



# **Influence of Socio-Economic Status on Education Attainment of Female Child: A Study of Rural Community in Newai Block, Rajasthan, India.**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of the present research was to investigate the effect of socio-economic status on the education attainment of female children of Gurjar community of Newai block of Tonk district of Rajasthan. The study utilized the quantitative approach and especially used the descriptive research design. Convenient sampling technique was used for the selection of the families for the research. A total 25 families of Gurjar community were sampled from two villages of Newai Block of Rajasthan. The tools used for data collection were interview schedule and self-designed academic achievement test. The education attainment of female children was measured on the basis of the test scores they achieved in the tests designed for finding out their education attainment. Simple percentage, frequency analysis and chi-square test were used to analyse the data. The study concluded that there is no strong positive relationship between socioeconomic status and education attainment of female children. It has been observed during the interaction with the Gurjar families in Newai block that due to the sociocultural structure of the society education takes a back seat and not much stress is given to the education attainment of the female children. The results are in line with the studies conducted by Narasimham (2006), Beutel & Axinn (2002) and Tilak (1979) research.

**Key words:** Socio- economic status, Education attainment, Gurjar community, Percentage analysis, Socio-cultural structure

## Introduction

Education is pillar of the society and a crucial factor for the development of a nation. A person's education has become the indicator of his status in the society. Educational attainment and achievement determine the level of intelligence and is a direct link to achieve higher standard of living, better opportunities, income and overall wellbeing of life (Battle and Lewis 2002). Thus, it is imperative to understand what factors hinder or promote the educational attainment of an individual. Several pieces of researches in the past decades have investigated the factors determining the educational attainment of students in different countries and societies over the globe.

OECD Report in PISA 2014 has presented data from a comparative study of 63 countries with diverse economies on student performance, parents' occupation, and family background. Similar studies have provided the researchers with the dynamics of education attainment in different countries and what factors influence the quality and length of attainment of education (Brewer & Haslum, 1986; Taiwo, 1993; Sammons, 1995; Brien & Jones (1999); Javed, Khilji & Mujahid, 2008; Piotrowski, 2012; Koban Koc, 2016; Ovansa, 2017; Gobena, 2018; Soharwardi et al., 2017; Kwarteng et al., 2022). But the span of such research has not yet reached the present area and community of the study. The contemporary society is undergoing a rapid transformation with the government intervention and initiatives, the communities that were not able to catch up with the pace of development in the society have also been helped to a great extent. Despite the efforts of the government and various social organizations at different levels, some communities have not been able to benefit much from this help and thus are significantly left behind in the socio-economic hierarchy and the standard of living overall.

Parents have a pro-active role in readying their children for a successful future. Lack of parental support or inactive participation can hamper a child's prospects to realising her potential. Parents from different occupational levels have a different tradition of child upbringing, different techniques of parenting, and different ways of responding to their child's needs. "These differences do not express themselves consistently as expected in the case of every family; rather they influence the average tendencies of families for different occupational classes" (Rothstein 2004). Education has been defined as a process which develops knowledge, skill and competency in learners in such a way that they can improve themselves and their society (Crosnoe et al, 2004). Providing educational support means rendering services and assisting someone to achieve his targets (Think, 2009). Educational support is therefore providing children their basic needs for education, for example, writing materials, textbooks, pocket money, school fees etc. (Jeynes, 2004). The educational support that the parents provide to their children has a significant effect on the behavior of children in their later life and parent's socio-economic background effect student's achievement (Eamon, 2005). Opportunities of good education are dependent on the economic and social status of a family. It is also affected by the gender perception especially in lower strata income groups where females are considered a liability and thus girl's education is neglected despite of there being no difference in their intelligence and ability.

Socio- Economic Status can be defined as the composite measure of a person's economic and social position in relation to others based on education, occupation, and income. The present study has used Updated Modified Kuppuswamy scale (2021) for measuring the socio-economic status of the Gurjar community of Newai block for this purpose. The socioeconomic status of the parents determines the type of school their ward will attend which in turn minimizes or maximizes the growth and development opportunities for their future. There is a very significant difference between the educational and academic achievement of a child attending a government school or a private school. Education develops a child's intellectual capacity and creative thinking abilities which help her to succeed and earn a name for them in the society or culture.

Several studies have confirmed that children whose parent's socio-economic condition is good generally tend to have better education attainment in comparison to other children whose socio-economic status is not good as they get better opportunities for physical, emotional and intellectual development (Hiebert & Carpenter, 1992; Cavendish,1988). Morakinyo (2003) also investigated a significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic achievement of the students.

The purpose of the present research is to find out, how does the parental socio-economic status influence the education attainment of female children of Gurjar community in Newai block of Rajasthan?

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Gurjar community in Newai block which comes in the Other Backward Classes is economically, socially, politically, and educationally backward. The main traditional occupation of this community is cattle breeding and partially agriculture. This community has been nomadic for a very long time and for livelihood as they used to live in remote areas cut off from main- stream of society. Because of their transhumance characteristics, they have been socially marginalised. The condition of women of this community is lamented. In the light of these facts the present research is aimed to investigate the relationship between socio-economic status of parents and education attainment of their female children of this community.

### **Research Question**

In order to carry out the research the following research question was designed to guide the study:

How does parent's socio-economic status affect the education attainment of female children of Gurjar community of Newai block of Rajasthan?

### **Research Hypothesis**

H0: There is no significant relationship between parent's socio-economic status and education attainment of female children of Gurjar community of Newai block of Rajasthan .

Ha: There is significant relationship between socio-economic status and education attainment of female children of Gurjar community of Newai block of Rajasthan.

## Material and Methods

The quantitative approach and the descriptive research design were used to conduct the research. Convenient sampling technique was used for the selection of the families for the research. A total 25 families of Gurjar community were sampled from two villages of Newai block. The tools used for data collection were interview schedule and self- designed academic achievement test. The education attainment of female children was measured on the basis of the test scores that they achieved in the self-designed academic achievement tests designed for finding out their knowledge, competency and skills in language, mathematics, science and social science. Simple percentage, frequency and chi-square test was used to analyse the data. The modified Kuppuswamy scale (2021) was used to calculate the socio-economic status of female children of Gurjar community. It is a composite scale which has three indexes for measuring the socio-economic status, namely, occupation, income and education of the family.

The academic questionnaire was administered to check the knowledge, competency, and skills of the respondent. 5 subject areas were tested which included- English language skills, i.e., Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, Hindi language skills, i.e., Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing and knowledge and competency in the subjects of Math, Science, and Social Sciences/ General Awareness. The first part of the questionnaire was based on British Council's standard set of questions for testing language skills in English. In the second part, Hindi language skills were tested through standard practice sets as prescribed by ACTFL. NCERT questions corresponding to the standard of study of the respondent checked the knowledge and competency in the subjects of Math, Science, and Social Sciences/ General Awareness in the next three parts. Each subject carried 8 marks and the maximum marks of the set were 40.

## Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

Socio-economic status of a family is its social positioning in society in terms of education, occupation, and income a family has. Results from the analysis indicate that majority of parents have elementary occupation, very basic education and belong to Upper Lower Income group.

**Table1 : Distribution of Respondents Parents by their Occupation**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid Craft & Related Trade Workers	2	8.0	8.0	8.0
Elementary Occupation	16	64.0	64.0	72.0
Unemployed	2	8.0	8.0	80.0
Legal_Senior_Officers &_Managers	1	4.0	4.0	84.0
Plant & Machine Operators& Assemblers	1	4.0	4.0	88.0
Skilled_Agriculture &Fishery workers	1	4.0	4.0	92.0
Skilled_Workers and shop and Market sales workers	2	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

Most of the parents are daily wage earners. From the table it is clear that 2 respondents who represent 8% of the female children have their parent's craftsman. Parents of 16 families who represent 64% of the total 25 families are in elementary occupation. 2 (8%) are unemployed, whereas 1(4%) comes in the category of Legal Senior Officer, 1 (4%) parent is a plant or machine operators and Assemblers, whereas 2 who represent 8% of the total are Skilled workers.

**Table2: Distribution of Respondents Parents by their Qualification**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid High_School Certificate	7	28.0	28.0	28.0
Illiterate	2	8.0	8.0	36.0
Middle School Certificate	6	24.0	24.0	60.0
Primary School Certificate	4	16.0	16.0	76.0
Professional Qualification	2	8.0	8.0	84.0
Undergraduate/Postgraduate	4	16.0	16.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

Analysis of the results show that 28% of the female children come from the families whose father's highest qualification is High-school certificate, whereas 24% come from the families whose fathers highest qualification is Middle school certificate.16% of the respondent's parents possess primary school certificate. 8% of female children's father is professionally qualified whereas 16% of the respondents' parents possess undergraduate/postgraduate degree.

**Table 3: Distribution of Parents of Gurjar Community by their Income**

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid ≤ 6,174	3	12.0	12.0	12.0
18,497- 30,830	10	40.0	40.0	52.0
30,831- 46,128	3	12.0	12.0	64.0
46,129- 61,662	1	4.0	4.0	68.0
6,175- 18,496	7	28.0	28.0	96.0
61,663- 1,23,321	1	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

Total aggregate monthly income of the families was calculated and families were put in the different categories which are given in Kuppuswamy scale. Out of 25, 10 families (40%) fall in the income group of 18,497-30,830, whereas 7 families (28%) fall in the group of 6,175-18,496. 3 families each (12%) fall in the income group of 6,174 and 30,831-46,128. 1 family each (4%) fall in the income group of 46,129-61,662 and 61,663-1,23,321.

**Table 4: Socio-economic Status of the Parent's of Female Children**

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid Lower (V)	2	8.0	8.0	8.0
Lower_Middle (III)	6	24.0	24.0	32.0
Upper (I)	1	4.0	4.0	36.0
Upper_Lower (IV)	15	60.0	60.0	96.0
Upper_Middle (II)	1	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	25	100.0	100.0	

Income of parents was calculated using Kuppuswamy socioeconomic status scale 2021. The socioeconomic status of the family has been calculated on the basis of the education, the occupation and aggregate income of the family. Out of 25 families, 15 families (60%) fall in the Upper Lower (IV) group, whereas 6 families (24%) fall in the group of Lower Middle (III). 8% (2) families fall in the group of Lower class (V). 4% (1) family each fall in the group of Upper (I) and Upper Middle (II).

**Table 5: Relationship between Parent's Socioeconomic Status and Education Attainment of Female Children of Gurjar Community**

	Grade		Total
	Average	Below Average	
SES Lower (V)	1	1	2
Lower_Middle (III)	1	5	6
Upper (I)	0	1	1
Upper_Lower (IV)	4	11	15
Upper_Middle (II)	0	1	1
Total	6	19	25

Out of 15 families of Upper Lower (IV) group, 11 female children (40%) scored below average in self-designed academic achievement test and 4 (16%) scored average. Out of 6 families of Lower Middle (III) group 5 female children (20%) scored below average whereas 1 female child (4%) scored average marks on self-designed achievement test. Out of 2 families of Lower (V) socio-economic status 1 (4%) scored below average and 1 female child (4%) scored average on academic achievement test. Only 1 family belonged to

Upper (I) class in socio-economic scale and even female child of this family performed below average on the academic achievement test. Only 1 female child belonged to the Upper Middle (II) class and even female child of this socio-economic group performed below average on academic achievement test.

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.608 <sup>a</sup>	4	.807
Likelihood Ratio	1.977	4	.740
N of Valid Cases	25		

a. 9 cells (90.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .24.

A chi-square test was also conducted to find out the relationship between socioeconomic status and education attainment of female children of Gurjar community. The chi square value is .740. As can be seen from table above the p value is taken from Likelihood Ratio row and is greater than .05. This indicates that there is no strong positive association between socioeconomic status and education attainment of female children of Gurjar community in the selected sample. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted and it can be said that H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and education attainment of female children.

### Discussion of Major Finding

The discussion is based on the major finding of the research that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and education attainment of female children of Gurjar community. It has been observed during the interaction with the Gurjar families in Newai block that due to the sociocultural structure of the society education takes a back seat and not much stress is given to the education attainment of female children. This could be because of the gender role differentiation. The results are in line with the studies conducted by Beutel & Axinn (2002) and Tilak (1979) research.

The prior researches related to the differences in gendered academic achievement indicate significant discrepancies in the difference between boy's and girl's levels of education. For instance, studies that were carried out in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s revealed that women compared to men, had a tendency to have lower levels of educational achievement and intergenerational occupational mobility. These studies revealed that parental traits were significant predictors of educational achievement for both men and women. Boys were at a significant advantage because they had more parental encouragement for education than girls. The emphasis on family responsibilities for female child mostly results in actual or perceived role conflicts between the pursuit of the family role and the pursuit of education and job roles and cause kids to stop going to school or make their parents dissuade them from pursuing education. Gender also plays a conflicting role in educational attainment and involvement, with females being far less likely to be engaged in school at any one moment and performing at a lower level. This shows that gender role differentiation has significant effects on girls' educational outcomes, which is consistent with the findings of



status attainment studies in the United States as well. In agriculturally- backed families, parents are likely to have strong reasons to keep their daughters at home and out of school because of their cultures where female responsibilities are predominantly defined in terms of the home and family. Such ethnic groups undoubtedly exists in rural India, and the necessity for girls is manual labour at home and fields, most of the times completely regardless of the level of household affluence. Furthermore, labour on the farm and in the home has been highlighted as a primary cause for not sending females to school or for sending them to school for just brief periods of time. Therefore, even while parents may want their daughters to attend school to improve their chances of getting married, the perceived conflict between women's roles in the family and their educational and professional roles leads parents to stop their daughters' education at a substantially earlier age than their sons. In environments like rural India, gender variations in marriage patterns and parental reliance on children for old-age security might increase the effects of perceived gender-specific role conflict between home obligations and labour roles. Furthermore, daughters typically move in with their in-laws after marriage leaving their parents' home. Because investments in daughters are typically thought to benefit in-laws rather than natal families, parents are significantly more likely to invest in their boys' human capital than their daughters'. This lessens parents' desire to educate their daughters even more. Consequently, these setting-specific qualities confirm the effects of gender disparities on educational attainment of female child in general.

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