

Influence of Family Attitudes and Gender Norms on Women's Education

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Abstract—This study examines the influence of family attitudes and traditional gender norms on women's education using a descriptive-survey research design. Employing a normative survey method and purposive sampling, data were gathered from 26 female graduates across various disciplines using a self-developed, 15-statement rating scale ($\alpha = 0.85$) covering three core dimensions: family perspectives, gender expectations, and educational outcomes. The findings reveal a nuanced sociological landscape. Overall, 100% of respondents experienced a positive baseline of support, with 76.9% reporting a general "Positive Influence." Dimension-wise analysis highlights an exceptionally empowering familial environment, as 84.6% of participants reported a "Highly Positive Influence" from their immediate families. However, broader societal gender expectations present significant friction, with 69.2% of respondents clustering in the "Moderately" and "Least" positive categories. This societal pressure directly impacts tangible progress; consequently, actual educational outcomes were split evenly between "Positive" (50%) and "Moderately Positive" (46.2%) levels, with no respondents achieving "Highly Positive" outcomes. The study concludes that while individual familial support for women's education has evolved remarkably, systemic gender norms remain a complex hurdle. Bridging this gap requires targeted community and policy interventions to dismantle structural gender barriers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a basic human right and an essential factor in empowering women and promoting social and economic development. Although access to education for women has improved over time, many girls still face challenges because of traditional family attitudes and gender norms. Family beliefs and expectations often influence decisions about girls' education, affecting their learning opportunities and future aspirations. Traditional gender roles that place greater value on domestic responsibilities than education continue to restrict many women's educational progress. Previous research has emphasized the important role of family and community attitudes in shaping women's education. Closson et al. (2022) showed that gender-equitable attitudes within families were linked to greater educational and career aspirations among adolescent girls in rural India. Likewise, Gopalakrishnan et al. (2024) indicated that inequitable gender norms reduce women's autonomy and decision-making ability, thereby limiting their educational opportunities. Hossain and Islam (2024) suggested that education encourages more egalitarian gender attitudes and weakens traditional gender beliefs. Gupta and Kumar (2024) also highlighted that family and social gender norms have significant influence on women's educational attainment in India. In addition, Lin et al. (2020)

observed that despite improvements in women's educational attainment, traditional gender expectations continue to influence major life decisions such as marriage, reflecting the enduring impact of gender norms. These findings suggest that family attitudes and gender norms continue to play a vital role in shaping women's educational experiences. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of family attitudes and gender norms on women's education and to understand how these social factors affect women's educational opportunities and aspirations.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research consistently demonstrates that traditional gender roles and unequal community norms heavily restrict women's autonomy, health empowerment, and educational attainment (Gopalakrishnan et al., 2024; Gupta & Kumar, 2024). Closson et al. (2022) note that while multigenerational traditional roles persist in rural areas, girls from families rejecting violence exhibit significantly higher aspirations. Furthermore, even when women achieve high educational milestones, entrenched patriarchal norms continue to dictate marital choices, often leading highly educated women to marry lower-educated men from advantaged backgrounds (Lin et al., 2020).

Conversely, education serves as a powerful catalyst for change. Hossain and Islam (2024) affirm that higher education strongly correlates with more egalitarian beliefs and acts as a primary tool for dismantling traditional gender structures. Ultimately, these studies converge on a singular conclusion: while education is vital for fostering equality, achieving true systemic progress requires actively dismantling traditional gender beliefs and proactively promoting gender-equitable norms within both individual family units and the broader community.

III. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Educational policies such as the NEP 2020 and the RTE Act 2009 have improved access to education, but more women in India continue to face barriers arising from family attitudes and traditional gender expectations. Household responsibilities, patriarchal values, and early marriage often affect girls' ability to continue their education. Most previous studies have emphasized economic and infrastructural challenges, whereas the role of family attitudes has received comparatively less attention. This study aims to examine how family perceptions influence women's educational aspirations and achievements, especially in rural and semi-urban settings.

The results may support educators, policymakers, and community leaders in designing measures that encourage gender equality and strengthen inclusive educational opportunities.

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- ✓ This study explores how family attitudes and gender-related beliefs shape women's educational experiences and learning opportunities.
- ✓ It analyses the impact of parental encouragement, household expectations, and cultural practices on women's access to and continuation of education.
- ✓ The study offers insights that can support teachers, policymakers, and community organizations in developing initiatives that encourage equal educational opportunities for women.

V. TITLE OF THE STUDY

The title of the study is "Influence of Family Attitudes and Gender Norms on Women's Education."

VI. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study are to examine the influence of family attitudes and gender norms on women's education.

VII. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study utilizes a descriptive-survey research design employing the normative survey method to systematically collect, analyze, and interpret the current influence of family attitudes and gender norms on women's education. A purposive sampling technique was used to intentionally select a targeted sample of 26 female graduates across various disciplines based on specific research criteria. Data collection relied on a self-developed 15-statement rating scale spanning three core dimensions. The tool's technical integrity was robustly established, achieving high internal consistency with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.85, alongside verified face and content validity. The responses given were considered for the overall and the 3 dimensions by using five options: strongly agree, agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. They are as given below.

TABLE 1. Shows the Overall Scoring Range

Score Range	Level	Interpretation
15-30	Least Positive Influence	Low level of family support and greater influence of gender-based barriers
31-45	Moderately Positive Influence	Moderate level of family support and gender-related influence
46-60	Positive Influence	High level of family support with fewer gender-related barriers
61-75	Highly Positive Influence	Very high level of family support and positive educational outcomes

TABLE 2. Shows the Dimension-Wise Scoring Range

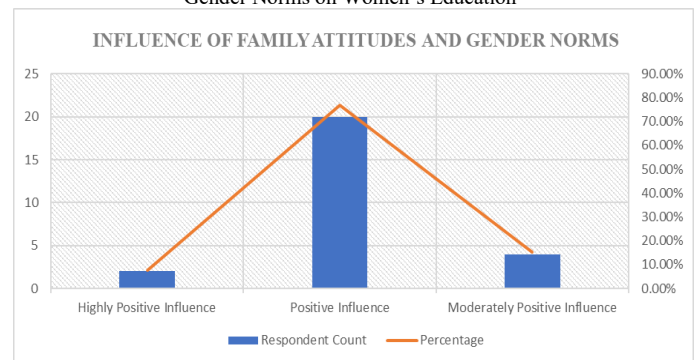
Score Range	Level
5-10	Least Positive Influence
11-15	Moderately Positive Influence
16-20	Positive Influence
21-25	Highly Positive Influence

VIII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 3. Shows the Overall Level of Influence of Family Attitudes and Gender Norms on Women's Education

Count	Percentage	Interpretation
2	7.7%	Highly Positive Influence
20	76.9%	Positive Influence
4	15.4%	Moderately Positive Influence
26	100%	Total

GRAPH-1 SHOWS the Overall Level of Influence of Family Attitudes and Gender Norms on Women's Education



Based on the overall findings, a survey of 26 respondents reveals that family mindsets and evolving gender norms exert an overwhelmingly constructive impact on women's educational journeys, with 100% of the sample experiencing some tier of positive influence and zero reported instances of restrictive barriers. The vast majority of participants (76.9%) report a direct Positive Influence, establishing family environments as strong supportive pillars, while the remaining respondents experience varying intensities of backing, split between an exceptionally strong driving force (Highly Positive at 7.7%) and a more measured, conditional layer of support (Moderately Positive at 15.4%). Ultimately, this universal baseline of positivity highlights a progressive societal shift where both family units and shifting gender roles actively encourage and facilitate women's academic advancement.

TABLE 4. Shows the Analysis of Dimension 1: Family Perspectives on Women's Education

Count	Percentage	Interpretation
22	84.6%	Highly Positive Influence
2	7.7%	Positive Influence
2	7.7%	Moderately Positive Influence
0	0.0%	Least Positive Influence

The data focusing on the dimension of Family Perspectives on Women's Education reveals an exceptionally empowering domestic environment, where 100% of the 26 respondents experienced a favourable outlook and zero negative influences were reported. A striking 84.6% (22 out of 26 participants) received a Highly Positive Influence, demonstrating that the vast majority of families serve as active champions and powerful catalysts for women's educational pursuits rather than just casual observers. The remaining minority of the sample is evenly divided between a steady Positive Influence (7.7%, representing Respondents 4 and 14) and a more reserved, cautious Moderately Positive Influence (7.7%, representing Respondents 10 and 26). Finally, this

concentration of support shows that almost five-sixths of the polled women receive the highest level of family support, solidifying the home as a crucial pillar for academic success.

TABLE 5. Shows the Analysis of Dimension 2: Influence of Gender Expectation Distribution of Responses

Count	Percentage	Interpretation
1	3.8%	Highly Positive Influence
7	26.9%	Positive Influence
9	34.6%	Moderately Positive Influence
9	34.6%	Least Positive Influence

The dimension assessing the Influence of Gender Expectations on Women's Education reveals a much more complex and conservative societal reality, with over 69% of the total group clustered in the lower tiers of support. Specifically, the two largest segments of respondents are tied at 34.6% each for the Moderately Positive and Least Positive categories, indicating that traditional gender roles—such as domestic responsibilities and early marriage expectations—continue to act as a form of passive systemic friction that lacks active academic encouragement. Conversely, a smaller pocket of progress exists among the remaining 30.7% of respondents who view evolving gender expectations as an asset, including a single standout participant (Respondent 7) who experiences a Highly Positive Influence where norms actively champion equality. Ultimately, these findings indicate that while individual family mindsets are evolving rapidly, broader community gender expectations remain a complex hurdle, changing at a much slower and more cautious pace.

TABLE 6. Shows the Analysis of Dimension 3: Educational Outcomes

Count	Percentage	Interpretation
0	0.0%	Highly Positive Influence
13	50.0%	Positive Influence
13	50.0%	Moderately Positive Influence
0	0.0%	Least Positive Influence

The findings regarding the final dimension, Educational Outcomes, reveal a highly stable and favourable baseline of academic achievement that is divided almost evenly down the middle. Exactly 50% (13 respondents) experience a directly Positive Influence on their tangible educational results, while 50.0% (13 respondents) view the impact as Moderately Positive. Crucially, there are zero responses in the "Least Positive" or negative categories, indicating that actual academic progress remains secure despite broader social friction. However, in a stark contrast to the family perspective

dimension—where 84.6% of participants felt highly empowered—absolutely no respondents (0%) reported a Highly Positive Influence on their actual outcomes. These missing peaks underscore a critical sociological gap, demonstrating that while domestic enthusiasm is exceptionally strong, it does not automatically translate into flawless academic milestones because students must still navigate the real-world friction of conservative societal gender norms.

IX. CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates a clear divergence between individual micro-environments and macro-societal expectations. While contemporary families have progressively transitioned into active champions of women's academic pursuits—providing an exceptionally supportive foundational environment—wider societal gender expectations continue to exert considerable conservative pressure. This societal friction acts as a structural bottleneck, preventing overwhelming familial encouragement from translating perfectly into peak educational outcomes. Ultimately, achieving complete educational empowerment for women requires moving beyond isolated domestic support. Systemic progress relies on comprehensive community reforms and targeted policy interventions designed to actively deconstruct traditional gender roles within the broader social landscape.

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