

**ANALYSIS OF GIRLS' PRIMARY EDUCATION IN DISTRICT
BOLAN BALOCHISTAN: ISSUES, CHALLENGES
AND PROBLEMS**

Education

Ghazala Yasmin^{††} Dr. Nasim Qaisrani^{††}
Shahid Mughal^{§§}

ABSTRACT

The psresent study attempts to critically analyze girls' primary schools of District Bolan Balochistan with reference to enrolment, drop out ratio, available physical facilities, teachers and head teachers characteristics; to find out the attitude of stakeholders towards female education and to identify factors that cause low enrolments and drop out of girls at primary level.

Different research instruments were designed to collect data. A check list was developed to collect information about primary girls' schools of District Bolan. In order to collect data from female teachers and head teachers, a questionnaire was developed. A focus group discussion was arranged in all tehsils of district Bolan for different stakeholders. In addition, a check list was also developed for girls students in order to elicit their views about causes of drop out.

Data indicated that: the causes of girls drop out; as majority of stakeholders believed; were the lack of basic facilities and financial constraints girls enrolment was poor in schools, majority of respondents agreed that School Management Committees were not very much active in girls primary schools and ineffective teaching methods distract girls from schools. The monitoring system to support girls' schools was also not working properly.

The officials faced different issues in order to achieve hundred percent literacy rates, due to shortage of budget schools are suffering. The population of District Bolan is scattered and uneven. It becomes difficult for officials to reach at every point of the district.

^{††} M.Phil Scholar Pakistan Study Centre, University of Balochistan, Quetta.

^{††} Professor, Iqra University, Gulshan Campus, Karachi

^{§§} Assistant Professor, Department of Education Management, IBA Sukkur, Sindh

In order to improve girls education at primary level in District Bolan Balochistan the study recommends that the district education department Bolan may ensure the basic facilities such as availability of electricity, drinking water, toilet facility, furniture in every girl's primary school on immediate basis. Incentives such as free textbooks, uniform, stipend and scholarships should be offered to girls' students on priority basis. The district education department Bolan may strengthen school management committees; these committees may ensure the access of rural areas girls to basic education.

Key Words: Primary, Girls education, Bolan, Balochistan

INTRODUCTION

“Education is the only process which decides the position of nations in the world. No nation can make progress without education” (p.82, Jumani, Khan and Nazar, 2008). Education is a process of socialization. It brings change in the behavior of individuals and empowers them to learn to live with dignity and freedom. In other words through the instrument of education, human beings develop abilities, skills and attitudes that help them to modify their behavior according to social, economic and political demands of their environment. Education and training is usually considered the most important way of human capital formation, which is a prerequisite for sustainable development.

It is universally accepted that education is the concomitant of all progressive societies. Shami and Hussain (2005) articulate that the education is becoming one of the defining enterprises of the 21st century with the emergence of globalization and increasing global competition.

Keeping in mind, the significance of education for mankind, a world forum consisting of UN agencies, World Bank and NGOs joined hands and a World Conference on Education was held in Thailand, in March 1990. All the nations of the world agreed to a world declaration on “Education for All”. The declaration included that “education is a fundamental right for all people men and women of all ages, throughout our world” (World Conference on Education for All 1990). It declared that every one, irrespective of religion, race and gender has a right to get education (World Conference on Education for All, 1990, Cited in Shaikh, 2006).

All representatives of the participating countries committed themselves to the attainment of the following six goals:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childcare and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

2. To ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. To make certain that the learning needs are met through fair access to appropriate learning and life skill programs.
4. To attain 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education of good quality.
5. To do away with gender inequality in primary education, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
6. To improve all aspects of the quality of education.

Primary education is the most important sector of the whole educational system. It is believed to be investment in human capital as it builds human capability which is vital ingredient for national building. Khan (2002, Cited in Praveen, 2008) argues that primary education can help in alleviating poverty by increasing income, improving health and nutrition and reducing fertility.

In spite of federal and provincial governments' efforts, the situation of primary education especially for girls is not satisfactory in the country. The situation in the Balochistan province is still deteriorating. Siddiqui (2008, Cited in Shaikh, 2006) has portrayed the situation of Balochistan province as "Balochistan has poor education performance as the aggregate can be attributed largely to its poor record in educating girls. No doubt that the enrolment rate of girls students at primary level has been increased slightly. But still is very low and still 50% girls in between 5-9 are dropped out of the school. During the year 2006-07 more than 9631 girls of the school going age group could not seek admission in the schools."

The situation of girls' education at primary level in District Bolan Balochistan is not encouraging. There are clear indications that enrollment is decreasing as the girls move from lower to higher grade. This situation motivated me to conduct a study that aimed to identify the issues, challenges and problems of girls primary

Statement of the problem

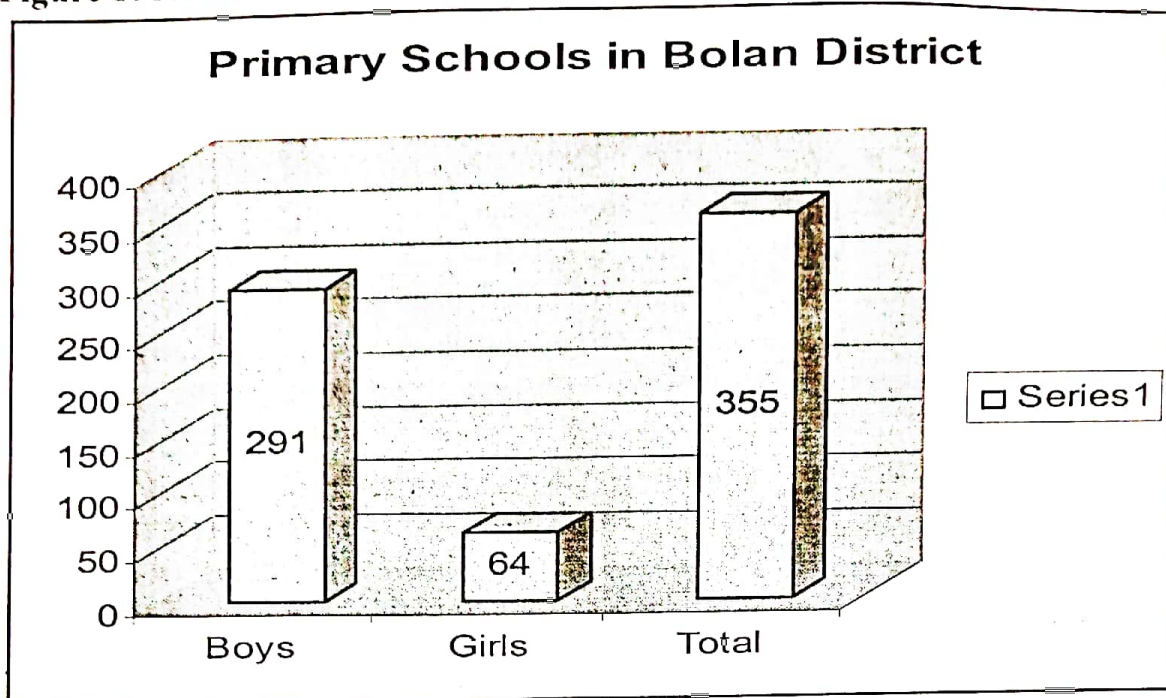
The problem of the study was to portray the existing situation of girls education with reference to availability of physical facilities, teachers and head teachers professional characteristics and to highlight those factors that cause low enrolment and drop out of girls from schools.

The Context of the study

The present study has been conducted in District Bolan of the province of Balochistan.

EDUCATIONAL PROFILE OF DISTRICT BOLAN

Figure 1: Number of Primary schools



(Source: BEMIS School Census 2006-07)

Bolan district is one of the most underdeveloped areas of Balochistan. According to School Census 2006-2007, the total number of primary schools in Bolan district were 355 of which 291 boys schools and 64 girls schools. The literacy rate is very low as compare to other districts of the province. It is estimated 23% for males and 8% for females. The enrolment rate is very low especially for girls at primary level and drop out ratio is very high of girls from primary schools. The researcher was interested to know about the causes of high drop out of girls from primary schools in the Bolan district and to know about the characteristics of effective girls primary schools.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the study were:

1. To critically look at existing state of girls primary education with reference to enrolment, drop out ratio, available physical facilities, teachers and head teachers characteristics in District Bolan Balochistan;
2. To find out the attitude of community members, teachers, district education department towards female education;
3. To identify factors that cause low enrolments and drop out of girls at primary level

4. To propose suggestions for District and Provincial Education Department in order to improve the state of girls' primary education in district Bolan particularly and for other districts of Balochistan generally.

Methodology

The present study was qualitative in nature.

Population and Sampling

The following was the sampling frame of the research:

Table 1: Sampling Framework

Target group	Population	Sample average
All Girls Primary Schools of District Bolan	According to BEMIS(2006-07) survey report, 63 Girls Primary Schools are working in Bolan District of which: 38 schools are in Dhadar→ 17 schools are in Bhag→ 6 schools are in Mach→ 2 schools are in Sani Tehsil→	20 schools (about 50%) selected from Dhadar 8 schools (about 50%) selected from Bhag 3 schools from Mach 2 schools from Sani ----- Total 33 schools were selected from the District Bolan
Female Head teachers/ teachers	According to District Education Department Bolan, 89 teachers/ head teachers are working in all tehsil of District Bolan	All teachers of selected schools were included in the study. There were about 50 teachers who participated in the study.
Members of Parents Teacher Association and Representative Education Department	One focus group discussion was arranged for PTAs in each tehsil of Bolan	Each group comprised of 8-10 members Purposive sampling by selecting President and General Secretary of each team
Girls students	All girls who were in class IV and V were included in the sample	Approximately 100 girls were chosen for data collection by simple random sampling

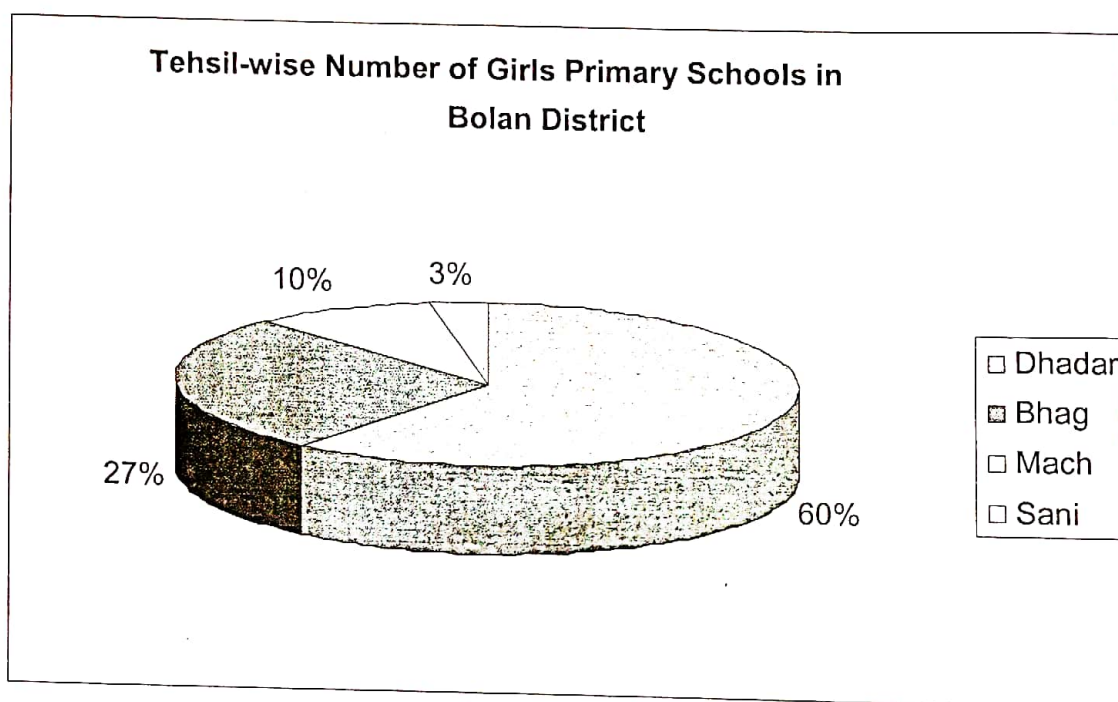
Characteristics of Sample Selected for Study

The sample was selected from all sub-divisions (Tehsils) of the district Bolan. There are four tehsils in district Bolan. This includes Dhadhar, Bhag, Mach and

Sani. According to BEMIS (2006-07) survey report, 63 Girls Primary Schools are working in Bolan.

Percentage wise Distribution of Schools in each Tehsil of Bolan is shown in the following pie chart.

Figure 2: Tehsil-wise number of Schools



Further characteristics of the sample are as under:

- Schools were selected from each tehsil
- Due representation was given both urban and rural schools
- All teachers, head teachers, and parents of selected girls schools were included in the study.
- Schools were further categorized into low enrolment schools and high enrolment schools
- Girls who were in class 4th and 5th were included in the study.

Research Instruments

Check List on collecting Profile of Girls Primary School of District Bolan

A check list was developed to get information about girls' schools profile in District Bolan Balochistan. It covers the following aspects:

1. Name and Address of School

2. Physical facilities available (Such as No. of classrooms, condition of school building, availability of drinking water, electricity, gas, furniture, textbooks, AV Aids etc)
3. No. of Staff(Teaching and non-teaching)
4. Ratio of girls enrolment and drop out

Documents Analysis

The material regarding state of girls' education in the country was collected. This included the following material:

- Documents relating to National Education Policies of Pakistan
- Statistical profiles of School Census in Balochistan
- Previous researches regarding girls education with reference to Pakistan and Balochistan
- Sharing International perspective about girls education

Focus Group Discussion

Several Focus Group Discussions were arranged for the following stakeholders:

- Parents(Both mothers and fathers)/
- Nazims/Landlords/ Zamindar of the area/village/ where the girls' primary school is situated.
- Representative of Education Department
- Teachers and head teachers

The purpose of focus group discussion was to know the perceptions of these people about the causes of low enrolment of girls at primary level, reasons of drop out, and highlight the role of community in the promotion of girls education.

Questionnaire for teacher/ head teachers

A questionnaire was developed for teacher/ head teachers of girls schools. The purpose of questionnaire was to elicit the views of teacher/ head teachers about different aspects of effective schools. The questionnaire sought to acquire the following information:

- Detail of Academic and Professional Qualification of teachers/head teachers
- Perceptions of respondents on the causes of drop out.

Check List for Girls Students

A check list for girls students of class IV and V was developed. The following items were included in the check list:

- Items relating to socio-economic status of parents of girls

- Items relating to causes of girls drop out

Findings of the Study

The major findings are as under:

- Data indicate that 35% of schools comprised of one room, 60% schools had 2 rooms and only 5% schools had 3 rooms.
- Only 68% schools had boundary and 32% schools are with out boundary walls.
- Only 22% girls schools have the facility of playing while majority of school(78%) have no facility of play area.
- Drinking water is available only in 25% schools, while 75% schools are deprived of this important commodity.
- Data show that for majority of girls schools (65%) the facility of toilet is not available.
- 80% female teachers are matriculate, 13% intermediate and only 7% are graduates.
- With respect to professional qualification, data indicate that 93% female teachers are PTC and 7% hold CT certificate. No teacher has B.Ed degree.
- Regarding teaching experience, 54% female teachers hold experience between 11-15 years while 33% possess teaching experience from 1-10 years.
- Data show a major difference in rural and urban enrolment. Out of 5384 enrolment 4468 girls were enrolled in rural area while only 916 girls were admitted in urban areas. This further clarifies that majority of population live in rural areas.
- The graph shows that every year 6% girls dropped from class one, 24% from class II, 8% from class III, 12% from IV and 13% from class V. It also showed that maximum drop out occurred at class II.
- Majority of teachers and head teachers (78%) believe that Due to lack of basic facilities Girls enrolment is poor in school.
- A quite reasonable number (55%) parents like to send their girls to schools. 45% parents still not in favour of girls education.
- Majority of parents (86%) view that the culture of village does not permit girls to move for higher education.
- Majority of teachers (80%) believe that community is aware of the importance of girls' education.
- Majority of respondents (79%) did not express their view on the statement that early marriages of girls force them to leave schools

- An overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that improper guidance and counseling about health related issues in schools force girls to abandon their education.
- Majority of respondents agree that School Management Committees are not very much active in girls primary schools.
- The opinion of respondents was divided on the statement "Feudal strifes force girls to leave schools". 50% agreed the statement while 50% did not respond.
- Majority of teachers (72%) opined that ineffective teaching methods distract children from schools. Therefore enrolments remain thick in girls' schools.
- 93% of respondents' opinion was that there was shortage of teaching material in schools.
- All teachers (100%) agreed that there are few opportunities for them to attend in-service training programs and workshops.
- 60% respondents shown their agreement on the statement that the district education department is not serious about raising girls participation at all levels of education, where as 29% did not share their view.
- 60% of Teachers were disagreeing about getting support from supervisors in improving their teaching practices while 40% shown their agreement that they receive supervisors support.
- Majority of teachers 90% agree that Girls Primary schools have no regular budget to arrange teaching resources.
- Majority of respondents (65%) disagree the statement that district education department regularly conduct meetings with teachers and community to stop girls drop out, only 30% agree with the statement.
- A large number (95%) respondents are of the view that poverty is the major hurdle for majority of parents to send their girls to schools.
- 62% respondents be in agreement with the statement that girl students prefer to stay at home due to lack of incentives, where as 30% did not agree with the idea.
- It was a mixed response on the statement that community held the view that girls education makes them unfit in their existing culture. On this item 50% shown agreement and 50% did not indicated their agreement.
- Majority of respondents (70%) did not respond on the statement that teachers, head teachers and district education department unable to convince community members in eliminating gender bias against girls' education, only 10% agree the statement.

- 55% parents of girls students are farmers, 8% are teachers and 12% have adopted other professions.
- 32% of parents earn less than Rs.3000 per month, 55% parents monthly income lie between Rs.3000 -4000, 10% of parents earn between Rs.5000-6000 and only 3% parents monthly income is more than Rs.6000.
- Data show that 35% parents of girls students have never gone to school i.e. they were illiterate, majority 40% of them were primary pass, 15% of them were middle pass, 3% were intermediate and only 2% were B.A.
- 80% girls believe that their father were in favour of their education, 10% believe that their mother favour them while only 5% Brothers and 5% Sisters favour the education.
- 36% girls view that local landlords were against their schooling, 30% believed that their uncles are not in favour of their education, 30% said that grandmother opposed their education while 20% felt that their grandfathers created obstacles in their schooling.
- Majority of girls (96%) were willing to continue their education after passing primary.
- Data reveal that 35% girls were interested to become teachers, 28% doctors, 18% engineers, and 10% tailors.
- Data show that majority of girls(50%) leave schools due to poverty, 12% because of opposition from community members, 16% because of ineffective teaching and 7% due to lack of physical facilities in school.
- Only education departments representatives termed Girls education in District Bolan satisfactory, where as majority of parents were not satisfied with the performance of education department.
- Teachers remained absent or came late. Teachers had not interested in teaching.
- Boys schools were in a better condition than girls' schools. Boys' schools were more in number. More teachers were there and teachers get opportunities for professional growth.
- Teachers complained about lack of opportunities for professional growth and community members raised their voice against non availability of funds for schools.
- Parents prefer boys education as compared to girls education.
- The causes of girls drop out in Bolan were poverty and lack of physical facilities in schools.

- Parents face challenges in community regarding their girls' education. Parents believed that due to old traditions girls hardly allowed for education.
- Teachers were not serious about their profession.
- The officials face different issues in order to achieve hundred percent literacy rates. We have lack of transport to reach all schools. There is shortage of budget in the department.
- There was no program or framework available for monitoring the schools with education department Bolan.
- Due to shortage of budget schools are suffering. The population of District Bolan is scattered and uneven. It becomes difficult for officials to reach at every point of the district.

Discussion on Findings

The findings of the study indicated that girls primary schools of Bolan were lacking basic facilities as a results girls left schools. In one of the studies Humala (2002) also sketched the picture of primary schools. She said that data on physical facilities is available and comparative information for public and private schools reveals that in rural areas, only 17% of government schools provide desks; 27% have electricity; and 43% are without water.

The findings of the present study endorse the findings of the similar nature. As one of the findings of this study revealed that 32% of parents earn less than Rs.3000 per month, 55% parents monthly income lie between Rs.3000 -4000, 10% of parents earn between Rs.5000-6000 and only 3% parents monthly income is more than Rs.6000.

Most published studies analyzing the determinants of enrollment have found the association between household or family income and girls' enrollment to be positive and statistically significant, whether it is measured directly, using detailed household consumption data, or more indirectly, through some aggregation of household assets (World Bank 2002, Cited in Shaikh, 2006) Furthermore, in most cases, when results for boys and girls are compared, the size and significance of income effects are larger for girls than boys (World Bank 2002, Cited in Shaikh, 2006).

One of the findings of this study showed that Data show that majority of girls(50%) leave schools due to poverty, 12% because of opposition from community members, 16% because of ineffective teaching and 7% due to lack of physical facilities in school. The similar kind of study was conducted in Pakistan. This study was conducted by AEPAM.

According to study conducted by Academy of Educational Planning and Management Ministry of Education Islamabad in June 2004, The reasons of high

drop-out were investigated by the parents and the teachers. It has been found that too expensive education that is not affordable to common people was found very important reason of dropout. Further mores:

- i. For 85% administrators, lack of interest of parents was a reason;
- ii. For 83% administrators, expensive education was another reason;
- iii. For 78% administrators large family size of the child might be a reason;
- iv. For 76% respondents, lack of good teachers might be a reason;
- v. For 65% respondents, difficult syllabus was a reason of dropout;
- vi. For 60% administrators long distance of school might be reason for leaving the school;

Many other reasons of drop out included security problem, repeated failures, teachers' harsh behavior, students' unwillingness, non-availability of physical facilities, and physical punishment.

The family related factors for drop out such as help in domestic work, lack of parents' interest, large family size, and security problems were also found very important reasons of the students' dropout. Moreover, early marriages of the children were also a reason of leaving the schools, as 42% parents called this important for boys, 59% for girls and 54% teachers rated as important for boys and 33% for the girls as a reason of leaving the school. Physical facilities such as drinking water, electricity and toilets etc. were also considered very important by most of the parents and teachers. It was also found that difficult syllabus is hindrance in completing the education as 53% parents said this reason as very important for boys and girls, whereas 50% teachers said as very important for boys and 50% for girls' for leaving the schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for the district education department Bolan, the Education Department Balochistan in the vast interest of girls' students of primary school:

- The district education department Bolan may ensure the basic facilities such as availability of electricity, drinking water, toilet facility, furniture in every girl's primary school on immediate basis.
- The district education department Bolan should involve local communities in order to mobilize people for sending their girls to school.
- Incentives such as free textbooks, uniform, stipend and scholarships should be offered to girls' students on priority basis.

- The district education department Bolan may strengthen village management committees; these committees may ensure the access of rural areas girls to basic education. These committees will also ensure the attendance of girls, teachers in the school.
- The district education department Bolan may strengthen its monitoring system by involving local people in teaching learning process.
- The provincial Education Department Balochistan should allocate funds at the disposal of district education department for improving teaching learning situation in girls' schools.
- The provincial Education Department Balochistan should organize seminars/ workshops and conferences for all stakeholders in order to create soft heart for female education in the province.
- Sufficient funds should be provided to Bureau of Curriculum and PITE Balochistan to arrange trainings for teachers/ head teachers at taluka level.
- There is need to appoint more female teachers in schools and strengthen the cadre of female teachers in Balochistan.
- Media (especially FM Radio) should air programs in local languages in order to motivate people for the importance of female education.
- The government should encourage private sector to open or run female schools in rural areas. This sector should be provided soft loans.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Government of Pakistan. (1959). *National Educational Policy 1959*.
- Government of Pakistan. (1972). *National Educational Policy 1972*.
- Government of Pakistan.(1998). *National Educational Policy 1998-2010*.
- Jumani, N., B., Khan, S., B. & Nazar, N., A. (2008). Study of Situation and problems of Girls Education in Rural Areas of Sindh and Punjab. Paper published in the Proceedings of 3rd National Conference on Education, Hyderabad, and University of Sindh: 26-27, November, 2008.
- Munshi, P. & Bhatti, T. (2008). A Reform Plan to improve School Education in Sindh. Paper published in the Proceedings of 3rd National Conference on Education, Hyderabad, and University of Sindh: 26-27, November, 2008.
- Parveen, S. (2008). An Evaluative Study of Primary Education In The Light Of Policies and Plans In Pakistan (1947 – 2006). *Journal of College Teaching & Learning* 5(7), UIER, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, Pakistan.
- Shami, P., A., Husain, S. (2005). Access and equity in basic education. Islamabad: Academy of educational planning and management Ministry of education.
- Shaikh, S. (2006). *Causes of Girls Absenteeism among Girls students in Rural Sindh*. (Unpublished M.Phil Dissertation. Iqra University) Karachi.
- Shami, P., A., Husain, S. (2005). Access and equity in basic education. Islamabad: Academy of educational planning and management ministry of education.

- BEMIS Statistical Profile. School Census 2006-07. Balochistan Education Management Information System. Directorate of Education (Schools) Balochistan Quetta.
-
- BEMIS Statistical Profile. School Census 2005-06. Balochistan Education Management Information System. Directorate of Education (Schools) Balochistan Quetta.
- Shami, P., Dawood Shah and Sarwat, B. (2006). *Comparative analysis of educational indicators*. Islamabad. Academy of educational planning and management ministry of education.
- Shami, P., Shah, D.S. and Butt, S. (2006). *Cooperative analysis of educational indicators*. Islamabad: Academy of Educational Planning and Management, Ministry of Education. Social development in Pakistan.(2001). Growth, inequality and poverty. Karachi: Spdcand oxford university press.
- Shami,P. and Husain.K.S. (2005). *Access and equity in basic education*. Islamabad: Academy of Educational Planning and Management, Ministry of Education.