



RESEARCH PAPER

Beyond the Classroom: Factors Driving the Shift to Home-Schooling

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ABSTRACT

This study explores parental attitudes toward homeschooling in Pakistan's twin cities, focusing on their experiences, motivations, and challenges. With increasing dissatisfaction with conventional schooling due to overcrowded classrooms, moral concerns, bullying, and rigid curricula, many parents opt for homeschooling. This study aims to understand the factors influencing this decision and its impact on children's education. A qualitative phenomenological approach was employed, with semi-structured interviews conducted with homeschooling parents. Thematic analysis identified key patterns and insights. Findings reveal that parents choose homeschooling for better academic outcomes, personality development, flexibility, and cost-effectiveness. However, challenges include societal pressure and the demand for parental involvement. Raising awareness about homeschooling, providing parental support networks, and developing flexible policies can improve homeschooling experiences. Policymakers should recognize homeschooling as a viable educational model and offer guidance to ensure quality education while addressing parental concerns. Further research is needed to explore long-term academic and social impacts.

KEYWORDS Home-Schooling, Education In Pakistan, Homeschooling In Pakistan, Out-Of-School Schooling, Parents And Education, Beyond Class Room

Introduction

Parent-led home-based education is an educational choice that has existed for millennia around the globe. Nowadays, most people refer to it as homeschooling. Homeschooling, often thought of as a fringe movement, has acquired substantial momentum globally, with a projected 3.3% of school-age children in the United States alone receiving their education at home (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). The practice of homeschooling has expanded significantly over time. One educational option that has been available for millennia worldwide is parent-led home-based Homeschooling is gaining popularity among parents who are concerned about their kids attending schools outside the home, for example, because of safety concerns or because they have seen positive traits in their homeschooled kids, Gray & Riley (2013). This phenomenon raises significant questions regarding the justifications for homeschooling, its effects on intellectual and social development, and its potential implications for education policy in general.

Homeschooling has been more popular in recent years and is now practiced by a wide range of families for a variety of reasons. These reasons can be broadly divided into four categories: practical, pedagogical, religious, and ideological (Green & Hoover, 2007; Jones & Gloeckner, 2004). While pedagogical motivations are related to worries about the learning environment in regular schools, lack of individualized attention, or unhappiness with the quality of education, ideological motivations frequently entail parents' wish to instill specific values, beliefs, or worldviews. The decision to homeschool is also heavily influenced by pragmatic considerations like scheduling flexibility, special needs, safety concerns, and family dynamics (Anthony & Burroughs, 2010; Hanna, 2012). The desire for

individualized learning, safety concerns, and educational discontent are some of the many reasons why people choose to homeschool. Research shows that few parents in Islamabad and Rawalpindi are hopeless with the quality of public education, as they are pointing to strength of students in classes, teacher absentee, and insufficient facilities as the main problems (Qureshi & Ali (2022). Furthermore, some families are considering homeschooling as a safer alternative due to safety concerns, especially for female pupils, (Crawford, Percy & Kelder 2020).

Literature Review

In a number of nations, including Canada, Australia, France, Japan, Hungary, Kenya, South Korea, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and Thailand, homeschooling is growing in popularity (Ray, 2013). Homeschooling is not just a trend among Americans. In several other countries, including Australia, Canada, France, and the UK, homeschooling has become more popular recently (Ray, 2016). The practice of homeschooling has been around for thousands of years, long before official schooling systems were established. The home was the primary setting for education in ancient societies. In order to provide individualized instruction and access to specialist information, wealthier families frequently employed private tutors to teach their kids at home. Homeschooling is a method in which the family is in charge of their child's education. It is also referred to as home education, home-based learning, or independent school (Razi, 2016).

Understanding parents' decisions to homeschool their children is crucial. The necessity for socialization, academic goals, familial motivation, and religious goals were the four main justifications for homeschooling, Jerub (1995). In a 2003 National Household Education Survey Program (NHES) research, parents of 31% of homeschooled children stated that the primary motivation for homeschooling was the possibly hostile environment of public schools. Additionally, 30% of their parents stated that fostering moral or religious qualities was their main goal. Additionally, the study found that 16% of the parents were unhappy with the academic guidance they had received at school (Princiotta & Bielick, 2006; McReynolds, 2007; Higgins, 2008).

The idea that homeschooled students learn more effectively and accomplish better academically than their counterparts in public schools is one of the main arguments in favor of homeschooling. On every standardized test, they perform better than kids who attend traditional schools (Chang et al, 2011; Moreau, 2012; Gloeckner & Jones, 2013). Families that homeschool are seen to be both wealthy and impoverished, as well as educated or not. However, most homeschooling families have good educations and are not particularly convinced by continuing public schools (Fairchild, 2002).

Material and Methods

Participants were identified for the study through snow-ball sampling technique (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In total, 13 families were contacted for face to face interviews. The parents, have reportedly, are home schooling their children were educated at least having graduate degree holder. Participants age ranges between 30 to 45. We achieved saturation (Bowen, 2008) from our home-schooled parents means adding new individuals to the sample no longer resulted in new information, making new codes being applied to the data indicated no new themes can be generated. This conclusion was compatible with other qualitative expert such as Guest, Bunce & Johnson (2006), Neumen (2006) regarding the saturation of sample saturation. The eligibility criteria for the selection of study participants included: Parents who home school their children will be included in the study.

Understanding the lived experiences of families navigating this expanding educational trend is the justification for undertaking phenomenology study on homeschooling in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. In order to match education with their values,

needs, and tastes, many urban families are resorting to homeschooling while traditional schooling in Pakistan encounters difficulties like packed classrooms, safety issues, and strict curricula. In a multicultural metropolitan environment, this study investigates how sociocultural, economic, and religious factors influence these choices. By documenting these distinct viewpoints, the study hopes to add to the scant body of knowledge on alternative education in Pakistan and offer guidance to educators and policymakers on how to meet changing educational demands.

Theory of Individualization, which upholds learning, it should be custom-made to every student's desires, hypothetically supports homeschooling. One operative method for doing this is homeschooling. Modifying learning prospects to every single student's separate needs, benefits, aptitudes, and learning partialities is the goal of the individualization thought in education (Holt, 1981).

The determination of this study is to aspect into the variables that influence Pakistani families in Islamabad and Rawalpindi to select homeschooling over public schooling. It goals to establish how parents view the assistances and difficulties of homeschooling and explore the sociocultural factors persuading their selections, such as socioeconomic position, religious beliefs, and cultural standards. This study aims to create the groundwork for additional research in this field by clarifying the details for homeschooling and its properties on local educational practices. The study contestants' demographics comprised age, gender (including both parents), socioeconomic position, education, employment, and the number of homeschooled children. The researcher formed the interview questions that represented as the tool for this qualitative case study after carrying out the literature review. Despite being informed by the review, the author was open to developing fresh concepts. The questions were finalized prior to the commencement of data collecting.

Results and Discussion

**Table 1
Results**

Themes	Logical Reasoning	Sample Quotes/Insights
Personalized and Flexible Learning (Fatima., Kaukab & Sheikh., 2023)	Homeschooling allows parents to tailor educational experiences to their child’s unique needs, learning styles, and pace, offering flexibility in scheduling.	We can adapt the learning schedule to our children's needs, ensuring they fully understand each concept before moving on."
Community and Social Dynamics (Firmin et al, 2019)	Despite concerns about isolation, families actively seek socialization opportunities through community events, religious institutions, and extracurriculars.	We participate in community groups and mosque activities, which keep our children socially connected."
Parental Roles and Challenges (Abuzandah., 2021)	Parents take on the dual roles of educator and caregiver, often finding it rewarding but also acknowledging the challenges of balancing both.	"It’s fulfilling to teach my children, but sometimes it’s hard to manage everything at once."
Cost Difference (Fatima., Kaukab & Sheikh., 2023)	Homeschooling reduces expenses like tuition, transport, and uniforms, but still involves costs for materials and potential loss of income. Despite this, it is often more affordable than private schooling.	- "We save thousands on school fees but invest in quality materials." - "Homeschooling cuts down costs like uniforms and transport." - "It's less expensive than formal schooling."

<p>Health, Well-Being, and Balance (Firmin et al, 2019)</p>	<p>Homeschooling families often cite improved well-being due to reduced stress and anxiety compared to traditional schooling environments.</p>	<p>"My kids are healthier and happier learning at home without the pressures of school."</p>
<p>Behavioral Resilience Sussman & Arnett (2014)</p>	<p>Homeschooling shields children from harmful habits like vaping and smoking while promoting a healthy, informed lifestyle.</p>	<p>"I chose homeschooling to protect my child from peer pressure and unhealthy influences at school."</p>

Discussion

Personalized and Flexible Learning

Personalized and flexible learning is one of the key advantages of homeschooling, allowing parents to adjust the curriculum and pace of education to suit the individual needs of each kid. Unlike traditional schools, which usually follow a predetermined curriculum and timetable, homeschooling allows for the flexibility to adapt lesson plans based on the child's interests, strengths, and weaknesses. Compared to traditional schools, which follow predetermined timetables and curricula, homeschooling offers greater educational flexibility. The ability to change up their learning strategies as necessary is especially beneficial for children with different learning demands, such as gifted children or those with learning disabilities. Students' enthusiasm for learning is one of the most important factors influencing their academic success. To sustain and improve children's excitement for learning at this phase of homeschooling, it is recommended that the focus be shifted from "teaching" to "learning" (Renninger, 2015)

Community and Social Dynamics

One of the most frequently expressed concerns about homeschooling is the possibility of social isolation. Homeschooled children, according to critics, would not have as many opportunities to interact with their peers, which could affect how they socialize. However, research and interviews with families whose children are homeschooled reveal that many of them are not lonely but rather lead active social lives. Families constantly seek out opportunities to socialize their kids through community events, religious groups, and extracurricular activities. The children gain the social skills necessary to thrive in a wider society as a result of this. It discusses socialization problems that are commonly associated with homeschooling and concludes that children who are homeschooled do not lack social skills. They usually participate in a greater range of social events rather than just following their peers who go to traditional schools. Homeschooling parents constantly seek out social activities through organized sports, religious pursuits, and community service projects in order to foster well-rounded social development, Medlin (2000).

Parental Roles and Challenges

Children's daily routines are significantly changed when their parents homeschool them, assuming the combined roles of caregiver and teacher. Even while a lot of parents find their work rewarding because it enables them to actively participate in their child's education and closely monitor their development, parents nevertheless face many challenges. Juggling teaching responsibilities with other obligations, such as taking care of the house, seeking a career, and offering emotional support, can be quite challenging. The dual role of homeschooling parents, stressing that while many people find teaching their kids to be fulfilling, there may be a lot of work involved, particularly when balancing the home and family life. Lesson preparation, tracking and evaluating and finding appropriate learning constituents are among the obligations of homeschooling parents. This can become significantly more thought-provoking when teaching a large number of teenagers, as they may all be at changing educational levels or involve different teaching modalities. This manipulating act causes some parents to scuffle with time administration, arranging

teaching above other responsibilities and perhaps leading to pressure or exhaustion. Homeschooling bounces parents a great logic of control over their kids' tutoring and moral development, but it may also be time and energy-consuming, mainly for employed parents or those with other caregiving household tasks, (Gaither and Kunzman 2013).

Additionally, big concern for parents who homeschool is the emotional peal of being both the child's parent and prime instructor. Uniting the emotional work of providing discipline, support love, with the responsibilities of education may be fairly fatiguing. safeguarding their children are emotionally protected and knowledgeably successful can be a hardship for parents. This emotional effort may intensify, for instance, when a child exhibits problematic behavior during learning sessions or struggles to understand a subject.

Cost Difference

Compared to traditional instruction, homeschooling can save a lot of money for many families, especially when it comes to private education. One of the main financial benefits of homeschooling is the elimination or decrease of large expenses like tuition, transportation, and uniforms—all of which are crucial elements of both public and private school systems. Since homeschooling allows families to avoid the expenses associated with traditional school settings, which can add up over time, many find it to be a financially feasible choice (Ray, 2016).

Depending on the school, tuition fees can range from a few thousand to tens of thousands of dollars per year, making them unaffordable for families who opt for private education (NCES, 2019). Even in public schools where tuition is free, parents are still responsible for paying for things like uniforms, school supplies, extracurricular activities, and transportation. Homeschooling eliminates or significantly reduces these recurring costs. The average annual cost per child at a public school was over \$10,000 when hidden costs like field trips, fundraising events, and sports fees are considered. However, because they do not have to pay these expenses, homeschooling families often spend significantly less per child, Riley (2015). Another significant benefit of homeschooling is that it gives parents the freedom to choose how much or how little to spend on additional materials. For example, some parents might wish to cover the cost of online courses or specialized tutors, but these expenses are entirely flexible. Disparity this with public school, where parents are obligatory to pay education irrespective of the caliber of tuition or the specific needs of their kid. One significant economic deliberation for families that homeschool is the potential cost.

Health, Well-Being, and Balance

One of the chief assistances of homeschooling is that it aids kids' complete health, happiness, and emotional equilibrium. Parents regularly notice developments in their children's physical and rational health as associated to the typical school situation. Homeschooling permits for a more tranquil, helpful learning atmosphere that can decrease strain and nervousness and foster a more enjoyable emotional state for parents and children. This elasticity, in turn, generates a learning atmosphere where children can flourish logically, intellectually and passionately without being embarrassed by external factors that are often related with old-style schooling. Abundant stressors that may affect a child's mental health are frequently connected with old-style schools, including, bullying, demanding scheduling, social pressure, standardized testing, and other external factors. However, by contribution the chance to modify learning environments, homeschooling lessens these pressures. With homeschooling, the parent-teacher can regulate the pace of the lesson to lodge the child's emotional and intellectual needs, letting them to have more free time and take disruptions as needed (Murtaza, 2011).

This emotional provision is particularly helpful for kids who might have wriggled with intimidation, bullying or social stress, anxiety in systematic schools. Homeschooled

kids can frequently learn in a more helpful, meticulous environment, free from peer burden or other damaging factors that could conciliate their mental health, self-respect or self-esteem. Compared to their classmates who appear old-style schools, homeschooled children classically display higher levels of self-esteem and scarcer behavioral problems (Medlin, 2013).

Behavioral Resilience

Parents who need to protect their children from hazardous behaviors like smoking and vaping, which are mutual in many systematic school settings, are progressively selecting homeschooling. Conferring to research, social possessions regularly inspire children to start smoking and vaping at an early age, and peer pressure is a chief factor in teen-agers to start these behaviors (Sussman & Arnett, 2014). Homeschooling, on the other side, offers a controlled and heartening setting where parents can put a close eye on their child's performance, code of conduct and take suitable action when needed. Behavioral consciousness, particularly in the setting of homeschooling, plays a critical role in determining a child's development and shielding them from theoretically harmful conducts, such as smoking and vaping. Many parents choose for homeschooling as a way to protect their children from undesirable peer effects that can often be predominant in school environments. Peer pressure is a key funder to dangerous behaviors amongst adolescents, as well as smoking and vaping (Sussman & Arnett, 2014). In old-style schools, students may be unprotected to circumstances where these behaviors are regularized or even invigorated within their social circles. This experience to unhealthy behaviors can meaningfully increase the probability that children will implement them, especially throughout their susceptible teenage years. However, homeschooling proposals a safer, more meticulous environment where parents can check their children's connections, relations guide them more efficiently, and ensure they are not uncovered to destructive behaviors.

The key role of parents in nurturing behavioral alertness is dominant, as they can vigorously inspire their child's thoughts about risky behaviors. Through homeschooling, parents have the unique and exclusive aptitude to assimilate behavioral instructions into the child's daily routine, talking topics such as the hazards of smoking and vaping. This modified and incessant form of teaching can be more actual than what is characteristically provided in public schooling. For example, parents can involve in open discussions with their children about the well-being, its risks related with smoking and vaping, explaining them with truthful evidence in a supportive, easy going and non-judgmental situation. Research showed that when parents are vigorously indulged in their child's tutoring, behavioral growth and development, children are better armed to fight peer pressure and make improved adoptions and selections, (Steinberg, 2014).

Conclusion

The qualitative study styles it copiously obvious that parents select to homeschool their children for a diversity of highly practical, instructive, and personal reasons. Homeschooling is a comeback to supposed deficiencies in the outdated educational system and a craving for greater governor over their children's education and learning environment. One of the primary incentives for parents to homeschool is the chance to deliver their kids with a modified and flexible education. Parents like the aptitude to adapt the course and learning stride to suit their child's exclusive needs and capabilities. This elasticity allows caregivers to emphasis on areas where their child may want more time and devotion, ensuring a profounder understanding of ideas before moving forward. Homeschooling offers plan flexibility that traditional schools do not, it allows families to assimilate academic learning with additional features of individual development, supplementary activities, and family life.

Even though they frequently find homeschooling to be very satisfying and worthy, parents are conscious of the tangled challenges. Altering the roles of caregiver and educator can be problematic, predominantly for parents who are also harmonizing other duties. Due to their manifold roles, they must continuously check and monitor their kids' theoretical and emotional development, which can be a challenging job. Parents articulated anxieties about assessment and improvement monitoring because homeschooling does not track the similar government morals and standards as traditional schools do. Although many parents trust on informal valuations maintained and established via daily observation, other parents apprehension about whether their children are continuing at the same degree as their peers in regular organizations. Many parents who homeschool emphasize the need of teaching students' real-world skills in addition to academic knowledge. By focusing on not only academic achievement but also the growth of independence, leadership, and adaptability, they view homeschooling as a way to prepare their children for challenges they may encounter in the real world. Because of this comprehensive approach to education, children gain a greater range of skills that will be beneficial in adulthood.

Recommendations

Increase awareness of homeschooling through workshops, media campaigns, and informational resources for parents and educators. Provide training sessions to equip parents with effective teaching methodologies and assessment techniques. Introduce policies that recognize homeschooling as a legitimate educational alternative and ensure flexibility in regulatory frameworks. Develop adaptable evaluation methods to monitor student progress while maintaining homeschooling's individualized approach. Explore financial assistance options, such as tax benefits or grants, to make homeschooling more accessible. Promote the use of digital learning tools and virtual support networks to enhance homeschooling effectiveness. Facilitate homeschooling communities or extracurricular activities to support socialization and collaborative learning. Invest in studies tracking long-term academic, social, and career outcomes of homeschooled students to guide future educational strategies.

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