *American International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, 15, 130-135.
-



Journal of Educare (JoE)
(A Peer Reviewed Bi-Annual Journal)

ISSN: 3048-9652 (Online)

www.educare.aliah.ac.in

-
- Reis, J. & Seidl, A. (1989). School administrators, parents and sex education: A resolvable paradox. *Adolescence*, 24(5), 639-645.
- Reshma, M. (2014). Parents attitude towards girl child education: A sociological study of Haryana. *International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 1(4), 1-4.
- Samal, R. (2012). Parents' attitude towards schooling and education of their children (Doctoral dissertation, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology, Odisha, India). <http://ethesis.nitrkl.ac.in/3233/1/Final.pdf>
- Sarkar, S. (2019). Attitude of different age group parents towards women education at Paschim Bardhaman district in West Bengal. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 6(2), 297-306.
- Saxena, R. (2023). A study of the attitude of the parents towards education of the higher secondary girl students. *Knowledgeable Research*, 1(10), 30-38.
- Thakker, D.G. (1994). A study of parents attitude towards home science education in Kaira district (Doctoral dissertation, Sardar Patel University, Gujarat, India). <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/74910>
- Useem, E. (1992). Middle schools and math groups: Parents' involvement in children's placement. *Sociology of Education*, 65, 263-279.
- Yagan G.S., & Alabay, E. (2018). Children's questions and answers of parents: Sexual education dilemma. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 14(6), 138-151. <https://doi.org/10.29329/ijpe.2018.179.11>