

## **Impact of Poverty on Higher Education Access in Rural Area's living Peoples: A Statistical Analysis of District Okara**

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### ***Abstract:***

Education is an important determinant of sustainable social and economic development. The objective of this study is to diagnose the Impact of poverty on higher education in rural areas of District Okara. Poverty, through a variety of factors, directly and indirectly affects student development and tertiary education. These factors often result in increased stress for students, which can affect their ability to study. Students living in poverty often have fewer resources at home to do their homework, study, or participate in activities that help them achieve success on Higher Education Day. This is a social factor, which plays an important role in creating barriers to the achievement of educational goals at higher levels. Because it is out of control in Pakistan's rural areas, where people lack access to adequate earnings, clothing, housing, healthcare, and educational opportunities, it also slows down economic growth and productivity. The aim of this study was to assess the problems facing and data analyzed the impact of poverty on students at higher level in District Okara. A qualitative method was used with the sample size is 200. The data was collected through questionnaires and interviews from 160 respondents from eight different villages 20 respondents each, 20 students and 20 teachers from university of Okara. The study developed that student's education at higher level is affected by different aspects such as household chores/student labor, financial issues, not access to nearby college and universities, and less parental support and guidance. This study recommends the sustainable development for rural communities. A Collaborative work is needed among government and stakeholders to eliminate the poverty that is hurdles for higher education of District Okara.

### ***Keyword:***

*Education, Facilities, Poverty, Financial Issues, Rural Communities*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Students in Pakistan, particularly those in rural regions, perform poorly in higher education due in large part to poverty. Physical health, brain growth, higher educational achievement, self-esteem, and self-efficacy are all impacted by socioeconomic level. A significant strain is placed on Pakistan's higher education system as a result of 20% of students being classed as living in poverty in rural areas. The proportion of students in higher education who are underweight, have poor hygiene habits, and have minimal to no parental involvement in their development and education is presently skyrocketing. Generational poverty develops and spreads as a result of the vacuum that poverty generates in higher education, which has little to no academic modeling of it. (Dong et al., 2021).

The secret to change is education. It is essential for fostering social cohesiveness, economic progress, and personal development. Pakistan is having difficulty meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of providing free and high-quality higher education by 2015, despite significant advancement over the past two decades. For instance, net enrolment has not improved significantly. Compared to the MDG target of 100% in 2015, the net primary enrollment ratio has only improved from 42% in 2001-2002 to 56% in 2013-2014. Despite the MDG target of 87 percent in 2015, the literacy rate (10 years and older) remained at 59 percent in 2013-2014. Similar to this, Pakistan's completion/survival rate (grades 1–5) is extremely low (51% in 2010–2011 compared to the MDG objective of 100%) (Nawaz and Iqbal. 2016).

Higher education provides a tool to assimilate with the changing circumstance in the dynamic scenario where the desires of the people change and the existing social institutions fail to meet the needs of the people, making education a widely acknowledged agent of socio-economic development, personal growth, and national development as well as the moral and cultural development of society. Human civilization advanced alongside the higher education system, and vice versa. Hence, wise investment in the higher education sector will ultimately lead to both human and economic development in rural areas. It has a significant impact on societal norms, traditions, beliefs, and faith. As an activity is taking place, both monetary and non-monetary aspects of human society

are taken into account. One such activity that both influences and is influenced by society is higher education.

Higher education promotes the creation of human capital, boosts individual productivity, and positions the nation for economic growth. Higher education is frequently seen as a tool for eliminating poverty, spurring economic growth, empowering people, increasing personal earnings, offering a welcoming atmosphere, and so paving the road for greater economic competitiveness. Also, it offers profound insight into how the younger generation will manage the complexity of economies in the future (Afzal et al. 2010). The main goal of every institution at all levels, including schools, colleges, and universities, is for higher education to help people become more skilled, knowledgeable, and capable (Fasasi, 2011). Education at the higher level equips students with abilities that support efficient resource use and economic progress. Due to their high rates of illiteracy, poor countries' main issue is a lack of expertise that leaves their resources unused (Berg, 2010). Higher education also provides social benefits in addition to its economic advantages. It includes lowering the fertility rate, enhancing cleanliness, saving lives, and educating women to strengthen the workforce (Jimenez & Patrinos, 2008). Also, because educated individuals connect with one another, it promotes social cohesion. In addition, better education raises awareness of deadly diseases like HIV/AIDS among people all over the world. This guarantees a stable and wholesome society. On the one hand, higher education helps people live in less poverty, while on the other; it enhances the political climate of the nation and the state of law and order. Also, it significantly enhances both the maintenance of democracy and the decline in crime rates (Berg, 2010). When comparing education in static and dynamic societies, Patil (2012) argued that higher education is simply a means in static society to transmit its customs and traditions to its predecessor while in dynamic change in societies, it also prepares the future generation to adapt to the changing circumstances. (Arafat and Khan. 2022).

Recent years have seen a rise in the importance of higher education as a policy issue in public debates in Romania. Several international surveys have shed attention on Romania's subpar performance in higher education when compared to that of its European counterparts. According to PISA results, the nation is among the least competitive European nations, which

points to systemic problems with secondary education quality. Early school dropout rates are still high and have exceeded the nation's Europe 2020 target. The nation has also failed to improve educational attainment, as evidenced by the fact that the share of university education graduates among people aged 30-34 stands at the absolute bottom of the EU league table (European Commission 2020). Another difficult subject has been research, where Romania has struggled with poor funding and production, once again falling significantly short of averages across Europe. The nation is having trouble luring European research funds and has had difficulties in important infrastructure initiatives for the field, such the flagship Extreme Light Infrastructure—Nuclear Physics (ELNP) (Afzal et al., 2010).

### **Objectives:**

- To know the demographic characteristics of the respondents
- To investigate the effect of poverty on higher education among rural peoples in district Okara
- To identify the factors that creates hindrance in the way of education
- To investigate the overall impact of education on rural development
- To know about Poverty and higher Education
- To find out some cause of poverty in rural areas
- To suggest some recommendations that reduces the poverty in the way of education in rural areas

### **Review Literature:**

Plomp, (2013) reported that this chapter will review the research and literature on the nature of poverty and higher education difficulties in rural areas in order to offer a background for the current study. With regard to this intricate subject, there are a number of questions that must be addressed: What effects does poverty have on rural students' access to higher education? What difficulties do professors have in helping students get past rural poverty-related hurdles to higher education? What assistance is required to help rural high school students who are poor engage in and succeed in higher education? The issue of higher education in rural areas can be better understood by looking at recent studies, which can also point to potential solutions that could assist students from rural areas and families in overcoming higher educational challenges caused by poverty. The complexity of the poverty culture makes it impossible to consider the

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subject of obstacles to higher education in isolation. An analysis of the study on poverty is first and foremost necessary.

Sonne, (2010) reported that these kids experience exclusion and discrimination frequently, which stunts their intellectual growth in rural regions. The main causes of parental illiteracy and greater education for their children include poverty, unemployment, and parental illness. Children in impoverished communities are compelled to drop out of college in order to support their families financially, through farming and raising livestock. Several developing nations do not invest the necessary funding for the basic infrastructure of higher education institutions and resources, as well as for teacher training or recruitment. Even the international community's pledged contributions are insufficient to educate the children who are denied access to higher education worldwide. Millions of children around the world are unable to pursue higher education due to poverty and marginalization. In terms of illiteracy, Sub-Saharan Africa paints a dismal picture for the entire world. More than 34 million children aged 19 to 25 live in one of the most affected places in the globe and do not attend a higher education. However, there are little differences between the circumstances in central and eastern Asia and those in sub-Saharan Africa. Almost 32 million people are excluded from higher education.

White, M. (2009) show that this paper on poverty and higher education explains the need for educators to have some grasp of the structural causes of poverty as well as the need to refute stereotypes about low-income students from rural areas and their families. It is crucial to stop students living in poverty from thinking that their financial situation is their fault in order to foster empathy and understanding. Students' perceptions of themselves and the campus community are influenced by how we think, feel, and talk about poverty (White, 2009, p.9). White draws on academic studies to examine the problems with how poverty and pupils from rural areas are framed. The paper also looks at how recent political, social, and economic changes have impacted student and family poverty.

Lynn *et al.*, (2010) reported that what is effective in reducing barriers to higher education caused by poverty is the area of research that is lacking in the current study. The current study aims to investigate the effects of poverty at the graduate level. Data collecting revealed the difficulties lecturers confront and the current tactics they employ to address the issues of poverty-related higher education. It was the researcher's goal that the data would reveal both important strengths and unmet requirements. Data findings were used to make suggestions for future action.

Gunn *et al.*, (2011) reported that an advocate for social policies looked into the bigger educational disparity between non-Aboriginals and Aboriginals. He was concerned that Aboriginal students' graduation rates are substantially lower, particularly for those who reside on reservations.

### Purpose of the Study

The present research study has explored the impacts of poverty on higher education, in particular from a social perspective. The present study conducted students from rural areas who affected higher education in Okara district, with a high percentage of families living in generational poverty. The study examined the impact of poverty at a higher level and the barriers to education associated with poverty.

### Research Methodology

In current descriptive research, primary data are collected through questionnaires and interviews; the target audience is higher education students and university lecturers. Two groups were involved in this study; one group was students from rural areas and the other one from universities teachers were taken randomly selected from rural areas and universities. In this research, the focus is on the rural areas of Okara, Pakistan, so in that context; the data was collected in the villages and the University of Okara, Pakistan. A convenient sampling technique is used in the research. Higher education in rural areas was seen as a dependent variable, while poverty and lower educational establishments were seen as independent variables.

**Table.1: Variables Description**

Variables	Description	Categorization
Yd	Poverty	Independent
Y1	Financial issues	Dependent
Y2	Household Labors	Dependent
Y3	Less parental support and guidance	Dependent

### Model

We developed following model for the higher education students of rural areas district Okara, Pakistan.

$$Y_d = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \mu \quad (1)$$

Where  $Y_d$  measures the poverty in rural areas,  $X$  is a vector of variables assumed to determine the higher education students of rural areas,  $\beta$  is the corresponding vector of coefficients to be estimated, and  $\mu$  is an error term. The model is unable to explain 98 % variations independent variables as  $R^2$  takes the value 0.02 in Private sector setup of rural areas

and higher educational institutions in okara, Pakistan. The value changes to 0.01 along with adjustments. The average impact of the included variables is reflected by the interception of the model which takes the value 1.8 in an insignificant way. The poverty variable X1 has a negative and significant effect, but the low effect on the target variable is 0.011. The second variable of model finance problems has a negligible effect on higher education in rural areas, namely 0.02. The model also shows that domestic work, higher education institutions and financial problems also have a negligible effect on higher education for students in rural areas, namely 0.03. The regression statistics of rural students in tertiary education are presented in Table 2 (a, b and c) respectively.

**Table-2(a): Regression statistics for model**

Model	R	R. Square	Adjusted Square	R. St. Error (Estimate)	Change Statistics	Change Statistics	Change Statistics	Change Statistics	Change Statistics
					R	F	Df1	Df2	Sig. F
<b>1</b>	0.155a	0.024	0.009	0.306	0.024	1.600	3.0	196	0.191

a. Predictors: (Constant), Q4 (Pr\_Eco), Q1(Pr\_emp), Q2(Pr\_Lit)

**Table-2(b): Anova<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	0.370	4	0.190	1.600	0.191 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	19.234	213	0.099		
Total	19.645	212			

a. Dependent Variable: Types

b. Predictors: (Constant), Q 4 (Pr\_Eco), Q 1(Pr\_emp), Q 2(Pr\_Lit)

**Table.2(c): Coefficients <sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Collinearity Statistics		
	<b>B.</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t.</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
1(Constant)	1.812	0.063		34.320	0.000		
Q1(Pr_emp)	-0.022	0.032	-0.076	-0.0508	0.713	0.378	3.635
Q 2(Pr_Lit)	0.0143	0.031	0.099	0.563	0.684	0.213	5.087
Q4(Pr_Eco)	0.033	0.024	0.0146	1.213	0.323	0.572	2.012

a. Dependent Variable: Types

## Results and Discussions:

To study the impact of poverty on higher education in rural areas of District Okara, Pakistan, we got the results through a questionnaire and interview in rural areas and university faculty (University of Okara), Pakistan. The basic objective was to find out the impact of poverty on

higher education and development of rural areas. We made a questionnaire to find the impact of poverty on higher education in rural areas of Okara, Pakistan through the application of statistical analysis to test the assumption.

**Table-3 Statistics**

	Q1 (Pr_Emp)	Q2 (Pr_Lit)	Q3 (Pr_Edu)	Q4 (Pr_Eco)	Q5 (Edu_Bus)	Q6 (Pr_Pb)	Q7 (Pb_Eco)	Q8 (Role_Pr-Pb)	Q9 (Pr_Aware)	Q10 (Pbs_Prs)	Gender	Age	Types
<b>N Valid</b>	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
<b>Mean</b>	2.60	2.96	2.98	3.10	3.10	2.98	3.06	2.88	2.76	2.94	1.65		1.90
<b>Median</b>	1.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00		2.00
<b>Mode</b>	1	1	1 <sup>a</sup>	5	4	3	3	1 <sup>a</sup>	3	3	2		2
<b>Std. Dev</b>	1.805	1.701	1.507	1.435	1.288	1.244	1.321	1.413	1.368	1.492	.480		0.307
<b>Variance</b>	3.256	2.893	2.271	2.060	1.658	1.547	1.745	1.996	1.872	2.228	.230		0.094

a. Multiple modes exist and the smallest value is shown.

**Table-4 Gender**

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>1</b>	160	64.5	64.5	100.0
<b>2</b>	40	35.5	35.5	35.5
<b>Total</b>	200	100.0	100.0	

**Poverty make a substantial impact on higher education among rural's students.**

The output chart indicates that the sample size is 160 & 40 for rural areas students and higher education respectively. The mean output is 3.17 and 2.48 respectively. In-group statistics the difference between the averages is 0.69. The findings suggest that the impacts are significant of poverty on higher education and the development in rural areas,  $t(198) = .035$ ,  $p = .391$ . That is, the average of responses for poverty effect on higher education ( $M = 3.17$ ,  $SD = 1.402$ ) is significantly different from that of urban areas ( $M = 2.48$ ,  $SD = 1.601$ ).

**Table-5 Group Statistics**

	Types	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Error Mean
Q4 (Pr_Eco)	Rural Students	160	3.17	1.402	0.010
Q4 (Pr_Eco)	Uni. Faculty & Students	40	2.48	1.601	0.349



**Table-6 Independent Samples Test**  
**Levene's Test for Equality of Variances**      **t-test for Equality of Means**

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std. Error Diff	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q 4 (Pr_Eco)	Equal variances not assumed			-1.911	23.738	0.068	-0.697	0.365	-1.450	0.056
Q 4 (Pr_Eco)	Equal variances assumed	0.740	0.391	-2.124	198	0.035	-0.697	0.328	-1.344	-0.05

**Agriculture labor make a substantial impact on higher education among rural's students**

The outlet table indicates the sample size is 160 & 40 for poverty and higher education respectively. Average production amounts to 3.03 and 2.38 respectively. Group statistics indicate that the difference among the average is 0.65. The results show that agriculture labor has an important impact on higher education and development in rural areas,  $t(198) = .099$ ,  $w = 947$ . That is, the average of responses for poverty affect on higher education ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 1.691$ ) is significantly different from that of urban areas education ( $M = 2.38$ ,  $SD = 1.717$ ).

**Table-7 Group Statistics**

	Types	Types	N	Std. Dev	Std. Error Mean
Q2 (Pr_Lit)	Rural students	160	3.03	1.691	0.126
Q2 (Pr_Lit)	Uni. Faculty	40	2.38	1.717	0.375

**Table-8 Independent Samples Test**  
**Levene's Test for Equality of Variances**      **t-test for Equality of Means**

		F	Sig	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std. Error Diff	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q 2 (Pr_Lit)	Equal variances not assumed			-1.636	24.774	0.114	-0.647	0.395	-1.462	0.168
Q 2 (Pr_Lit)	Equal variances assumed	0.004	0.947	-1.656	198	0.099	-0.647	0.391	-1.417	0.123

### Less Awareness make a substantial impact on higher education among rural's students

The outlet table indicates the sample size is 160 & 40 for poverty and higher education respectively. The mean output is 2.64 and 2.24 respectively. The group statistics show the difference between mean is 0.4. The results show a significant effect of less awareness on higher education in rural areas,  $t(198) = .333$ ,  $p = .66$ . That is, the average of responses for Poverty in higher education ( $M = 2.64$ ,  $SD = 1.804$ ) is significantly different from that of urban areas education ( $M = 2.24$ ,  $SD = 1.814$ ).

**Table-9 Group Statistics**

	Types	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Error Mean
	Rural students	160	2.64	1.804	0.135
<b>Q1 (Pr_Emp)</b>	Uni. Faculty & students	40	2.24	1.814	0.396

**Table-10 Independent Samples Test**

		F	Sig	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std. Error Diff	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
<b>Q 2 (Pr_Lit)</b>	Equal variances not assumed			-0.967	24.871	0.343	-0.404	0.418	-1.266	0.457
<b>Q 2 (Pr_Lit)</b>	Equal variances assumed	0.195	0.659	-0.971	198	0.333	-0.404	0.416	-1.225	0.417

### Major Findings

- Poverty impact on higher education in rural areas students. The result show that 80% strongly agree, 8% agree, 6% neither agree nor disagree, 2% strongly disagree, 4% somewhat disagree.
- The household labors are the barrier in the higher education in rural areas. 57% strongly agree, 22% somewhat agree, 4% neither agree nor disagree, 4% strongly disagree, 13% somewhat disagree.
- The result shows that faraway of the College and universities from rural areas. 49 % strongly agree, 19% somewhat agree, 4% neither agree nor disagree, 6 % strongly disagree, 22% somewhat disagree.
- The results financial issue and poverty is the barrier in higher education in rural students. The data indicated that 67 % strongly agree, 23% somewhat agree, 2 % neutral neither agree nor disagree, 4 % strongly disagree, 4 % somewhat disagree.

- Livestock labor is the barrier in higher education. The data show that 63 % strongly agree, 26% somewhat agree, 8 % neither agree nor disagree, 1 % strongly disagree, 2% somewhat disagree.
- The result shows that less awareness about the benefit of higher educations. The result show that 49% strongly agree, 22% somewhat agree, 5 % neither agree nor disagree, 6 % strongly disagree, 18% somewhat disagree.
- The results tell for the less parental support in the children education. The data indicated that 39 % strongly agree, 6 % somewhat agree, 10 % neither agree nor disagree, 26% strongly disagree, 12% somewhat disagree.
- The Strong bonding with agriculture farming is the main hurdles in higher education. The result indicated that 68 % strongly agree, 7 % somewhat agree, 5 % neither agree nor disagree, 6% strongly disagree, 12% somewhat disagree.

### **Conclusion:**

This study is to diagnose the Impact of poverty on higher education in rural areas of District Okara. Poverty, both directly and indirectly, affects the advancement and education of a student at a higher level through various processes. The study developed that student's education at higher level is affected by different aspects such as household chores/student labor, financial issues, not access to nearby college and universities, and less parental support and guidance, less interest in the study. The results for the Strong bonding with agriculture farming are the main hurdles in higher education but mostly people disagree. According to this study, poverty in higher education is a significant factor in the development of Pakistan's rural areas since higher education increases people's awareness of interest in education. Unfortunately, the Pakistani position on this front has always been weak in the context of higher education especially in rural areas. Higher education has played an important role in the development of rural areas and increased the employment rate.

### **Recommendations:**

Unfortunately, because of the government's lack of attention in higher institutions, the development of rural areas is regarded as unsatisfactory. In light of this study, it is suggested that the government consider the public and private sectors higher education sectors and build a new higher educational institutions nearby the rural areas, which will ultimately

increase the personal growth, and development of rural areas. A Collaborative work is needed among government and stakeholders to eliminate the poverty that is hurdles for higher education of District Okara.

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