BARRIERS FACED BY MUSLIM GIRL STUDENTS IN PURSUING THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION

A Dissertation Submitted to The University of Kerala in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Masters of Arts Degree Examination in Sociology

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DECLARATION

I. Sajina S, hereby declare that the dissertation titled **"BARRIERS FACED BY MUSLIM GIRL STUDENTS IN PURSUING THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION"** is based on the original work carried out by me and submitted to the University of Kerala during the year 2022-2024 towards partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Sociology Degree Examination. It has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title of recognition before.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **"BARRIERS FACED BY MUSLIM GIRL STUDENTS IN PURSUING THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION"** is a record of genuine work done by **SAJINA S,** a fourth semester, Master of Sociology student of this college under my supervision and guidance and that is hereby approved for submission.

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ABSTRACT

This research study explores the barriers faced by Muslim girl students in pursuing higher education. Utilising a quantitative approach, the study involved administering a questionnaire to 63 undergraduate Muslim girls to systematically assess the challenges impacting their educational pursuits. The study aims to identify and analyse the challenges affecting their academic pursuits, with a focus on financial constraints, family support, parental education levels, and societal pressures. The findings reveal that financial difficulties are a significant barrier, with many students heavily relying on family contributions to cover educational expenses. Despite some students receiving scholarships or financial aid, a substantial number do not benefit from such support, leading to financial strain that impacts their academic performance. Family support plays a crucial role in the educational experiences of these students. The study shows that most students receive strong emotional and financial support from their families, which is essential for their academic success. Parental involvement is significant, with parents' educational backgrounds influencing their daughters' aspirations. Many students are motivated to pursue higher education as a means to improve their family's socio-economic status, driven by the educational limitations of their parents. Societal pressures also pose a major challenge. The study highlights that societal expectations often prioritise marriage over education, creating a conflict for students who wish to continue their studies. This pressure can lead to internal conflicts and stress, affecting their ability to engage fully in their education. The study further indicates that the college environment is largely supportive, with minimal reports of religious discrimination, which is crucial for the students' academic and personal well-being. Financial stability emerges as a primary motivator for pursuing higher education, and the majority of students have significant autonomy in making their educational choices. This autonomy reflects their independence and the support they receive from their families, allowing them to align their academic paths with their personal goals and aspirations. Overall, this research provides valuable insights into the barriers faced by Muslim girl students in higher education and offers implications for policymakers and educational institutions to improve support mechanisms and address these challenges effectively.

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental instrument of social progress. At all levels and for children of all ages, it is the only way to effect the necessary social transformation in Indian society. Teachers and educational institutions are seen as socialising agents, and education has been identified as one of the main socialisation agencies. Education is the essential weapon that can be utilised to effectively combat the pervasive, deeply embedded issues in society. The third level of education that students acquire through the learning process is higher education. It is conducted virtually, online, or in universities, colleges, or other higher education institutions (Chauhan & Kumar, 2022).The opportunity to engage in higher education can significantly influence an individual's prospects, contributing to personal growth and societal advancement. Islam has always placed a high value on education, which is especially demonstrated in the holy writings of the religion. However, the Muslim population is among the least advanced in terms of education in the nation. In India, Muslim women's educational standing is inferior to that of the standing of Muslim women and men in other societies. They are the least educated group, and the majority of them engage themselves in household chores.

Particularly Muslim female students face significant difficulties that may prevent them from pursuing higher education. These difficulties are frequently brought on by cultural conventions, financial constraints, and varying levels of family support. Cultural norms can have a big impact on Muslim female students' access to resources and support, as well as on their educational opportunities and aspirations. They can also have a direct effect on attitudes towards female education. Furthermore, a parent's educational attainment might have a big influence on their daughter's goals and ambitions. Greater support and encouragement for pursuing higher education is frequently connected to higher parental education levels.

This study aims to explore the barriers faced by Muslim girl students in their pursuit of higher education. It will focus on the perceived level of family support, socio-economic conditions, and the influence of parental education on educational aspirations. By investigating these factors, the research seeks to provide insights that can inform targeted interventions and policies aimed at

improving access to higher education and supporting the academic and personal development of Muslim girls.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Kerala, known as India's most literate state, reported a literacy rate of 94% according to the 2011 Census. The male literacy rate was 96.11%, while the female literacy rate was slightly lower at 92.07%. This difference in literacy rates between men and women underscores persistent gender disparities, even in a state renowned for its educational achievements. Within Kerala's diverse population, the Muslim community, which makes up 26.56% of the state's population, boasts a literacy rate of 93.23%. This figure, while commendable, is marginally lower than the literacy rates of the Hindu (93.49%) and Christian (96.49%) communities in the state. Notably, despite being the most literate Muslim community in India, Muslims in Kerala still face significant challenges in accessing higher education, particularly among women.

The under-representation of Muslim girls in higher education is a significant concern, reflecting broader patterns seen across India, where the Muslim community has historically been under-represented in higher educational institutions. Several factors contribute to this situation, including socio-economic barriers, cultural and religious expectations, and limited access to resources and opportunities. For many Muslim girls, societal pressures often prioritise marriage over education, and financial constraints further limit their ability to pursue higher studies. Additionally, the influence of patriarchal norms within families and communities can restrict the educational aspirations of Muslim girls, leading to their lower participation in higher education compared to their male counterparts and peers from other communities. The challenges faced by Muslim girls in pursuing higher education are multifaceted. Economic hardship is a significant factor, with many families unable to afford the costs associated with higher education. This financial strain is often exacerbated by the lack of scholarships or other forms of financial aid targeted at Muslim students. Moreover, cultural expectations and societal pressures play a crucial role in shaping the educational trajectories of Muslim girls, as higher education is sometimes considered unnecessary or inappropriate for them.

Despite these barriers, the pursuit of higher education by Muslim girls is crucial not only for their personal empowerment but also for the socio-economic advancement of the entire

community. Higher education provides Muslim girls with the skills and knowledge necessary to participate fully in the workforce and to contribute to the development of their communities. It also has the potential to challenge and transform the traditional gender norms that restrict their opportunities. This study seeks to explore the barriers faced by Muslim girl students in pursuing their higher education. Through a detailed analysis of the socio-economic, cultural, and institutional challenges they encounter, along with the roles of family support, parental educational influence, and other significant challenges, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to their under-representation in higher education. By identifying these barriers, the study hopes to offer insights into strategies and interventions that could help increase the participation of Muslim girls in higher education, thereby contributing to their personal development and the overall progress of the community.

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Muslim girl students face numerous barriers in pursuing higher education, which can hinder their academic success and future career prospects. Despite their potential, many Muslim girls are denied the opportunity to pursue higher education due to various socio-cultural, economic, and institutional factors. Although education is increasingly recognised as a tool for empowerment and socio-economic development, these students often encounter obstacles rooted in cultural, economic, and educational factors. These barriers not only limit their opportunities but also perpetuate the broader issue of educational inequality. Family support plays a crucial role in the educational journey of Muslim girls. The level of encouragement and backing they receive from their families can significantly influence their ability to pursue higher education. In many cases, traditional gender roles and expectations may lead to a preference for educating male children, while girls are often expected to focus on domestic responsibilities or are encouraged towards early marriage. This lack of support can be a major deterrent, preventing many Muslim girls from accessing or continuing their education at the tertiary level. Economic conditions significantly hinder Muslim girls educational aspirations. Many families, especially those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, struggle to afford higher education costs, leading to a significant barrier to accessing educational opportunities. The educational background of parents is a critical factor that influences the educational trajectories of Muslim girls. Parents with higher levels of education are generally more likely to value and support their daughters' pursuit of

higher education. Conversely, parents with limited educational backgrounds may not fully appreciate the benefits of higher education for girls, or they may lack the knowledge and resources to navigate the educational system. This lack of awareness and support can severely limit the educational opportunities available to Muslim girls. Muslim girls also face a range of Socio-cultural challenges that further hinder their access to higher education. These challenges include societal expectations and religious interpretations that may discourage or restrict girls from pursuing higher education. Issues such as concerns about safety and mobility and the stigma associated with women who prioritise education over traditional roles are significant hurdles that must be addressed. This study aims to investigate the perceived level of family support, socio-economic status, and challenges faced by Muslim girl students in pursuing higher education, as well as the impact of parental education level on their higher educational aspirations. This study seeks to address the knowledge gap by investigating the multifaceted challenges that Muslim girls face in their pursuit of higher education. This study aims to explore the role of family support, economic conditions, and parental education in shaping the educational experiences of Muslim girls. By examining these factors, the research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles these students encounter and to propose strategies that can help overcome these barriers, ultimately promoting greater educational equity and empowerment for Muslim girls.

1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Muslim girl students face numerous barriers in pursuing higher education, which can hinder their academic success and future career prospects. Despite their potential, many Muslim girls are denied the opportunity to pursue higher education due to various socio-cultural, economic, and institutional factors. Although education is increasingly recognised as a tool for empowerment and socio-economic development, these students often encounter obstacles rooted in cultural, economic, and educational factors. These barriers not only limit their opportunities but also perpetuate the broader issue of educational inequality. Family support plays a crucial role in the educational journey of Muslim girls. The level of encouragement and backing they receive from their families can significantly influence their ability to pursue higher education. In many cases, traditional gender roles and expectations may lead to a preference for educating male children, while girls are often expected to focus on domestic responsibilities or are encouraged towards

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CHAPTER-2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

Muslim young women from lower socio-economic backgrounds often encounter significant barriers to accessing education. Shahu, Jeffery, & Nakkeeran (2017) found that financial constraints make it more difficult for them to enrol in and complete their higher education. They most likely live in less affluent areas, such as slums, where they are subject to the limiting influences of their neighbors. Due to a lack of funding, daughters' chances of pursuing higher education are harmed when support is frequently given to sons' education.

According to Malik (2023), some Muslim families struggle to provide for their girl child's higher education because they cannot afford it; female participation in Muslim households is a significant issue. Financial limitations are particularly significant in determining the educational trajectories of young women, including the quality of their educational experiences and their retention in educational institutions. Many parents have discussed how their child's dreams of pursuing a higher education will likely be dashed by the looming financial uncertainties, particularly if the youngster wants to pursue a medical or technical degree.

Bhat (2020) found that parents financial circumstances appear to be another factor that significantly affects their children's accessibility to educational opportunities. Regardless of the gender of their children, parents with higher income levels were found to be better able to afford the costs associated with their children's education. They were shown to be less prone to discriminate against daughters and sons in the area of education based on financial status.

Kuyetah (2023) states that Muslim parents with substantial incomes can enrol and support their daughters. Some even enrol them in schools for preparation. Compared to girls from low-income homes, girls from middle-class and upper-class families are more likely to start school and continue their education all the way to postsecondary institutions. Additionally, it was discovered

that there is a high association between parental income and attending school. Educated people who also work at other jobs that bring in money are the ones who can afford to pay for their girls' education.

Sengupta and Rooj (2008) conducted an empirical analysis that revealed significant disparities in educational attendance among Muslim children in India, based on household income status. The study found that both Muslim girls and boys from lower-income households are less likely to attend educational institutions. In contrast, Muslim girls and boys from upper-income households are more likely to attend educational institutions.

Notably, the study identified a gender gap in educational attendance, with Muslim boys from lower-income households being more likely to not attend school, while those from upper-income households are more likely to attend (Sengupta & Rooj, 2008).

A study by Rafiuddin et al. (2023) reveals that financial instability is a pervasive issue affecting many families, making it challenging for them to afford university fees, housing, and transportation. The rising cost of education, coupled with stagnant average salaries, has led to a critical examination of the financial viability of pursuing higher education, particularly for girls. A thorough analysis of the options available has revealed that, in many cases, forgoing college education for girls is deemed a more cost-effective decision.

Jahan and Ahmad (2016) identified several factors contributing to the educational backwardness of Muslim women, including low socioeconomic status, limited access to contemporary education, absence of single-sex schools for girls, remote location of schools from the community, inadequate school management, and lack of public awareness. These factors collectively contribute to the educational disparities faced by Muslim women, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to address these challenges.

Hoque (2016) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the factors hindering Muslim girls' education, revealing a complex interplay of barriers. These obstacles include, but are not limited to, socioeconomic constraints such as poverty, limited awareness of education's significance, and inadequate educational infrastructure.

2.2 CULTURAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS

Education is therefore essential for everyone, especially women. However, regrettably, the majority of the women, in particular Muslim women, discontinue their schooling after matriculation and intermediate, which is a barrier to a country's ability to develop.

Khatun (2022) highlight Some Muslim parents do not encourage their daughters to pursue higher education. They take this action to protect the girl from unintended threats that could arise when she enrols in colleges and universities.

According to Farhin (2022), early marriage is a significant barrier to education among students, as it leads to family and health issues. Traditional practices are largely responsible for this trend. Furthermore, many parents struggle to afford the high costs of education, including expensive books and study materials. Additionally, there is a noticeable gender disparity in education, where daughters are often neglected in favour of sons when it comes to educational opportunities.

The study on Empowerment of Muslim Women in India: A Study of Socio-Economic and Political Disparities Indicates that Muslim women in India are the most economically disadvantaged, socially isolated, politically marginalised, and deprived of educational opportunities. Among all the major religious communities in India, it is noted that the Muslim community has the lowest rates of female literacy. At later stages of educational attainment, such as matriculation, pre-university, and graduate school, this initial disadvantage is made worse. Furthermore, when compared to women from other minority faiths in India, such as Buddhists and Christians, the Muslim community's female workforce participation percentage is also noticeably lower (Sahnewaz, 2018).

According to Rahiman (2023), the young Muslim women have great aspirations and are focused on their careers. However, as they pursue further degrees, social safety and marriageability become more important to their families than advancing their careers. The study discovered that

gender prejudices and class status are also significant factors in women's educational growth. In comparison, lower-class pupils are more motivated to pursue advanced coursework and professions.

In a study conducted by Chan (2016) Understanding the purpose of higher education: An analysis of the economic and social benefits of completing a college degree, A higher level of education can make a person's life better. The study addresses a number of actions that might be taken to close the gaps in India's higher education system. The involvement of parents should not be viewed negatively. Higher education institutions should have appropriate management and rule execution. Promote courses taken part-time. Academic inquiry ought to be given to pupils that are less wealthy. All postsecondary educational establishments offer guidance and counselling services.

A study by Mollah and Bera (2018) The educational status of Muslims in India is not satisfactory And needs special attention.

Shazil and Azma's (2015) study highlights that traditional views on education persist. These individuals suffer politically, economically, and socially due to their refusal to accept modern education. For various reasons, they are reluctant to send their daughters to college. However, they have made some progress in education over the last two decades, learning to support themselves, although this progress is still limited. Muslim participation in professional education, particularly in management fields, remains low. Despite globalisation and technological advancements, the madrasa curriculum remains antiquated and conventional.

Hossain (2013) To find out the socioeconomic and educational standing of Muslim women, a study was carried out in Bengaluru. It is a well-known fact that the best instrument for empowering women is education. The study found that 0.5 percent of Muslim women and 4.6 percent of non-Muslim women have completed post-high school education (Census 2001). Examining the overall circumstances, it is evident that nearly every sphere of development is experiencing extremely dire circumstances. The study found that in order for Muslim women to advance in the current society, measures must be taken for their socioeconomic and educational growth.

2.3 PARENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS GIRLS' EDUCATION

In their study, Mir and Lone (2023) found that although their daughters have lower incomes, parents do not opt to send them to school. Standing in terms of society and economy. Because of financial constraints, the parent decides to pay for their son's schooling, which makes it less likely that the daughter will continue her education.

Jan and Neerja (2019) The study was carried out in the Jahangirabad (Bhopal) region to find out how parents felt about their daughters' education. According to the study, the Jahangirabad population is extremely poor. The students' female parents are housewives, and their male parents work. Nonetheless, the parents continue to support girls education. Their goal is to educate their daughters.

Attitudes towards daughters' education vary among male parents across different geographical locations. Saxena (2016) found a significant difference in attitudes between rural and urban male parents, with rural male parents exhibiting a more positive attitude towards their daughters' educational pursuits.

The study by Selvan (2017), Problems of Rural Girl Students in Higher Educational Institutions, Reveals that parents unawareness of the value of higher education is a significant barrier to girls pursuit of higher education in rural areas. This lack of awareness among parents hinders their ability to recognise the importance of higher education for their daughters, leading to limited encouragement and support.

According to Kapur (2018), several factors contribute to Muslim women's low educational attainment, including parental views that many girls should be married young and do not need education.

Nuna (2013) found that mothers are crucial in supporting their daughters' ambitions for higher education. But a contradictory conclusion emerges: women strongly advocate for their daughters' education, but their personal experiences of disempowerment and helplessness make it very

difficult for them to participate in decision-making processes related to their daughters' education. This restriction makes it more difficult for them to adequately assist their daughters in pursuing their academic goals, which feeds the cycle of disadvantage.

Mohanasundaram and Kannan (2001) explored the complex dynamics between motherhood, socioeconomic status, and women's educational attainment. Their research revealed a generally positive parental attitude towards women's education, yet highlighted a significant urban-rural divide in parental perspectives on education. Notably, the study found no significant differences in attitudes towards women's education among parents from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, suggesting that socioeconomic status may not be a primary influencer of parental attitudes towards women's education.

In their study, Buzdar and Ali (2011) examined the attitudes of parents belonging to Muslim communities in the Dera Ghazi Khan tribal region of Pakistan towards the education of their children. The findings indicated no significant differences in opinions between Muslim parents from rural and urban areas regarding the education of their daughters, highlighting a shared commitment to girls' education across different areas of the region.

According to Dinesh and Chandrashekar (2015), a study examining parental attitudes towards education in Muslim and non-Muslim households revealed a uniformly positive outlook. The research showed no significant differences in attitudes and behaviours between Muslim and non-Muslim parents, as well as no notable gender-based disparities in parental perspectives, indicating a shared emphasis on education across different demographic groups.

A study by Hilal (2016) found a notable difference in parental attitudes towards education based on their level of education.

Reshma (2014) conducted a study to examine parental attitudes towards female education and their awareness of educational initiatives and scholarships for girls. The findings revealed a highly positive parental disposition towards daughters' education, with mothers displaying greater enthusiasm than fathers. Notably, parents with higher educational backgrounds and more favourable socioeconomic statuses held more positive attitudes and provided greater support for their daughters' educational pursuits. This study highlights the significance of parental education and socioeconomic status in shaping attitudes towards female education.

A study by Sahu (2014) found a strong link between parental education and dropout rates, showing that children of more educated parents are less likely to drop out.

According to Al-Deen's (2019), study parents play a significant role in encouraging young women to pursue higher education, regardless of socio-economic background. This finding aligns with existing research emphasising the importance of family support in shaping educational aspirations. The study also reveals that participants' parents emphasised education while maintaining familial reputations, suggesting that cultural and social expectations intersect with educational pursuits.

2.4. CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS IN FAMILY SUPPORT

Ashraf and Kumar (2021) investigated the cultural constraints impacting Muslim girls' access to higher education in Bandipora District, Jammu and Kashmir, India. The study revealed that girls' higher education is influenced by their family type, with the joint family system still prevalent in the study area. Girls in these families often do not receive equal preference compared to boys, hindering their access to higher education.

Kapur (2018) confirms that familial priorities and financial constraints hinder Muslim women's educational attainment, aligning with previous research highlighting these barriers to educational access and gender equity.

Plageman and Sabina (2010) examined the relationship between family members and female adult students, revealing that mothers from their family of origin play a pivotal role in supporting female adult students' pursuit of higher education, influencing their attendance, persistence, and future achievements. Additionally, the study found that support from spouses/partners and children within their current family is crucial for women adult students' academic experiences, highlighting the significance of familial support in promoting educational success.

A study by Coker (2003) found that some women perceive pursuing higher education as a means to benefit not only themselves but also their entire family, highlighting the potential far-reaching impact of educational attainment.

The Lin and Wang (2015) study reveals that female adult students re-entered schools for the reason that they intended to catch up with other family members or to build a role model for their children. As a result, support from family would bring motivation and encouragement to female adult students during their path of pursuing education.

Hassan and Menon (2004) conducted a study on Muslim women's participation in educational pursuits and found a significant under-representation of Muslim women in prominent positions in India, suggesting a general resistance to transformation among Muslim women.

The educational challenges faced by Muslim girls are compounded by a range of factors, including resource constraints, limited job opportunities, perceived government bias, inadequate institutional access, discouraging societal attitudes, and the prevalence of child marriage (Hoque, 2016).

CHAPTER-3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the various methodologies used in gathering and analysing data relevant to the research. The methodologies include the selection of the study area, the type of study conducted, the research design framework, the definition of the universe, and the sampling techniques employed. Each of these components is critical in ensuring that the research is conducted systematically and effectively, providing a strong foundation for the study's findings**.**

3.2. TITLE OF STUDY

Barriers faced by Muslim girl students in pursuing their higher education.

3.3. OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

- To identify the barriers faced by Muslim girl students in pursuing higher education.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To assess the economic condition of the family in pursuing higher education.

- To understand the family support for girls' pursuing higher education.

- To analyse the role of parents' education influencing Muslim girls' in pursuing higher education.

- To examine the major challenges faced by Muslim girls' in pursuing higher education.

3.4. TYPE OF THE STUDY

This study used a quantitative research methodology due to its objectivity, generalisability, precision, and capacity for large-scale data collection. The quantitative approach enabled the collection of reliable and valid data, allowing for the identification of specific trends and patterns. This methodology was selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon and contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing evidence-based insights. The quantitative design allowed for a systematic and rigorous investigation, providing a robust foundation for the study's findings.

3.5. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study utilised a descriptive research design due to its capacity to provide a systematic and detailed examination of the phenomenon under investigation. This design is particularly appropriate when the objective is to capture the current status, behaviours, and characteristics of a specific population or phenomenon without influencing it. Descriptive research is effective in identifying and describing patterns, trends, and relationships within the data, offering a comprehensive understanding that can inform subsequent research or practical applications.

3.6. SAMPLING

Respondents were selected using purposive sampling, allowing for the collection of in-depth data from individuals who were directly connected to the phenomenon being studied.This is a non-probability sampling technique used in qualitative research to select participants based on their characteristics and the study's objectives. The goal is to identify and recruit participants who can provide rich and diverse data to enhance the research findings

3.7. UNIVERSE

The universe of the present study consists of Muslim girl students pursuing undergraduate studies in Kollam District.

3.8. SOURCES OF DATA

Primary Data

Primary data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire prepared by the researcher.

Secondary Data

Secondary data sources included academic journals, books, and online resources, which provided valuable insights and background information on the research topic.

3.9 TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher used a questionnaire tool that was distributed using Google Forms to gather primary data from the participants. This digital strategy made it easier to organise and collect data for later study. Google Forms offered a user-friendly and effective platform for gathering data, making it simple for participants to complete the questionnaire online. The researcher created a questionnaire to collect information on the barriers faced by Muslim female students who want to pursue higher education. There were 40 questions in all, spanning a wide range of subject matter. It asked questions about the respondents' demographics, educational backgrounds, and career goals in addition to barriers and challenges related to education.This approach enabled the researcher to collect comprehensive and reliable data from the 63 respondents who participated in the study.

3.10. TOOLS OF DATA ANALYSIS

For analysing the data, the researcher utilised the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a software designed for comprehensive statistical analysis. The data collected underwent both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarise and present the fundamental characteristics of the dataset, including measures of

central tendency and variability. Inferential statistics were used to draw conclusions, make predictions, and test hypotheses about the larger population based on the sample data.

3.11. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study acknowledges several limitations that may have impacted the research findings. Firstly, while Muslim girl students face a wide range of challenges in pursuing higher education, this research focused on a select set of barriers. As a result, some relevant challenges may not have been included in the analysis, potentially limiting the comprehensiveness of the study.

Secondly, the quality of responses from participants posed a significant limitation. Some respondents were not fully cooperative and showed a lack of interest, which affected their engagement with the questionnaire. This lack of interest and cooperation led to superficial responses and response bias, which could impact the validity of the data. Consequently, the responses may not fully reflect the participants' true opinions or experiences, thereby affecting the accuracy and reliability of the study's conclusions.

CHAPTER-4
DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the data analysis using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and Microsoft Excel. The data was collected from undergraduate Muslim girl students in the Kollam district of Kerala through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire was designed to explore economic constraints, the level of parental educational influence, the degree of family support, and the major challenges these students face in pursuing higher education. The analysis aims to provide insights into how financial limitations, parental guidance, and familial support shape the educational experiences and outcomes of these students, while also identifying other significant barriers that may affect their academic progress.

4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The demographic variables considered for the study are age, marital status, monthly income, parents occupation, type of family, and number of working family members

Figure 1. Age of the Respondents
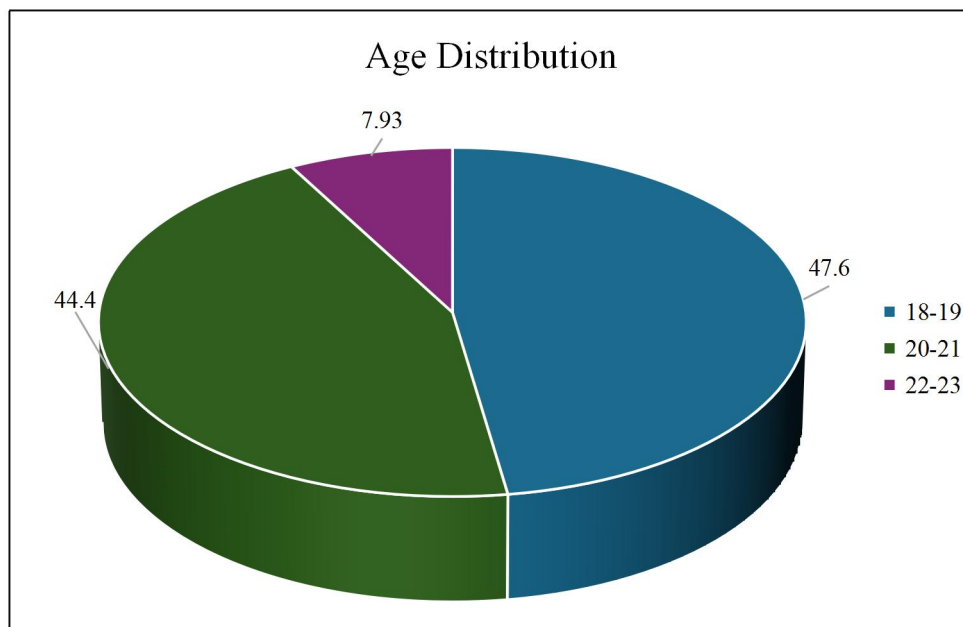
The age distribution of the respondents reveals a significant majority (47.6%) of Muslim girl students pursuing higher education fall within the 18-19 age range, with 47.6% in the 18-19 group and 44.4% in the 20-21 group. This indicates that most participants are in the earlier stages of their undergraduate education, corresponding to their first and second years. A smaller proportion (7.93%) of students are aged 22-23, which may include students who have taken a gap year or are pursuing a higher education course that spans more than three years. This age distribution has implications for understanding the barriers faced by Muslim girl students in pursuing higher education. For instance, students in the 18-19 age range may face unique challenges related to transitioning from high school to college, while students in the 20-21 age range may encounter different obstacles related to academic progression or career exploration. By examining the age distribution, you can better understand the specific needs and challenges of Muslim girl students at different stages of their higher education journey.

Figure 2. Marital status of the respondents
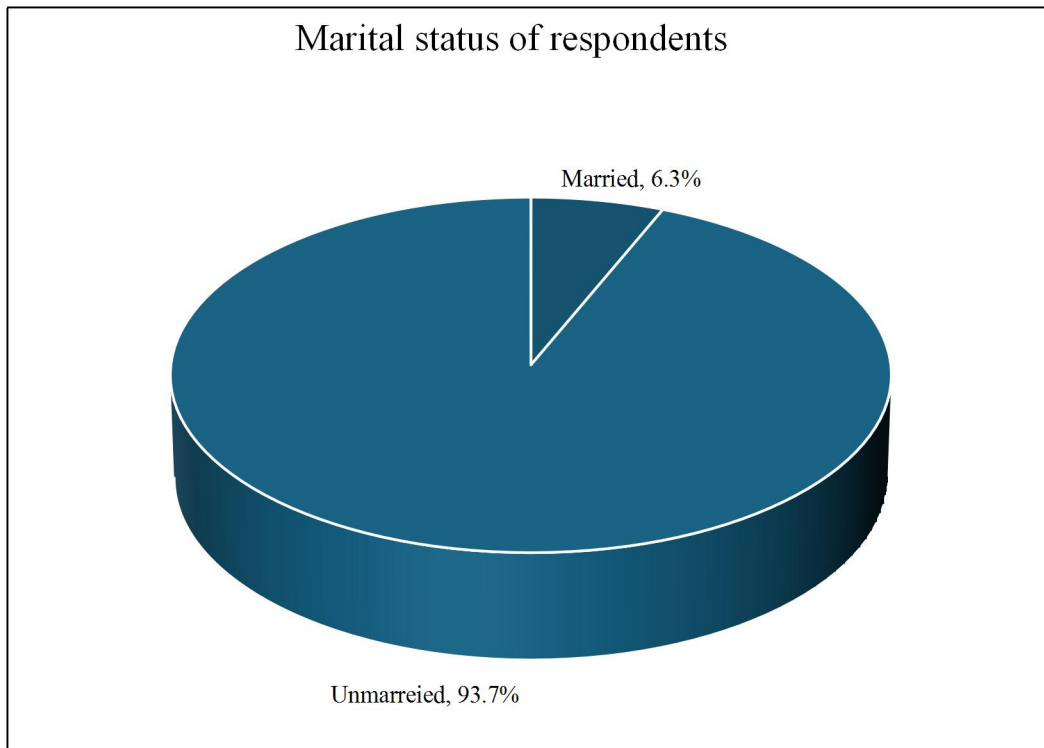
The marital status distribution among the respondents reveals a significant majority (93.7%) are unmarried, while a small but notable minority (6.3%) are married. The predominant unmarried status of the respondents (93.7%) suggests that most students are focussing primarily on their education and personal development. They are not yet entering into marriage or having significant family responsibilities. Their academic pursuits are a central priority in their lives. In contrast, the smaller but still significant percentage of married respondents (6.3%) are facing additional responsibilities and challenges balancing academic and marital obligations. They require more robust support systems to manage their multiple roles. Having different priorities and time management strategies compared to their unmarried peers. This marital status distribution highlights the importance of considering the diverse circumstances and responsibilities of students in this population.

Figure 3. Monthly income of the respondents
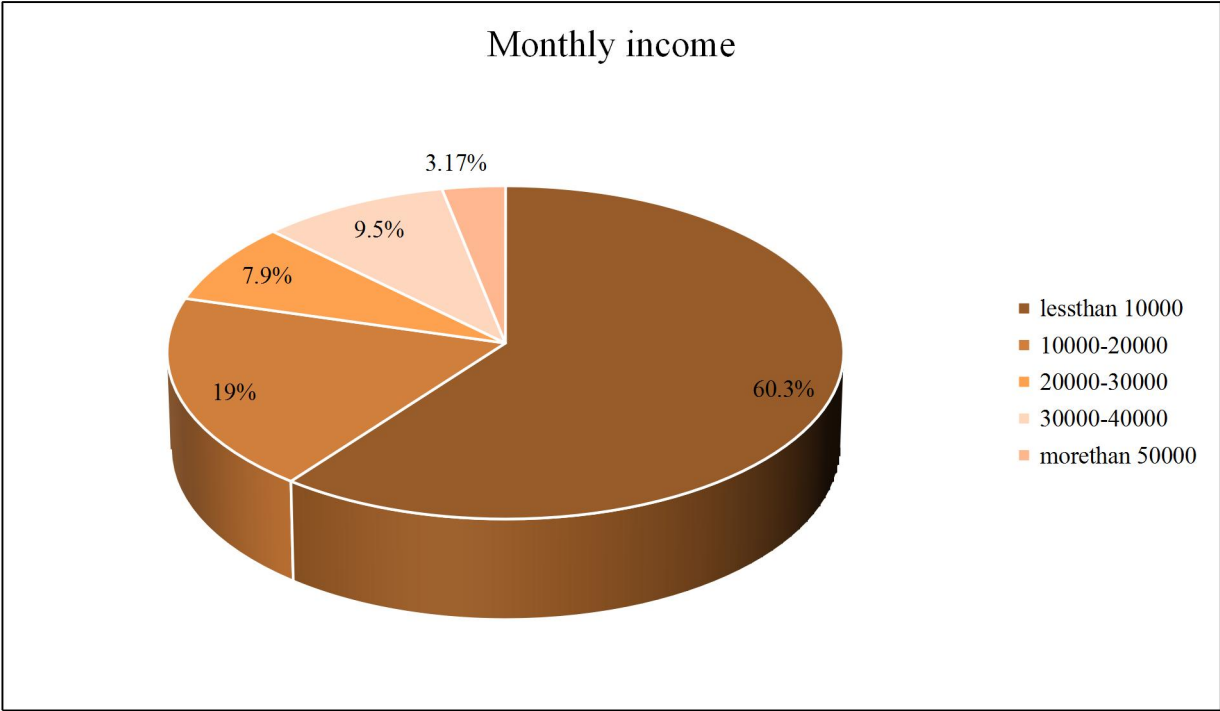
Source: Primary data

Figure 3 presents a detailed overview of the monthly income distribution among the respondents, offering insights into their economic conditions. The data reveals that a significant majority,

60.3%, of respondents have a monthly income of less than ₹10,000. This indicates that a large portion of the respondents come from low-income households, which may pose substantial financial challenges for accessing and sustaining higher education. Further analysis shows that 19% of respondents fall within the ₹10,000-₹20,000 income bracket. Although this group has a somewhat higher income compared to the majority, it still faces financial constraints that could impact their ability to cover educational expenses and other related costs. A smaller percentage, 7.9%, report a monthly income between ₹20,000-₹30,000. This represents a moderate-income group that, while experiencing less financial strain than the lower-income brackets, may still encounter difficulties in fully funding higher education without additional support. Additionally, 9.5% of respondents have a monthly income ranging from ₹30,000-₹40,000, suggesting a relatively more comfortable financial situation compared to those with lower incomes. However, this group still constitutes a minority within the overall population. Only 3.17% of respondents earn more than ₹50,000 per month, indicating that a minimal segment of the population enjoys a higher income level. This group likely has greater financial flexibility and fewer constraints in managing higher education expenses. The overall distribution underscores the predominance of low-income households among the respondents, with over 60% earning less than ₹10,000 per month. This highlights the significant financial barriers that many students face in pursuing higher education and emphasises the need for targeted financial support and aid to address these challenges and promote greater access to higher education.

Figure 4. Fathers occupation of the Respondents
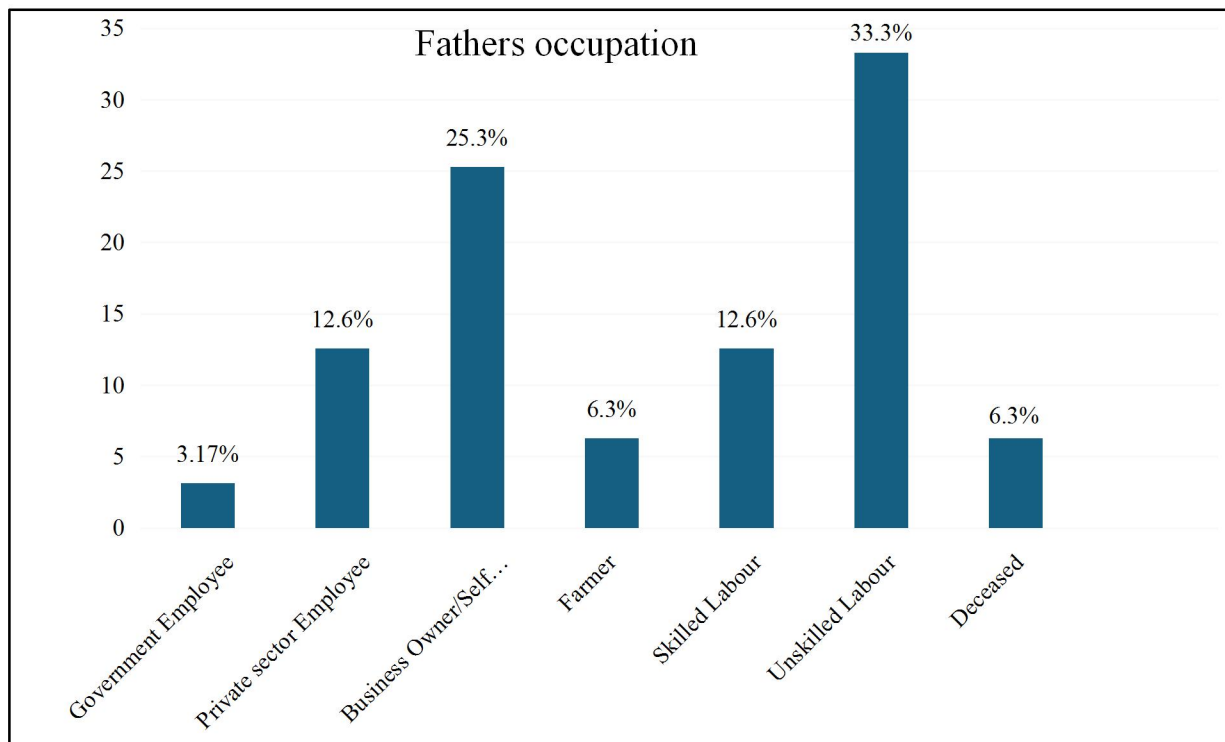
Source: Primary Data

The occupation of the respondents' fathers provides critical insight into the socio-economic context influencing their ability to pursue higher education. The majority, 33.3%, of respondents' fathers are engaged in unskilled labour, which is often characterised by low wages, limited job security, and few benefits. This suggests that many respondents may face financial challenges and have limited access to resources and opportunities. In contrast, a significant proportion, 25.3%, of respondents' fathers are business owners or self-employed, which can indicate a higher level of financial stability and autonomy. Additionally, 17.6% of respondents' fathers are skilled labourers, indicating a moderate level of financial stability. A smaller percentage, 12.6%, are private sector employees, suggesting a relatively stable financial situation. A minimal percentage, 3.17%, of respondents' fathers are government employees. A small percentage, 6.3%, are farmers, indicating a vulnerable financial situation due to dependence on natural factors. Another 6.3% of respondents have deceased fathers, pointing to potential challenges related to financial and emotional support. The findings suggest a diverse range of fathers' occupations

among the respondents, with a majority engaged in unskilled labour. This highlights the need for targeted support programs to address the financial challenges faced by these families.

Figure 5. Mothers occupation of the respondents
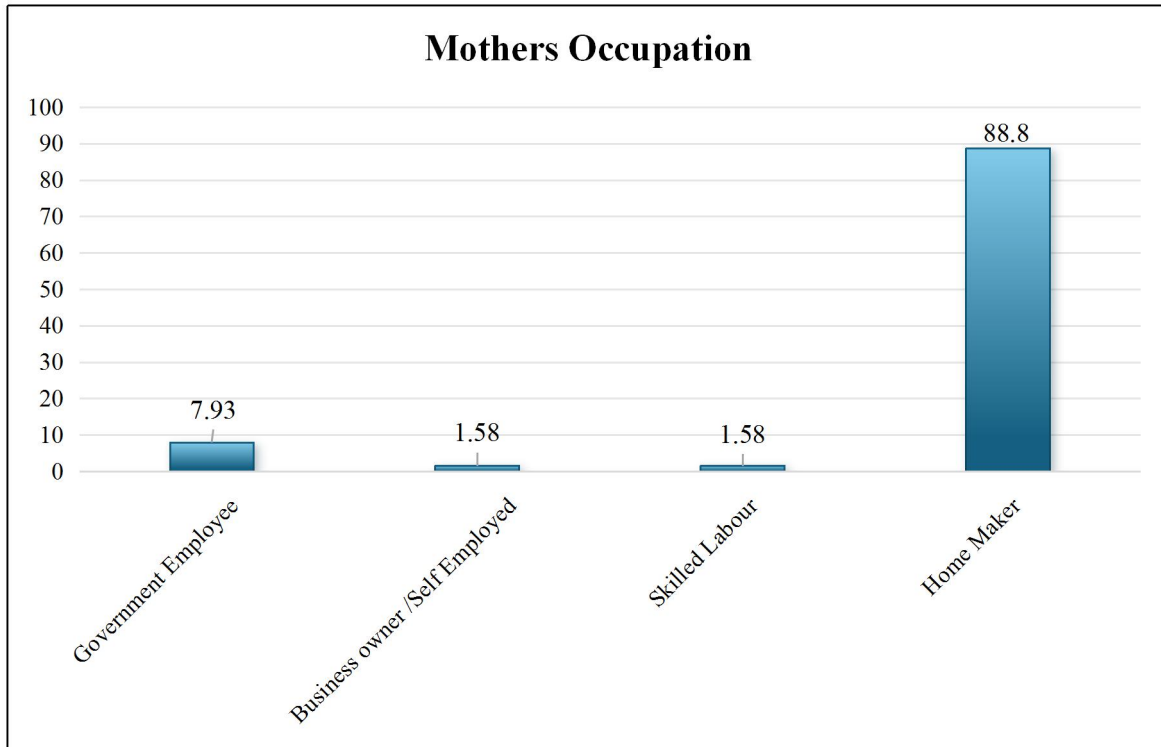
Mothers Occupation

The data on mothers' occupations provides valuable insight into the socio-economic dynamics affecting the respondents. A significant majority, 88.8%, of mothers are homemakers, indicating that most respondents' mothers are engaged primarily in domestic roles rather than formal employment. This predominant role may reflect limited financial independence and fewer external support structures within these families.

In contrast, 7.93% of mothers are employed in government positions, which often offer greater job security and benefits, potentially leading to a more stable financial situation compared to other employment sectors. The presence of mothers in these roles may contribute to a more robust financial base for their families and better support for their children's educational needs.

Additionally, 1.58% of mothers are either business owners or self-employed, highlighting a minor entrepreneurial presence. This small percentage indicates that while some families benefit from entrepreneurial income sources, the overall impact remains limited. Another 1.58% of mothers are involved in skilled labour, suggesting that specialized or technical roles are underrepresented among the respondents' mothers. Overall, the data illustrates that the majority of respondents' mothers are focused on homemaking, with relatively few in formal employment or entrepreneurial positions. This distribution suggests that financial resources and professional development opportunities are limited for these families, which could influence the educational experiences and support available to the respondents. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for analyzing how socio-economic factors impact educational outcomes and support systems.

*Figure 6. Family Size Of the Respondent*
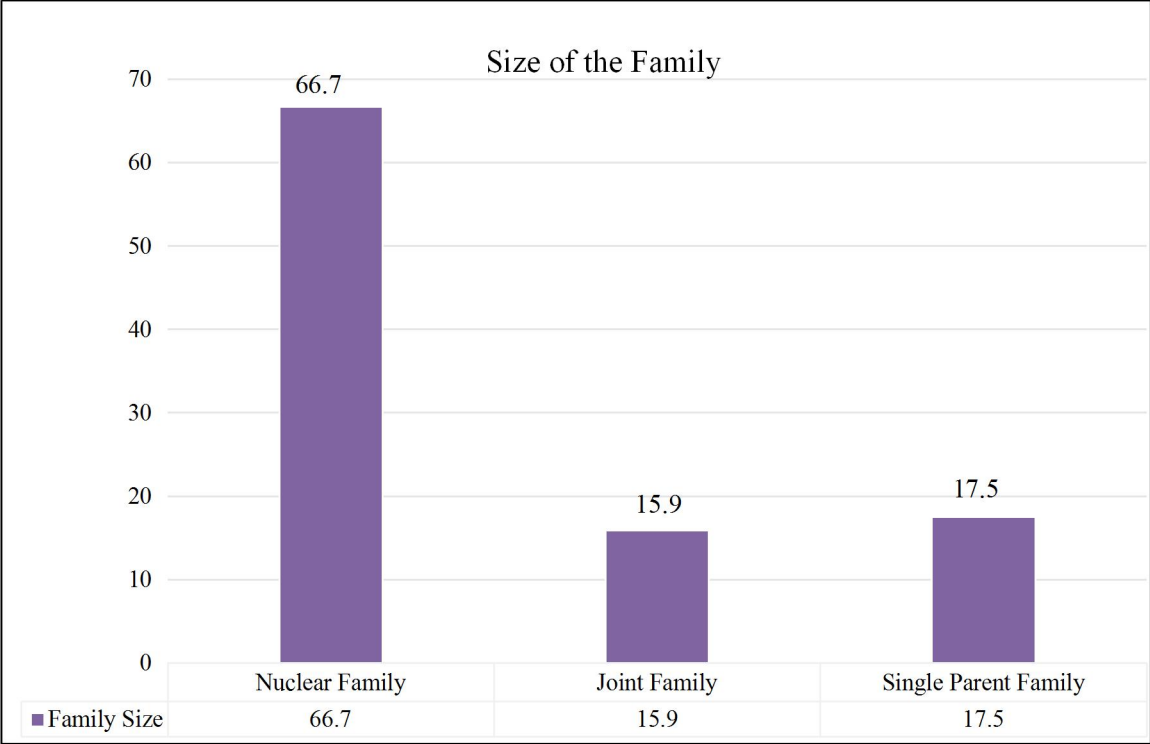
Source : Primary Data

The distribution of family structures among respondents provides valuable insights into their socio-economic and emotional environments. A majority, 66.7%, of respondents come from

nuclear families, indicating that most live in households with parents and siblings only. This family structure may be associated with a more immediate and focused support system, potentially affecting the respondents' access to educational resources and personal attention. A smaller proportion, 15.9%, are part of joint families, where extended family members also reside together. This structure can offer a broader support network and may influence the social and emotional environment in which respondents are raised. Additionally, 17.5% of respondents come from single-parent families, a structure that presents distinct challenges. Single-parent families often face financial constraints and may experience higher stress levels, which can impact the availability of educational resources and support. The absence of one parent might also affect emotional stability and the overall support system available to the respondents. Overall, the findings underscore the diversity in family structures among the respondents, each of which can uniquely influence their educational experiences, access to resources, and overall support systems. Understanding these family dynamics is crucial for identifying and addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by students from different family backgrounds.

Figure 7. Number of Working Family Members

Number of Working Members
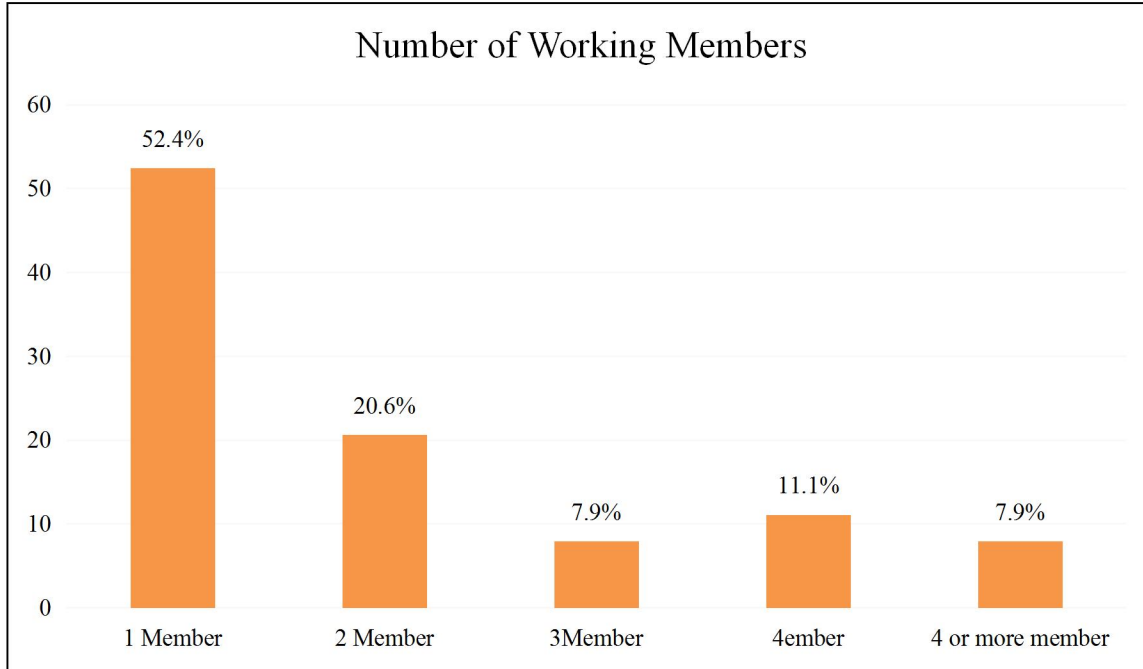
Source : Primary Data

The distribution of working family members among respondents reveals key aspects of their household economic dynamics. A majority, 52.4%, of respondents have only one working family member. This suggests that many households may rely on a single source of income, which could limit financial resources and impact the respondents' access to educational opportunities. A smaller proportion, 20.6%, have two working family members, indicating a slightly higher level of household income and financial support. A further 7.9% of respondents come from households with three working family members, suggesting a moderate level of financial stability. Similarly, 11.9% of respondents have four working family members, which may provide a more robust financial base and increased support for educational and other needs. Lastly, 7.9% of respondents have four or more working family members, reflecting households with multiple income sources. This situation could indicate greater financial stability and potentially better access to resources and support for educational pursuits. Overall, the findings highlight varying levels of financial support within respondents' households, which likely influences their ability to access educational resources and opportunities.

Figure 8. Number of Siblings of Respondents
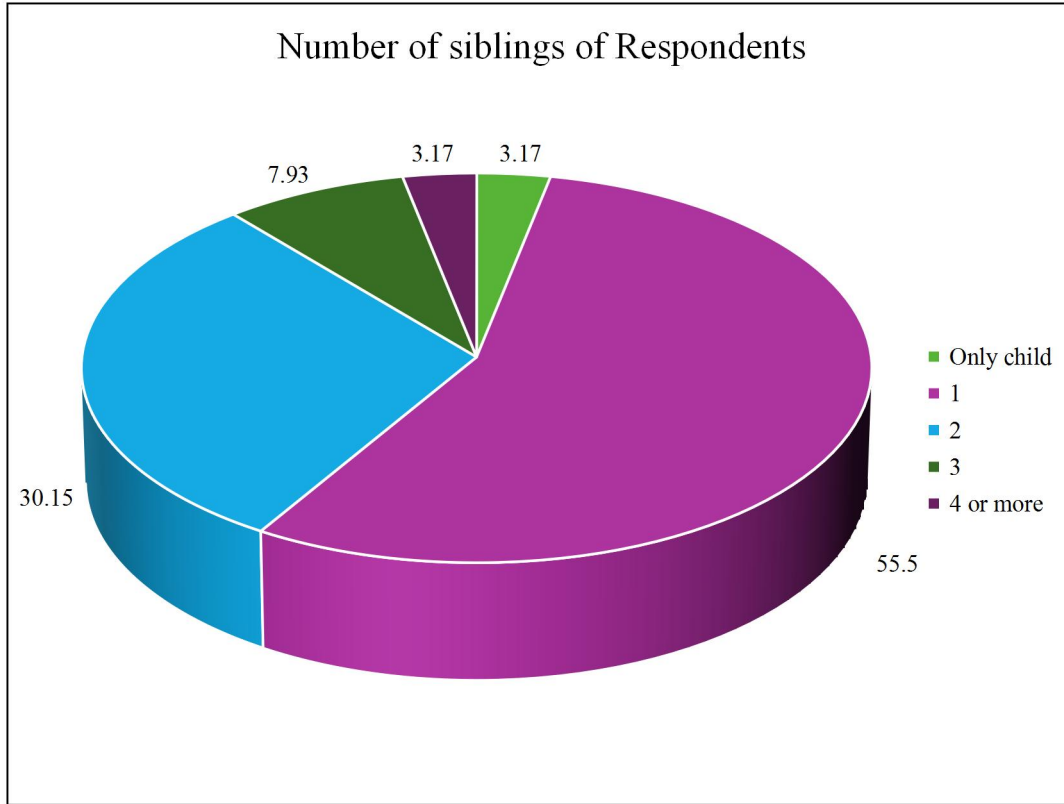
Source : Primary Data

The data on the number of siblings among respondents offers valuable insights into the familial structure and its potential impact on educational support. A very small percentage of respondents (3.17%) are only children. This situation may allow for concentrated parental resources and attention towards their education, potentially reducing barriers to accessing higher education. The majority of respondents, 55.5%, have one sibling, indicating that most families are relatively small. This may enable a balanced distribution of resources and support between the two children, which could facilitate better educational opportunities. A significant portion of respondents, 30.15%, have two siblings, suggesting that these families must divide resources among three children. This could present challenges in providing equal educational support, particularly in lower-income households. A smaller segment of respondents, 7.93%, comes from families with three siblings. In these cases, the division of family resources becomes more pronounced, potentially leading to increased competition for educational support. Finally, 3.17% of respondents have four or more siblings. These larger families may face more substantial

challenges in providing adequate support for each child's education, thereby potentially increasing barriers to accessing higher education.

4.3. MOTIVATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Figure 9. Motivating factors for pursuing higher education among respondents
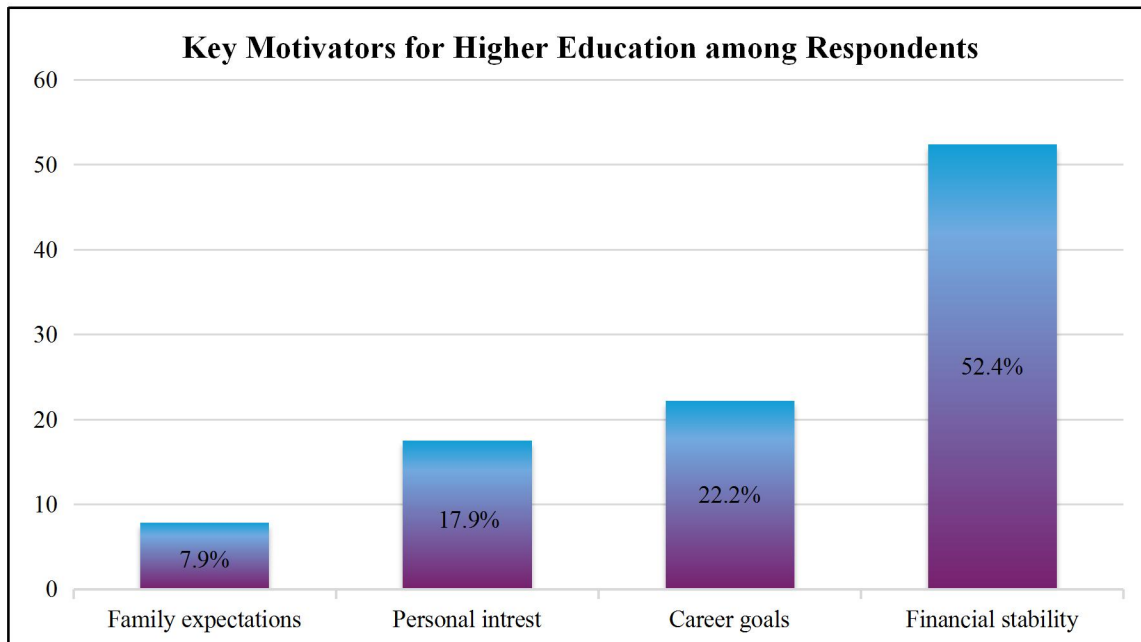
Source :Primary Data

The analysis of motive factors influencing the decision to pursue higher education among respondents revealed a strong emphasis on financial stability, with 52.4% identifying it as their primary motivation. This indicates that the majority of students view higher education as a pathway to economic security. Career goals also play a significant role, with 22.2% of respondents pursuing higher education to achieve specific professional objectives, reflecting the importance of education in long-term career planning. Personal interest was the driving factor for 17.9% of respondents, highlighting that a considerable proportion of students are motivated by intrinsic desires, such as a passion for learning or exploring a particular field. In contrast, family expectations were the least influential factor, motivating only 7.9% of respondents. This suggests that, within this context, individual aspirations and future-orientated goals are more critical in the decision to pursue higher education than external pressures from family members. Overall, these

findings underscore the importance of economic and career considerations in shaping educational choices among the respondents.

4.4. ECONOMIC FACTORS

Figure 10. Sources of financial support for higher education among respondents
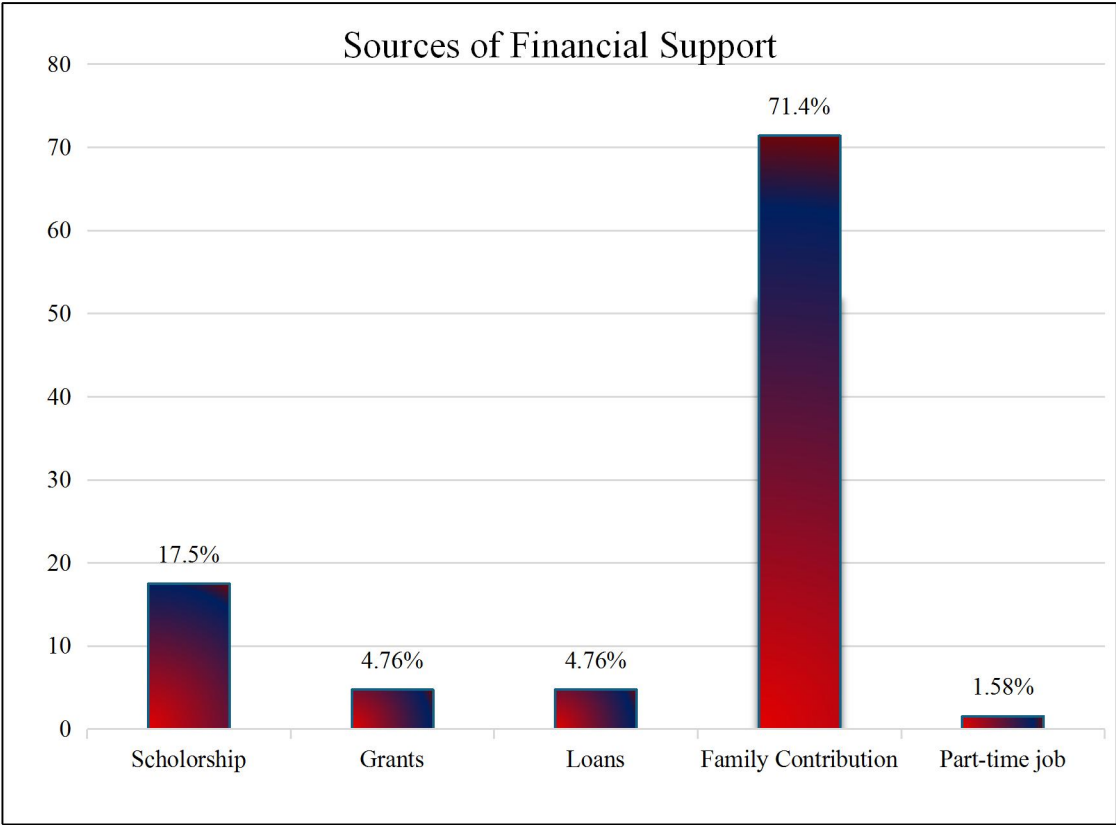
Source: Primary Data

Figure 10 provides a detailed overview of the sources of financial support for higher education among respondents. The majority rely heavily on family contributions, with 71.4% indicating this as their primary source of funding. This suggests that most students depend on their families to finance their education, reflecting the significant role of family support in enabling access to higher education. Scholarships are the next most common source of financial support, utilised by 17.9% of respondents. This indicates that while scholarships are a valuable resource for many

students, they are not the primary means of support for most. Grants and loans each account for 4.76% of the financial support, showing that these sources are less frequently relied upon by the respondents. The least common source of funding is income from part-time jobs, with only 1.58% of respondents citing this as a source of financial support. These findings highlight the predominant reliance on family contributions for financing higher education, with other sources like scholarships, grants, and loans playing a relatively minor role for the majority of students in this study.

Figure 11. Responses to Receiving Scholarship or Financial aid among Respondent
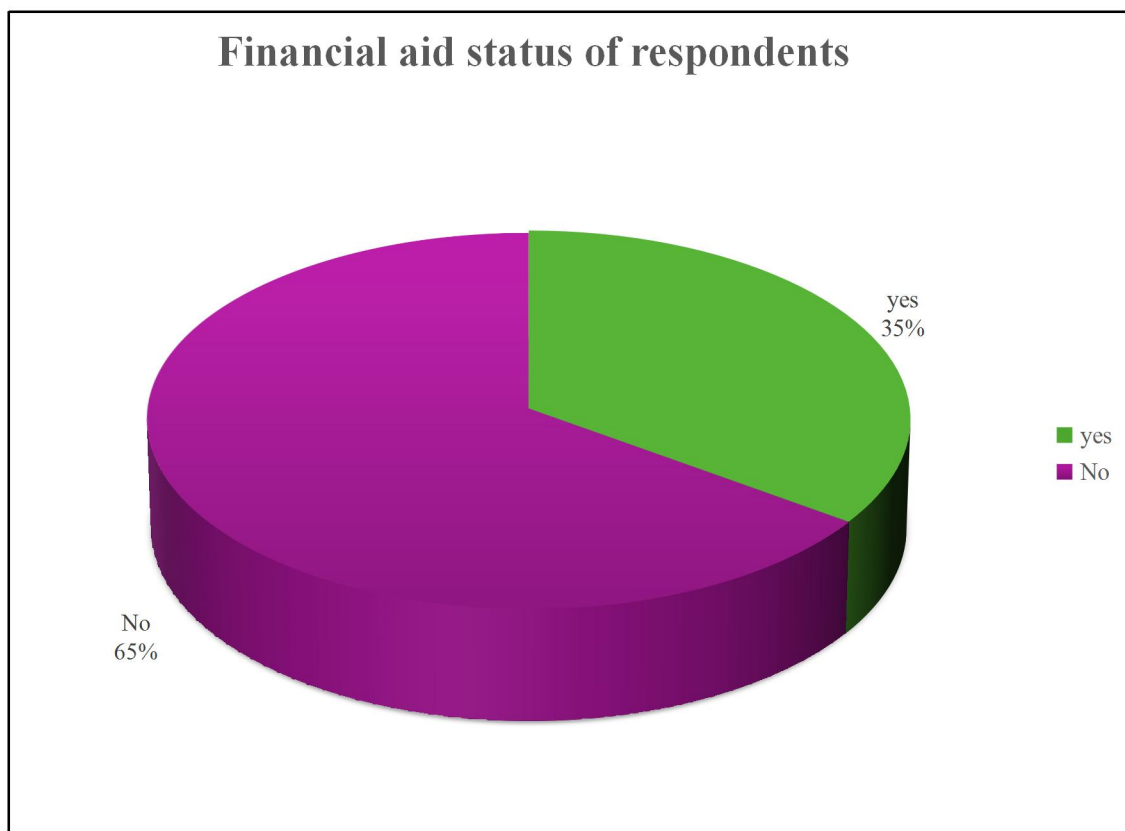
Source : Primary Data

Figure 11 provides a clear depiction of the distribution of respondents who received scholarships or financial aid, revealing a significant trend in the financial landscape of students pursuing higher education. According to the data, 65.1% of respondents did not receive any form of scholarship or financial aid. This indicates that a large majority of students are managing their educational expenses without the benefit of financial assistance, which could imply a heavier reliance on personal or family resources. On the other hand, 34.9% of respondents did receive

financial support. For these students, the availability of scholarships or financial aid likely plays a crucial role in their ability to access and continue their education. This financial support can provide essential relief from the costs associated with higher education, enabling students to focus more fully on their studies. The contrast in these figures highlights a potential gap in the reach or accessibility of financial aid programs. With the majority of students not receiving financial support, it suggests that scholarships and financial aid may not be sufficiently available or accessible to all who need them. This underscores the importance of expanding financial aid opportunities to ensure that more students can benefit from these critical resources, reducing the financial barriers to higher education and promoting greater equity in educational attainment.

Figure 12. Frequency of financial difficulties impacting academic performance among respondents
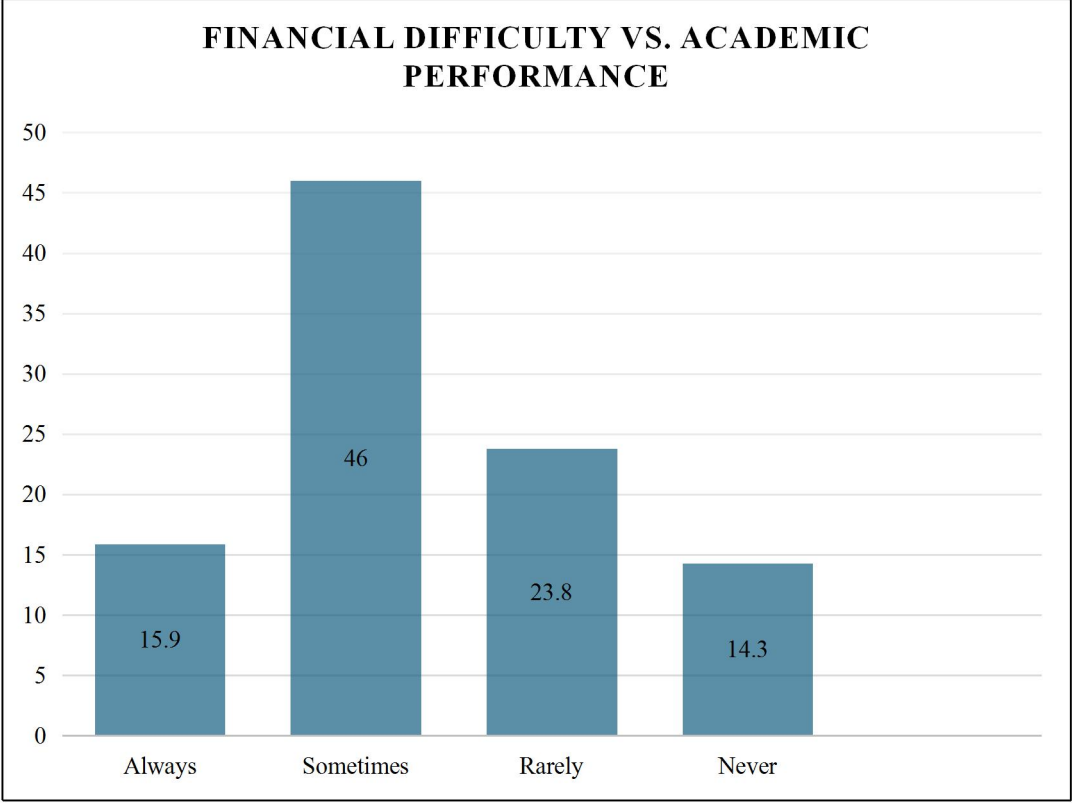
Source :Primary Data

Figure 12 provides insight into how frequently financial difficulty impacts academic performance among respondents. The data reveals that 15.9% of respondents experience financial difficulty affecting their academic performance always. This suggests a consistent and significant challenge for a notable portion of students. A larger segment, 46%, report that financial difficulty impacts their academic performance sometimes, indicating that for many students, financial challenges intermittently affect their studies. Additionally, 23.8% of respondents encounter financial difficulties rarely, showing that these issues affect them less frequently. Conversely, 14.3% of respondents indicate that financial difficulties never impact their academic performance. These findings highlight the varying degrees to which financial difficulties influence academic performance, with a substantial portion of students experiencing occasional or frequent impacts on their educational outcomes.

4.5. SUPPORT OF THE FAMILY

Figure 13. Parental /Guardian Support for Pursuing Higher Education
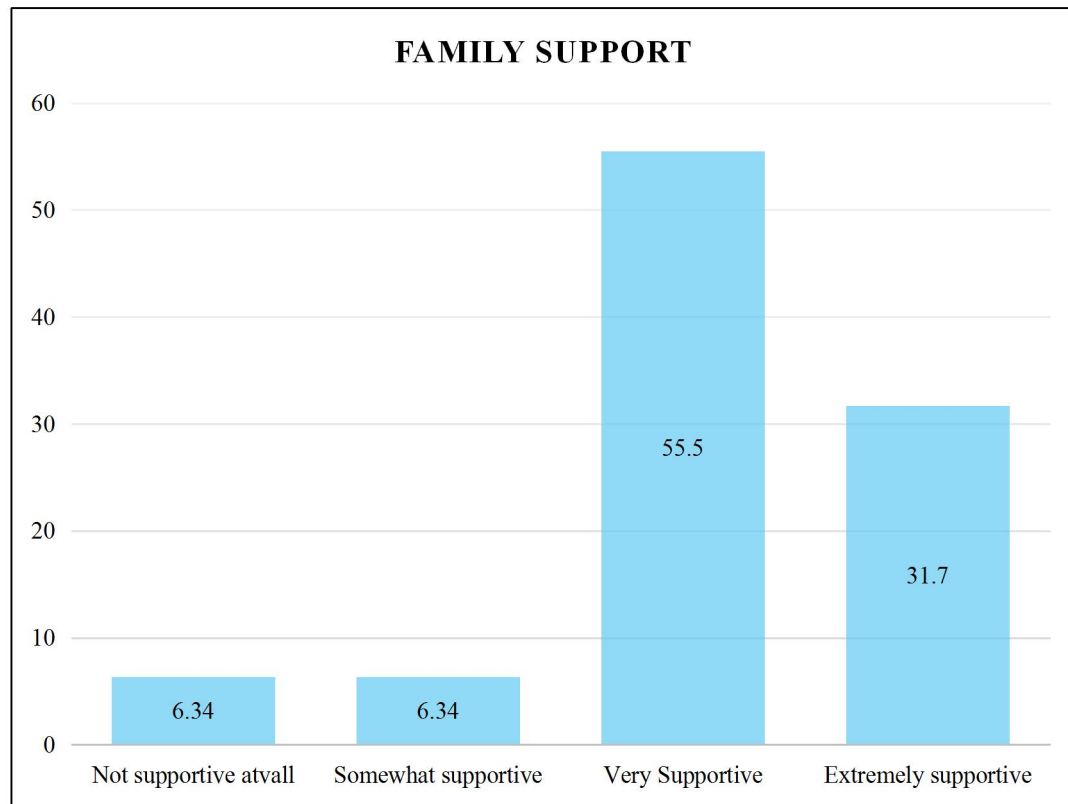
Source : primary Data

Figure 13 provides insight into the varying levels of parental or guardian support for pursuing higher education among the respondents. The data reveals a clear trend where a significant majority of students benefit from robust support from their families. Specifically, 55.5% of the respondents reported that their parents or guardians are very supportive, while an additional 31.7% indicated receiving extremely supportive guidance. This strong familial backing likely plays a pivotal role in enabling these students to navigate the challenges of higher education, offering them both emotional and practical resources that contribute to their academic success. The high percentage of students receiving substantial support underscores the importance of a supportive home environment in fostering educational aspirations and achievement. On the other hand, the data also highlights that not all students experience the same level of support. A smaller yet notable portion of respondents (6.34%) reported that their parents or guardians are only somewhat supportive, and an equal percentage (6.34%) indicated that they receive no support at all. This lack of strong encouragement can present significant challenges for these students, potentially hindering their ability to pursue and succeed in higher education. The presence of less supportive or even unsupportive family environments suggests that some students must overcome additional barriers in their educational journey, relying more on their personal resilience or external support systems.

These findings emphasise the crucial role that parental or guardian support plays in shaping students' educational paths. While a majority of students benefit from the encouragement and resources provided by their families, the data also reveals that a segment of the student population may struggle due to limited or absent familial backing. This disparity in support levels highlights the need for targeted interventions and resources to assist students who lack strong family support, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to pursue higher education regardless of their home environment.

Figure 14. Respondents Perceived Frequency of Family Encouragement for Academic Goals
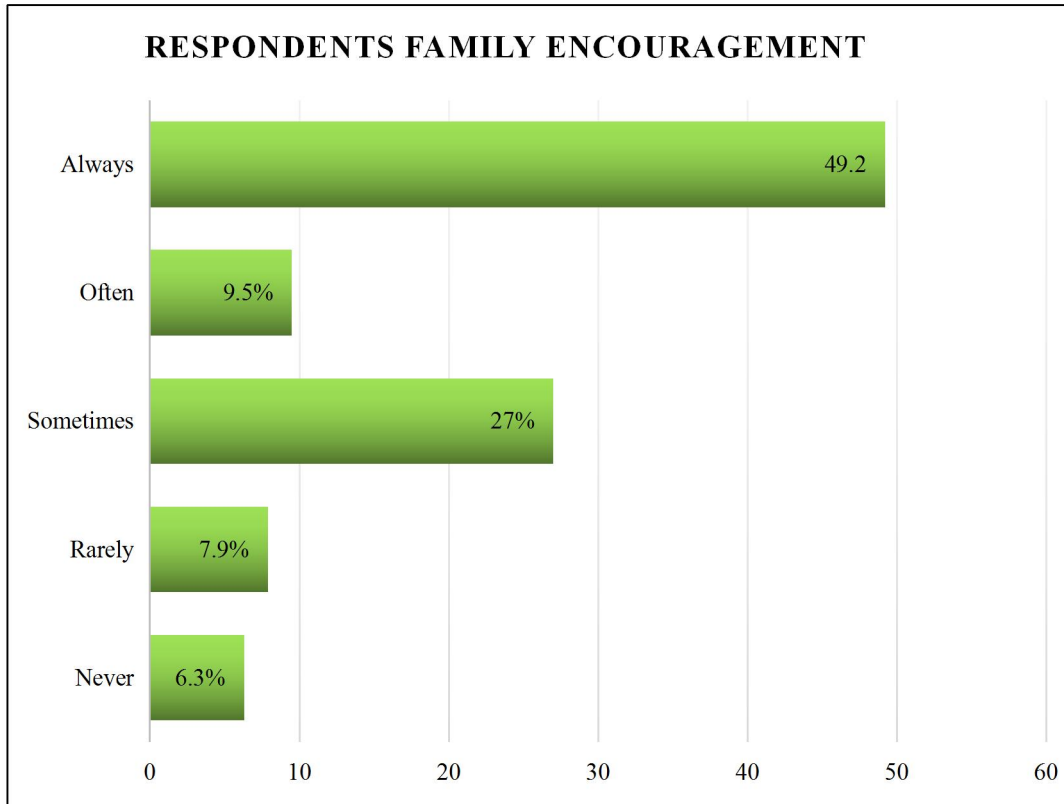
Source : Primary Data

Figure 14 illustrates the perceived frequency of family encouragement for academic goals among respondents. The data shows that a substantial portion of students, 49.2%, receive encouragement from their families always, reflecting a strong and consistent support system that significantly contributes to their academic motivation and success. Additionally, 27% of respondents experience family encouragement sometimes, indicating that support is provided periodically, though not consistently. In contrast, 9.5% of respondents report receiving encouragement often, suggesting regular, though not constant, support from their families. Meanwhile, 7.9% receive encouragement rarely, and 6.3% report never receiving any family encouragement for their academic goals. This distribution highlights that while most students benefit from substantial and regular familial support, a notable minority experience varying

levels of encouragement, with some receiving minimal to no support. This variation in family encouragement underscores the differing degrees of support that students may experience, which can influence their academic outcomes and motivation.

Figure 15. Family Prioritization of Education over Household Responsibilities
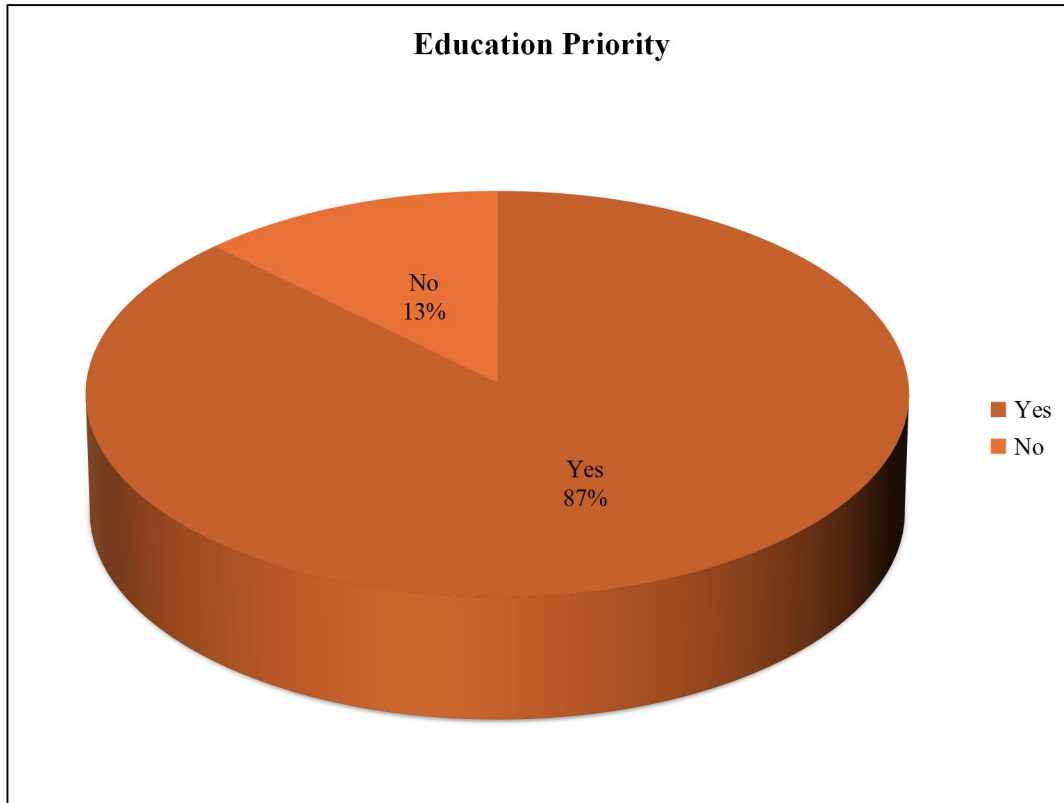
Source : Primary Data

Figure 15 shows the prioritisation of education over household responsibilities among respondents. The data indicates that 87% of respondents prioritise education over household responsibilities, suggesting that a significant majority of students and their families view education as a primary concern and are willing to allocate resources and attention accordingly. Conversely, 13% of respondents do not prioritise education over household responsibilities, reflecting a smaller portion of students for whom household duties may take precedence. This distribution highlights the strong emphasis placed on educational pursuits by most respondents,

while acknowledging that a minority may face competing demands that affect their focus on education.

Figure 16. Parents /Guardian Attendance at Academic Events Among Respondents

Academic Event Participation
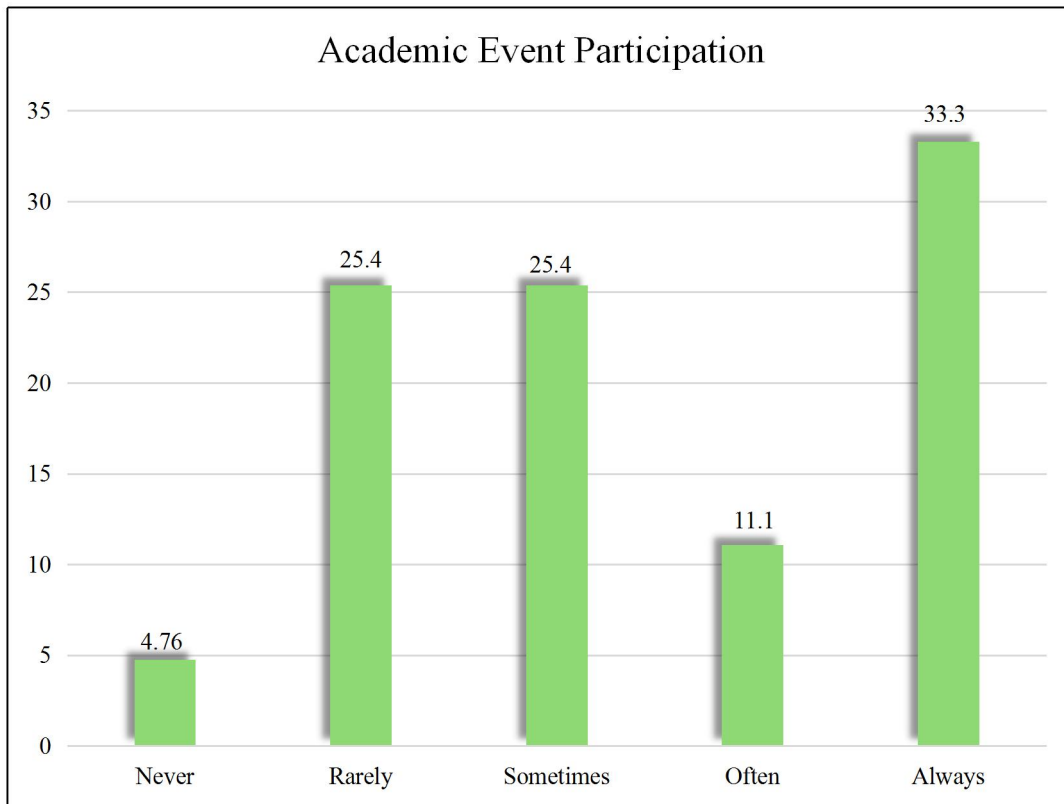
Source :Primary Data

Figure 16 illustrates the frequency of parents' or guardians' attendance at academic events as reported by the respondents. The data shows that 33.3% of respondents indicated that their parents or guardians always attend these events, reflecting a strong level of engagement and support. A further 25.4% reported that their parents or guardians sometimes attend, suggesting a moderate but not consistent involvement. In addition, 11.1% of respondents noted that their parents or guardians often attend academic events, while another 25.4% reported rare attendance. Finally, 4.76% of respondents stated that their parents or guardians never attend these events. This distribution highlights the variability in parental or guardian involvement, with a significant

proportion of students receiving frequent support, while others experience limited or no attendance, potentially impacting their academic experience and motivation.

Figure 17. Distribution of Decision-Makers educational Choices Among Respondents

Educational Decision-Makers Among Respondents
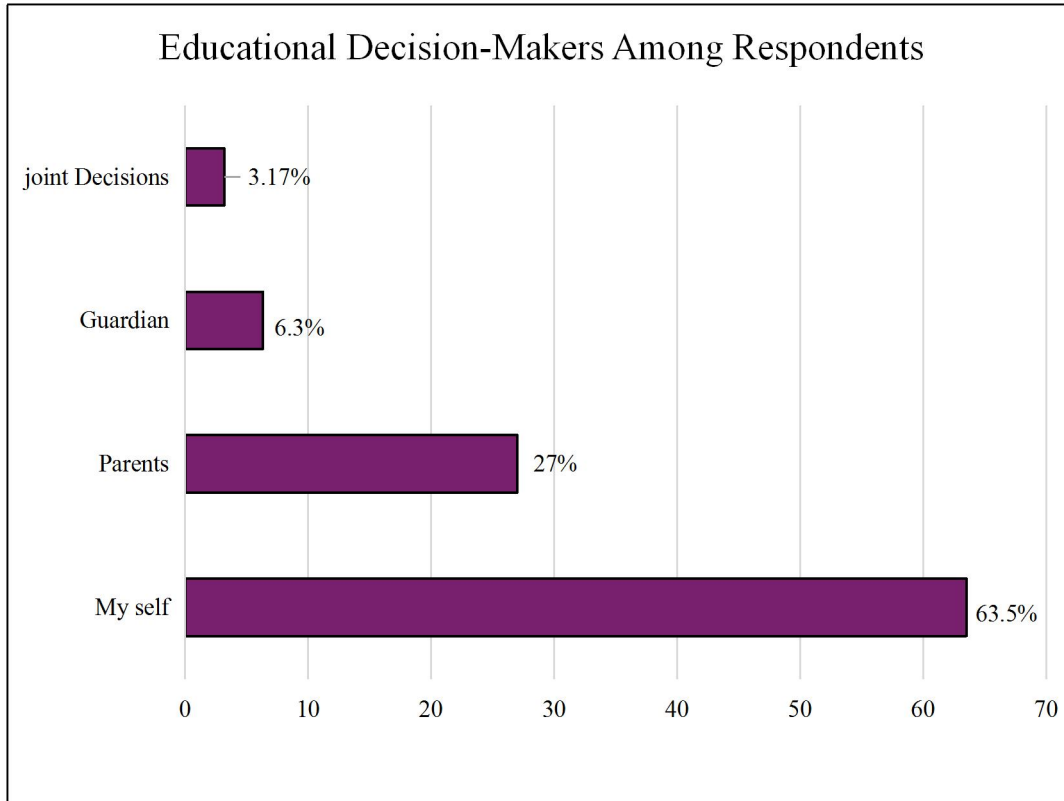
Source : Primary Data

The data on the distribution of decision-makers in educational choices among respondents reveals important insights into the factors influencing how students determine their academic paths. The majority of respondents, 63.5%, report that they make their own educational decisions. This high level of autonomy indicates that a significant portion of students are empowered to take control of their academic choices, reflecting personal responsibility and independence in shaping their educational futures. Additionally, 27% of respondents indicate that their parents are the primary decision-makers regarding their education. This figure highlights the substantial role

that parents play in influencing educational decisions. In contrast, a smaller percentage of respondents, 6.3%, report that a guardian is responsible for making their educational decisions. This suggests that, for this group, guardians—who may be relatives or other trusted individuals—play a key role in guiding educational choices, possibly due to the absence or limited involvement of parents. Furthermore, 3.17% of respondents state that educational choices are made jointly, involving both the student and another party, such as a parent or guardian. This indicates a collaborative approach to decision-making, where the student and the involved party work together to determine the best educational path. Overall, the distribution of decision-makers shows a predominance of student autonomy in educational choices, while also acknowledging the significant role of parents and guardians in the decision-making process for a substantial portion of respondents.

Figure 18. Opposition or Resistance Faced by Respondents from Family in Pursuing Higher Education
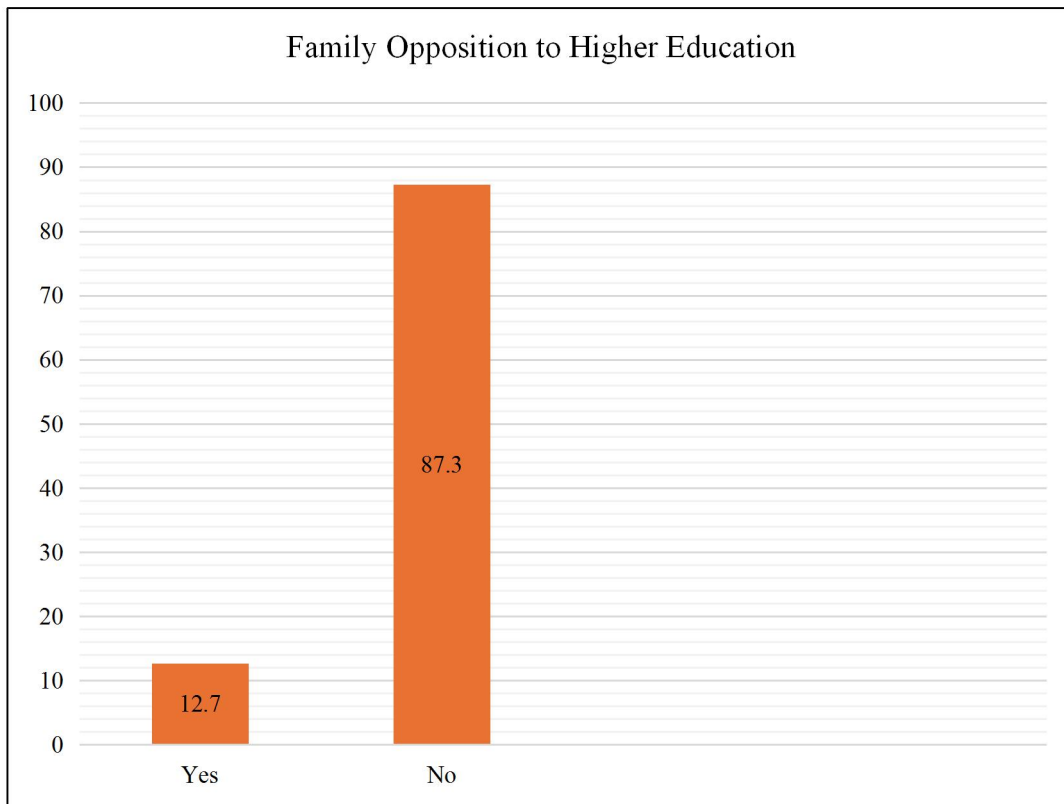
Source : Primary Data

Figure 18 depicts the opposition or resistance faced by participants from their families in pursuing higher education. The data indicates that a substantial majority, 87.3%, did not experience any resistance from their families, suggesting that most students enjoy strong familial support in their educational pursuits. This high percentage reflects a positive environment where family backing is likely contributing to the students' academic success and persistence in higher education. Conversely, 12.76% of respondents reported facing some form of opposition or resistance from their families. This minority highlights that while most students receive support, a significant portion still encounter challenges that could impact their educational journey. The presence of familial resistance underscores the varying degrees of support students may experience and points to the need for understanding and addressing these barriers to ensure equitable access to higher education for all students.

Figure 19. Perception of Parents/Guardian on the Importance of Higher Education for Future Success

PARENTAL VIEWS ON HIGHER EDUCATION
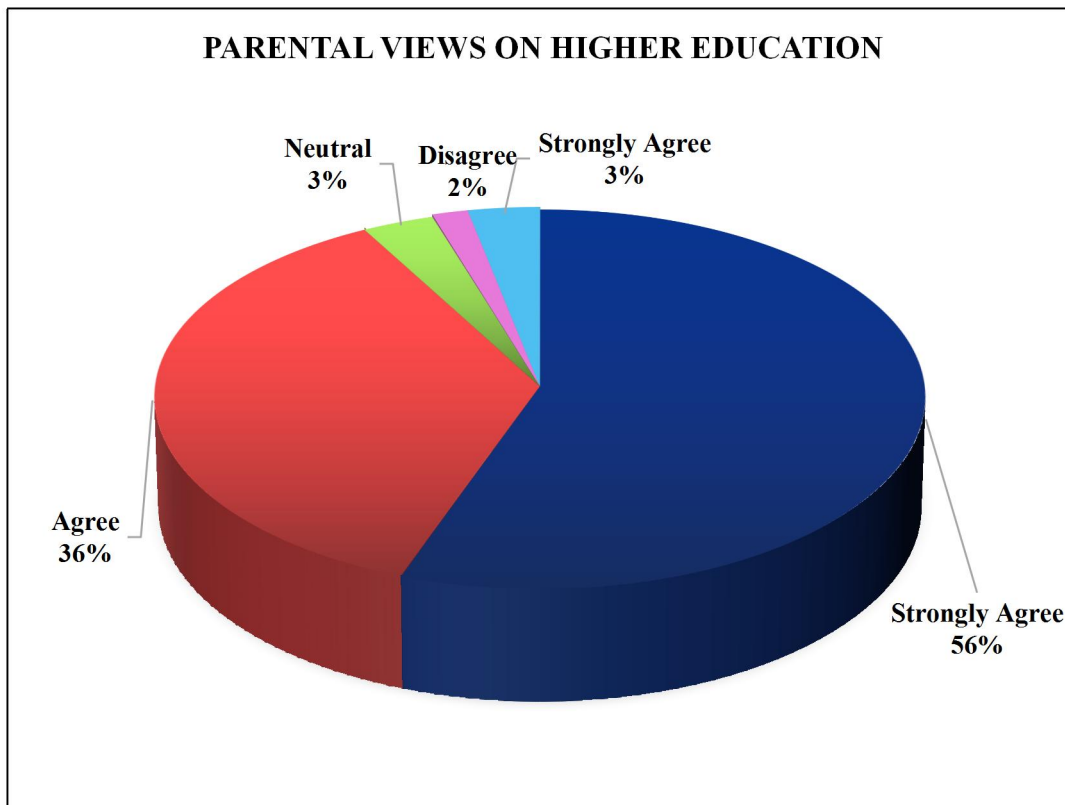
Source : Primary Data

Figure 19 illustrates the perception of parents or guardians regarding the importance of higher education for future success. The data reveals that a majority of 55.5% of respondents strongly agree that their parents or guardians view higher education as crucial for future success. This significant proportion reflects a strong belief among families in the value of higher education for enhancing future opportunities. Additionally, 36.5% of respondents agree with the statement, further indicating broad support for the importance of higher education. In contrast, 3.17% of respondents are neutral, suggesting indifference or uncertainty on this issue. A smaller percentage, 1.58%, disagree, and 3.17% strongly disagree, reflecting limited dissent among parents or guardians about the importance of higher education. Overall, the findings indicate a prevailing perception among parents or guardians that higher education is essential for achieving future success, with only a small fraction expressing opposing views.

Figure 20. Parental Support in Providing Educational Resources Among Respondents
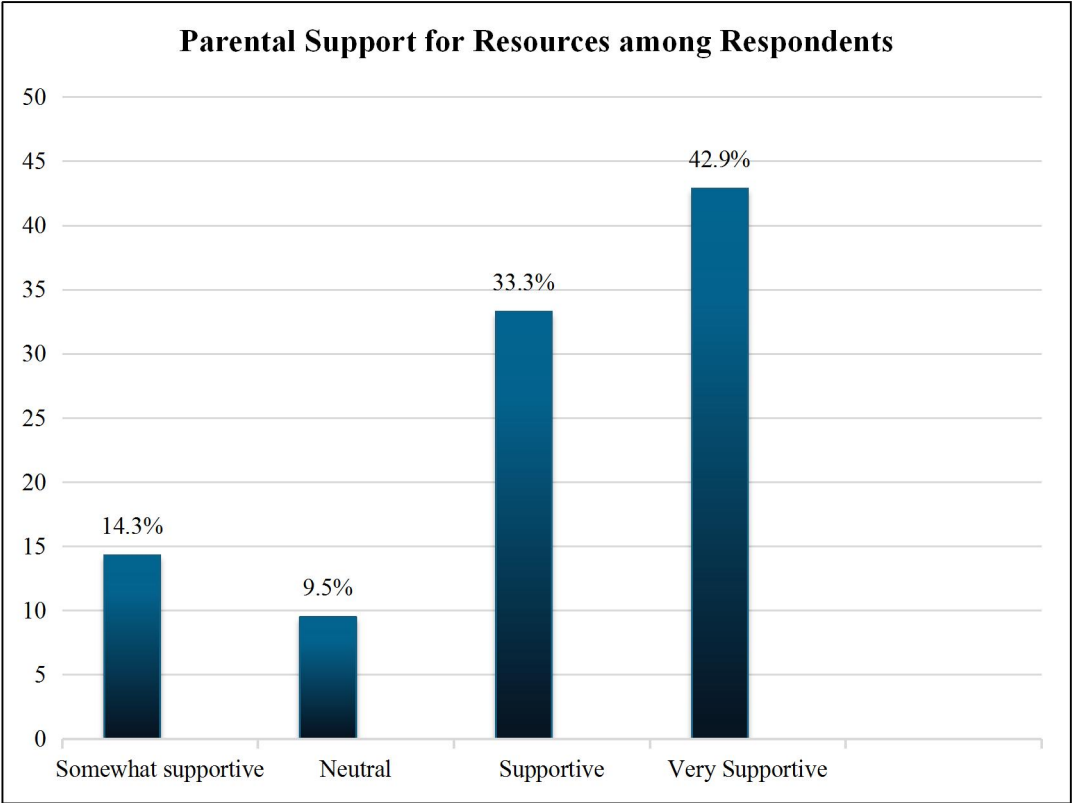
Source : Primary Data

Figure 20 provides an overview of parental support in providing educational resources among respondents. The data shows that 42.9% of respondents consider their parents or guardians to be very supportive in supplying educational resources, indicating a high level of assistance in meeting academic needs. Additionally, 33.3% report that their parents or guardians are supportive, reflecting a substantial level of aid. Conversely, 14.3% of respondents view their parents or guardians as somewhat supportive, while 9.5% remain neutral on the level of support. This suggests that while the majority of students receive significant support in obtaining educational resources, there is a smaller portion who either experience limited support or are indifferent. Overall, the findings highlight a generally positive trend in parental involvement in providing educational resources, with most students benefiting from substantial or very supportive contributions.

Figure 21. Siblings Support for Higher Education Pursuit
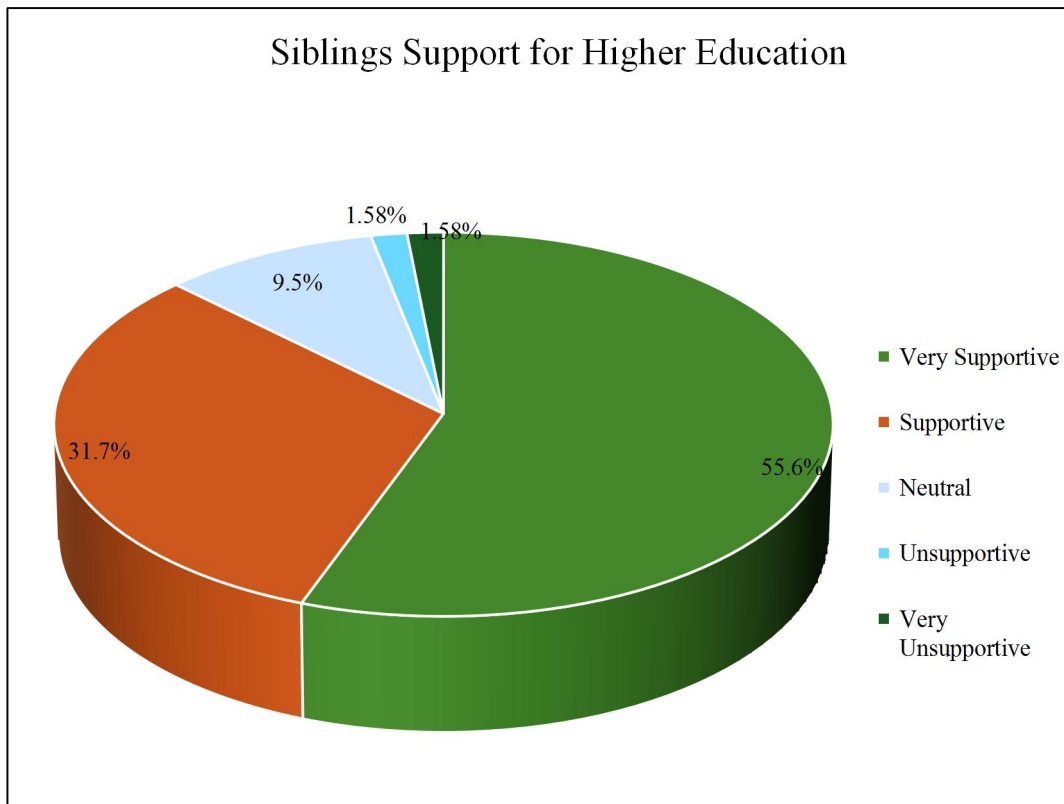
Source : Primary Data

Figure 21 presents data on sibling support for higher education pursuits among respondents. The findings indicate that a majority, 55.6%, describe their siblings as very supportive, highlighting a strong level of encouragement and assistance in achieving their educational goals. Additionally, 31.7% report that their siblings are supportive, further reflecting significant positive influence.

In contrast, 9.5% of respondents feel that their siblings are neutral, suggesting a lack of significant impact or involvement. A small percentage, 1.58%, find their siblings unsupportive, while another 1.58% consider them very unsupportive. These results illustrate that while the majority of students receive considerable support from their siblings, a minimal number experience varying degrees of unsupportive attitudes. Overall, the data emphasises the Generally positive role of siblings in supporting educational pursuits.

Figure 22. Frequency of Parental Discussions on Respondents Education and Career Plans
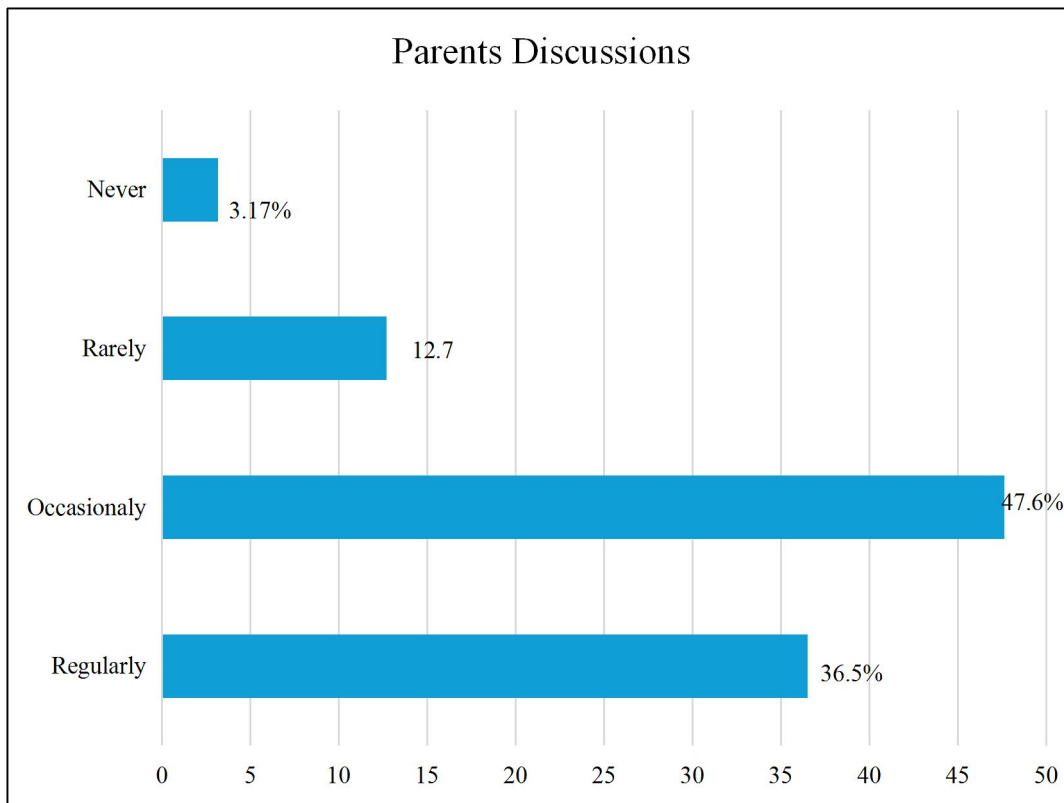
Source : Primary Data

Figure 22 shows the frequency of parental discussions regarding respondents' education and career plans. The data indicates that 47.6% of respondents experience occasional discussions with their parents about their educational and career aspirations, reflecting a moderate level of engagement. Additionally, 36.5% report that such discussions occur regularly, suggesting a consistent and proactive approach by parents in supporting their children's educational and career goals.

In contrast, 12.7% of respondents have rare discussions with their parents about these topics, indicating less frequent parental involvement. A smaller percentage, 3.17%, reports that these discussions never occur. This distribution highlights a generally positive trend in parental engagement, with many students benefiting from regular or occasional discussions about their education and career plans, though a minority experience limited or no communication on these important matters.

Figure 23. Parental Attitudes Towards Studying Away from Home (City/State/Country)
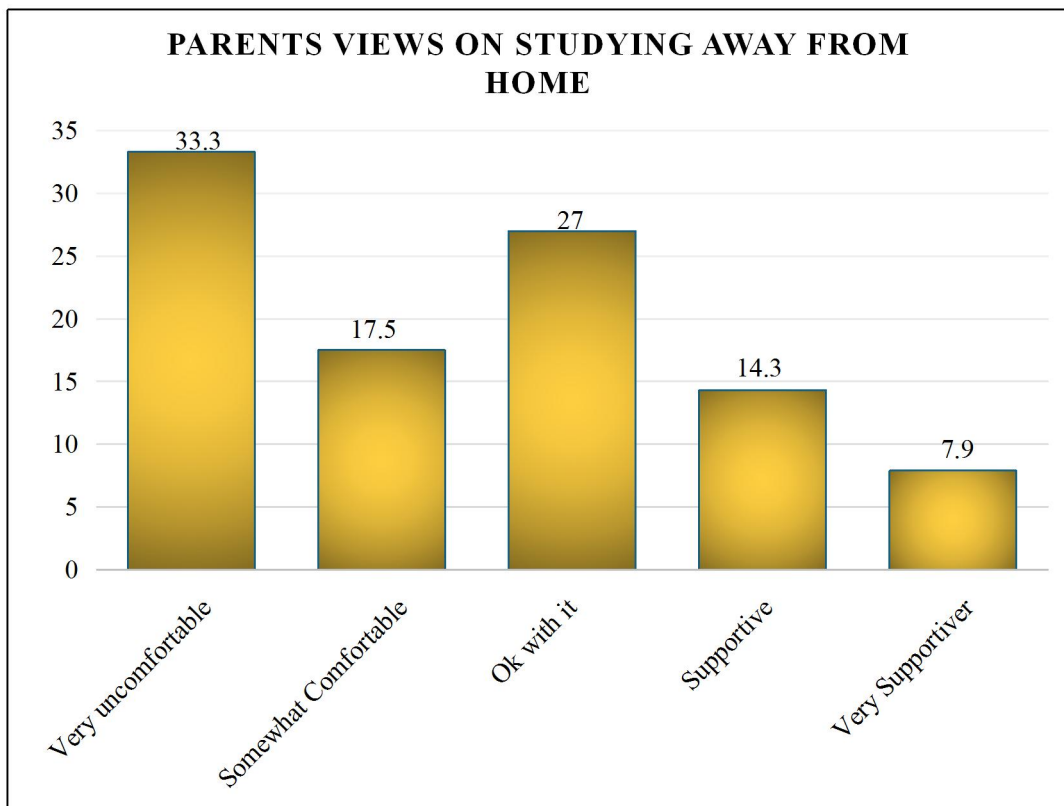
Source : Primary Data

Figure 23 displays the range of parental attitudes toward their child studying away from home (in a different city, state, or country). The data reveals that 33.3% of respondents feel that their parents are very uncomfortable with the idea, indicating strong reluctance or concern. Additionally, 17.5% perceive their parents as somewhat comfortable, suggesting a degree of acceptance, though not fully supportive. Furthermore, 27% of respondents report that their parents are okay with the idea, reflecting a neutral stance. Meanwhile, 14.3% describe their parents as supportive, indicating a positive attitude toward studying away. Finally, 7.9% find their parents to be very supportive, showing significant encouragement. This distribution illustrates a wide spectrum of parental attitudes, from considerable discomfort to strong support, which can impact students' decisions about studying in different locations.

Figure 24. Distribution of Emotional Support Received from Family to Overcome Academic Challenges Among Respondents
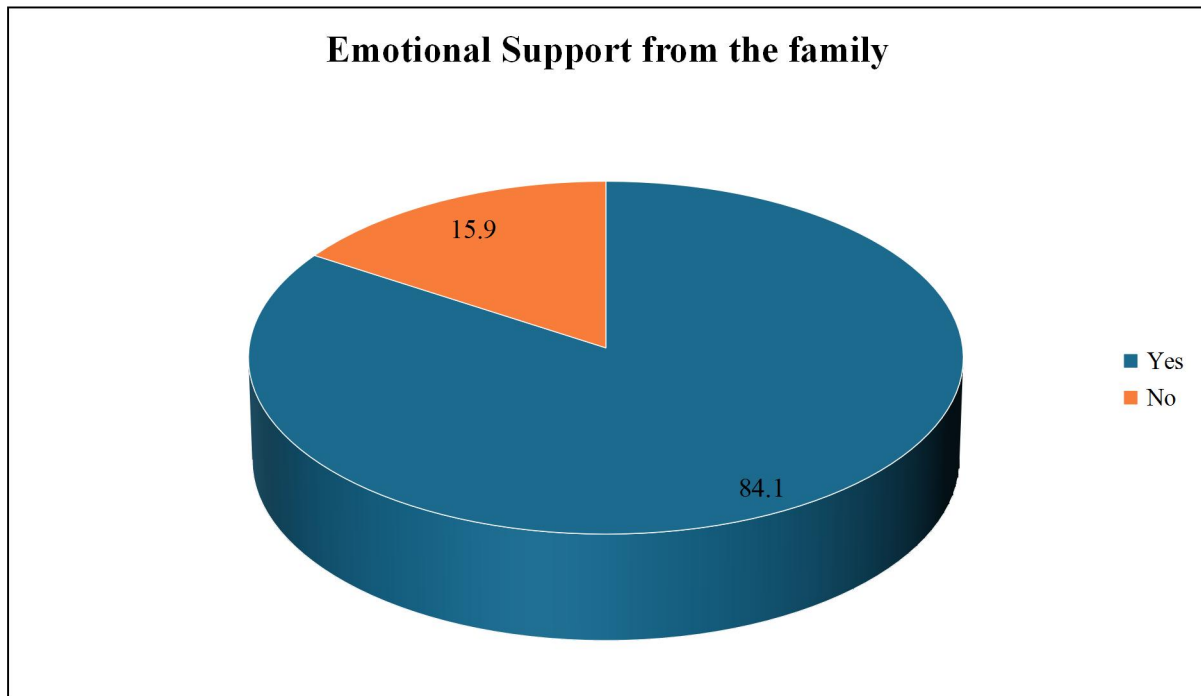
Source : Primary Data

The data reveals that a significant majority of respondents (84.1%) receive emotional support from their families to overcome academic challenges. This indicates a strong familial

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involvement in the academic lives of students, which could play a critical role in their ability to cope with and overcome obstacles in their studies. On the other hand, 15.9% of respondents do not receive such support, highlighting a minority of students who may be at a disadvantage in terms of emotional backing from their families, potentially impacting their academic performance and overall well-being. This contrast underscores the importance of emotional support in educational attainment and the need for additional resources or interventions for those lacking this familial support.

4.6. INFLUENCE OF PARENTS EDUCATION

Figure 25. Highest Level of Education Completed by the Respondent's Father
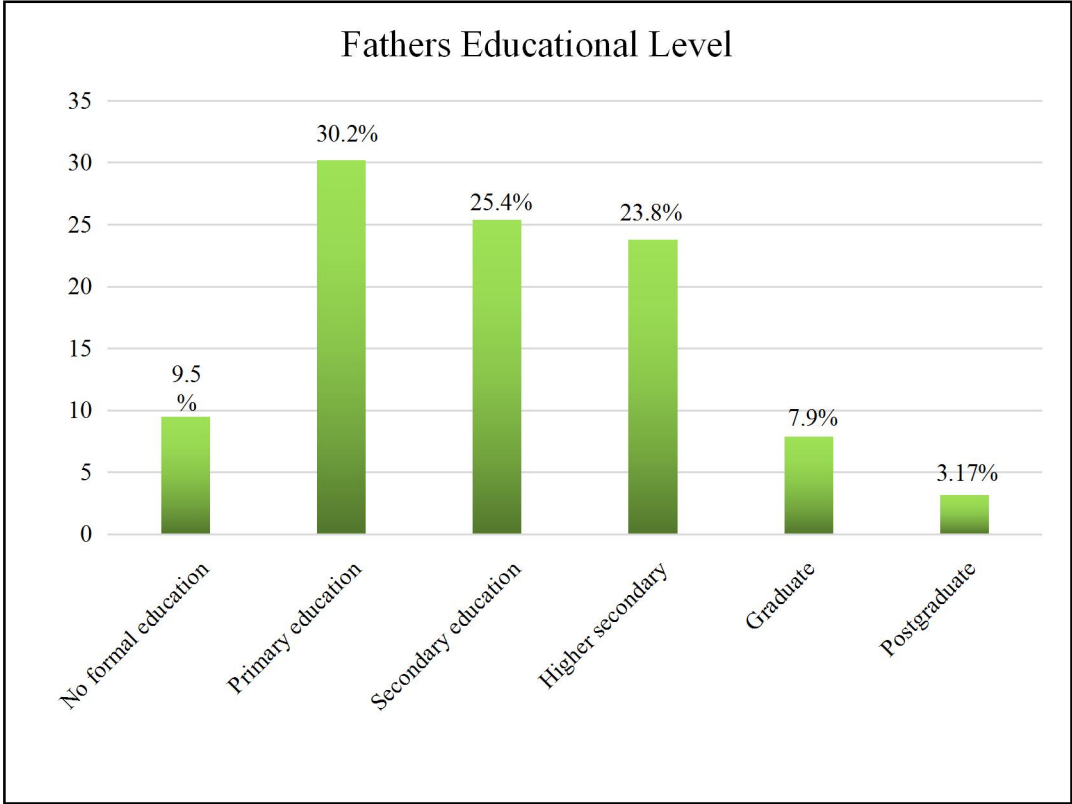
Source : Primary Data

Figure 25 illustrates the highest level of education completed by respondents' fathers. The data indicates that 30.2% of respondents' fathers have completed primary education, making it the

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most common educational level among the respondents' fathers. Secondary education follows, with 25.4% of fathers having attained this level. Additionally, 23.8% of fathers have completed higher secondary education, while 9.5% have no formal education at all. A smaller percentage, 7.9%, have obtained a graduate degree, and 3.17% have completed postgraduate education. This distribution highlights a range of educational backgrounds among respondents' fathers, with a predominant concentration at the primary and secondary education levels and a smaller proportion achieving higher education degrees. This variation in parental education levels can significantly influence students' educational aspirations and opportunities. For instance, fathers with higher educational attainment may be more likely to value and support their children's pursuit of higher education, whereas those with lower educational levels might face challenges in providing similar support or may prioritise different educational paths for their children. This diversity underscores the varying levels of parental influence on students' educational decisions and achievements.

Figure 26. Highest Level of Education Completed by the Respondent's Mother
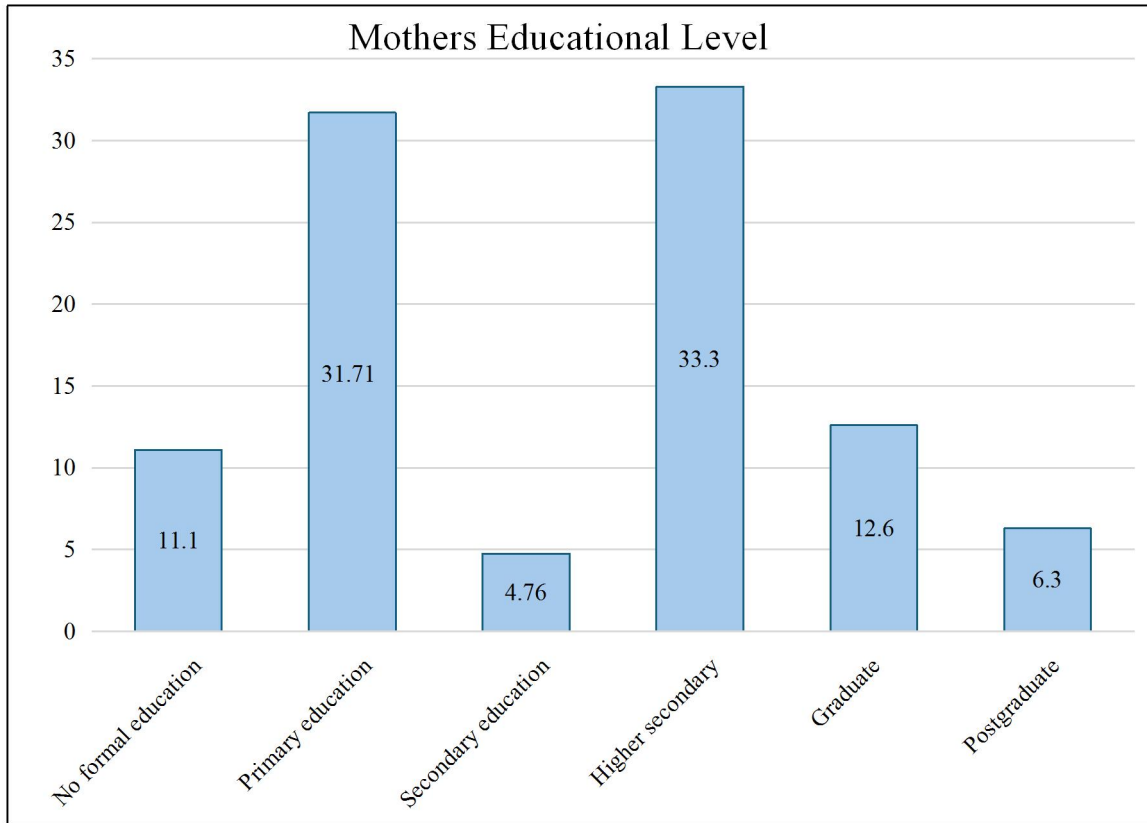
Figure 26 shows the highest level of education completed by respondents' mothers. The data indicates that 33.3% of mothers have completed higher secondary education, making it the most common educational level among the respondents' mothers. Primary education follows, with 31.71% of mothers having attained this level. Additionally, 12.6% of mothers have obtained a graduate degree, and 6.3% have completed postgraduate education. A smaller percentage, 4.76%, have achieved secondary education, while 11.1% of mothers have no formal education. This distribution highlights a range of educational backgrounds among respondents' mothers, with a significant proportion having completed higher secondary education and notable representation at the primary, graduate, and postgraduate levels. The varied educational attainment among mothers can influence their support for and expectations regarding their children's education, impacting the students' academic aspirations and opportunities.

Figure 27. Influence of Parental Education Level on the Decision to Pursue Higher Education
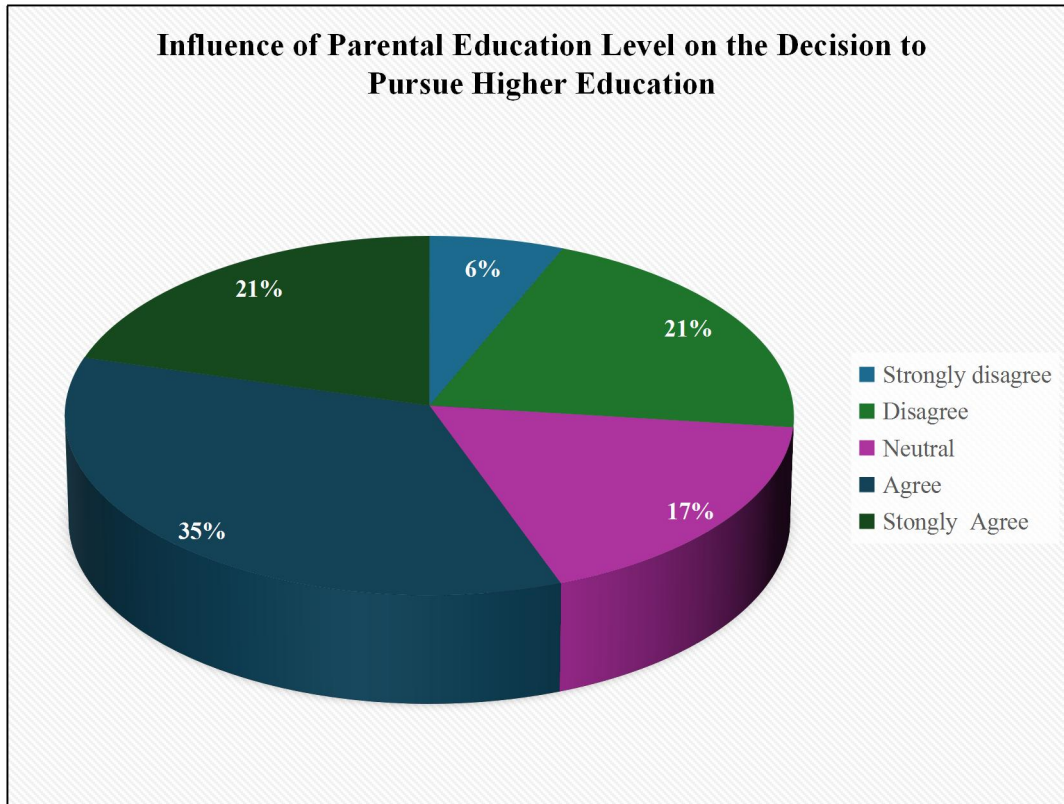
Source : Primary Data

Figure 27 illustrates the impact of parental education level on respondents' decisions to pursue higher education. The data reveals that 34.9% of respondents agree that their parents' educational background significantly influenced their decision to continue their studies. An additional 20.6% strongly agree, indicating that for more than half of the respondents, their parents' education levels played a pivotal role in shaping their educational aspirations. This suggests that higher parental education often correlates with a stronger emphasis on the importance of higher education, likely leading to greater encouragement and support for their children's academic pursuits. On the other hand, 20.6% of respondents disagree with the notion that their parents' education influenced their decision, indicating that other factors, such as personal motivation, peer influence, or socio-economic conditions, may have been more influential for this group. Additionally, 17.5% of respondents remain neutral, which could imply

that while parental education might have had some influence, it was neither a major driving force nor completely irrelevant in their decision to pursue higher education. Lastly, 6.3% strongly disagree, suggesting that for a small segment of the population, parental education had little to no impact on their educational decisions. This diversity in responses highlights that while parental education can be a significant factor, its influence is not universal and varies depending on individual circumstances, other influencing factors, and possibly the level of education attained by the parents themselves.

Figure 28. Respondents Perception of the Influence of Parent/Guardians on Their Educational Aspirations
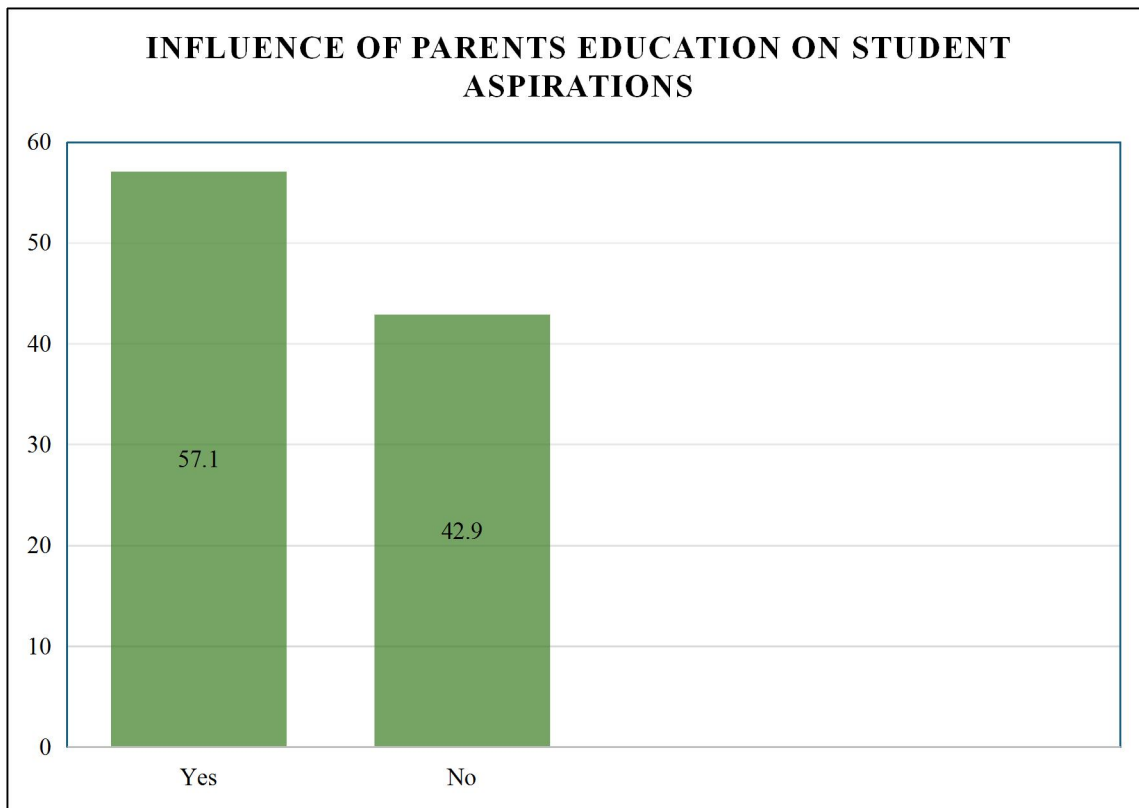
Source : Primary Data

Figure 28 shows the respondents' perceptions regarding the influence of their parents or guardians on their educational aspirations. The data indicates that 57.1% of respondents feel that their parents or guardians have a significant influence on their educational goals. This majority suggests that for more than half of the respondents, parental or guardian involvement plays a key

role in shaping their academic ambitions and decisions. In contrast, 42.9% of respondents do not perceive their parents or guardians as having a substantial impact on their educational aspirations. This proportion indicates that a significant number of respondents may rely more on personal motivations or external factors rather than parental influence when making decisions about their education. The results highlight a varied impact of parental or guardian influence, with a majority acknowledging its importance, while a notable minority do not perceive it as a major factor in their educational pursuits.

Figure 29. Influence of Parental Education on Higher Education Goals and Choices
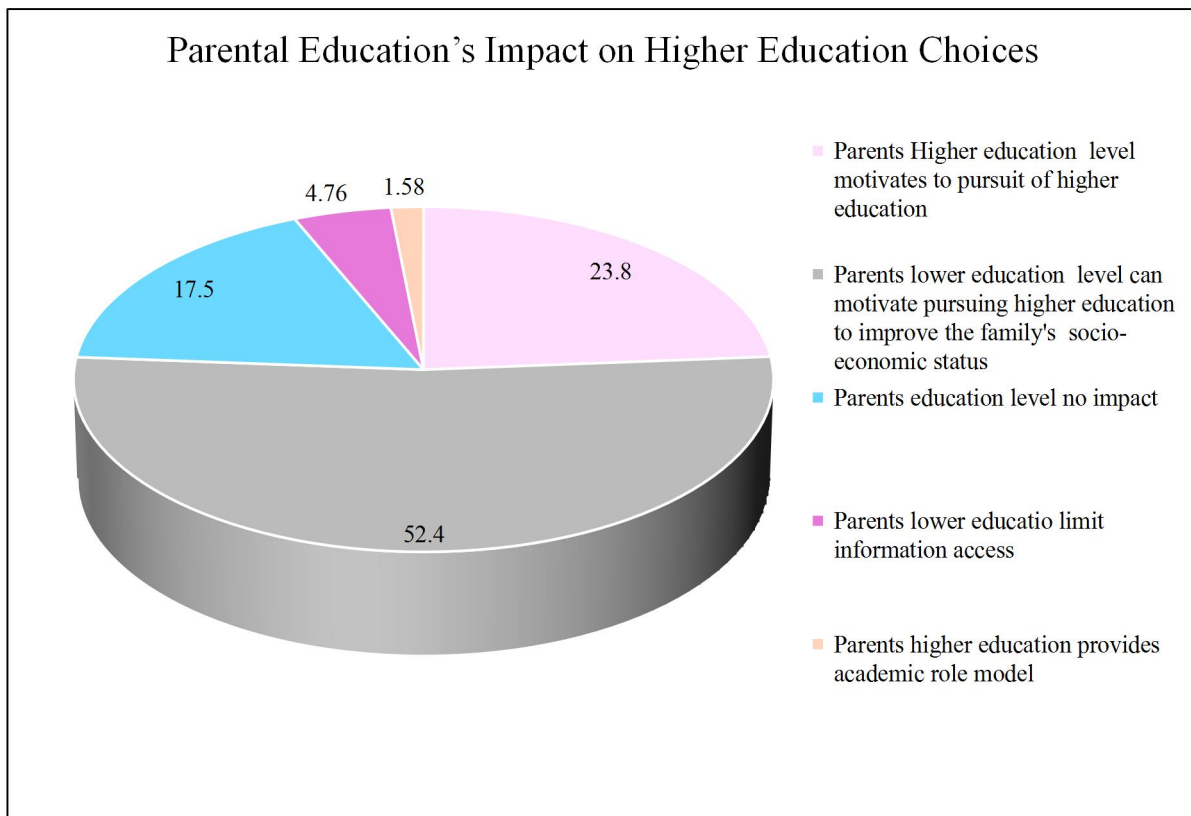
Source : Primary Data

The data highlights several ways in which parental education influences respondents' higher education goals and choices. A significant 52.4% of respondents believe that having parents with

lower educational levels can serve as a motivation to pursue higher education, driven by the desire to improve the family's socio-economic status. This suggests that many students view higher education as a pathway to greater economic stability and an opportunity to elevate their family's overall well-being. Additionally, 23.8% of respondents feel that having parents with higher education levels motivates them to pursue their own higher education goals. This reflects the idea that parents with advanced education can inspire their children to follow similar academic paths. On the other hand, 17.5% of respondents believe that their parents' education level has no impact on their higher education goals, indicating that some students may be more influenced by other factors, such as personal interests or external circumstances. Moreover, 4.76% of respondents perceive that having parents with lower education levels limits access to information, potentially hindering their educational opportunities. Lastly, a small proportion, 1.58%, view parents with higher education levels as role models of academic success, demonstrating that while this factor is recognised, it is not a predominant influence for most respondents.These findings underscore the complex ways in which parental education can shape students' aspirations and decisions regarding higher education, with both higher and lower parental education levels playing different motivational roles.

4.7. MAJOR CHALLENGES FACED BY MUSLIM GIRLS IN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

Figure 30. Pressure from Society or Community to Prioritize Marriage Over Education Among Respondents
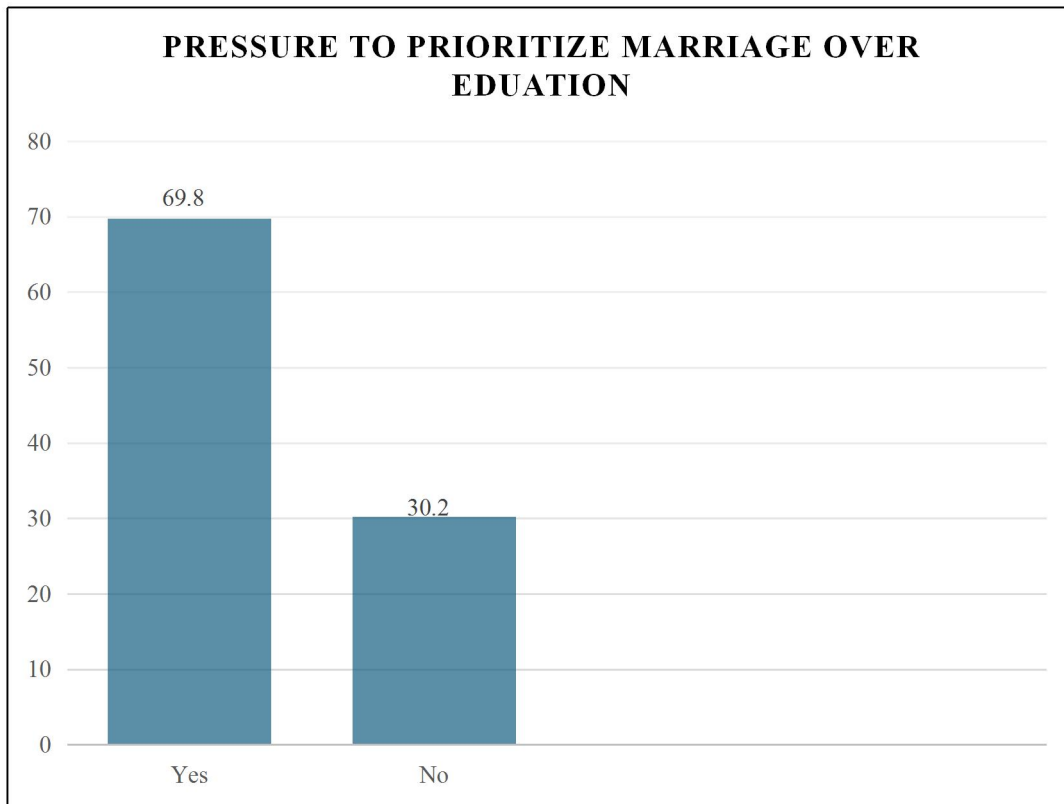
Source : Primary Data

The data indicates that a significant 69.8% of respondents feel pressure from their family or community to prioritise marriage over their educational pursuits. This suggests that for many students, particularly within certain cultural or social contexts, the expectation to marry can overshadow the desire or opportunity to continue with higher education. Such pressure can create substantial internal conflict, potentially leading to difficult decisions between following personal academic aspirations and adhering to family or community expectations. On the other hand, 30.2% of respondents report not experiencing this pressure, indicating that for a portion of the

population, education is given precedence, or they are less influenced by traditional societal norms that prioritise marriage. This disparity underscores the varied experiences among respondents, reflecting the influence of cultural, familial, and community dynamics on educational choices. The data highlights the challenge faced by many students who must navigate these external pressures while pursuing their educational goals, emphasising the need for greater support systems that advocate for educational advancement over traditional expectations.

Figure 31. Transportation Challenges Faced by Respondents in Attending College
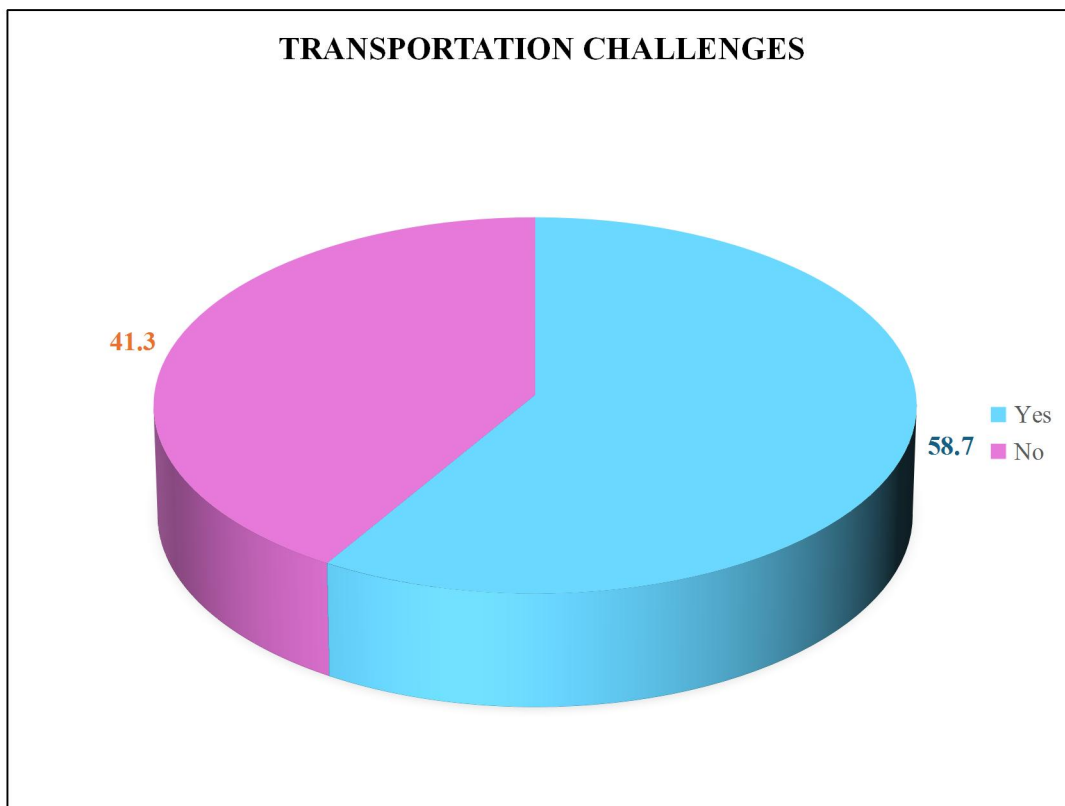
Figure 31 illustrates the transportation challenges faced by respondents in attending college. The data shows that 58.7% of respondents encounter difficulties related to commuting, indicating that transportation issues are a significant barrier for many students. These challenges may include unreliable public transportation, long travel distances, or financial constraints associated with commuting. Conversely, 41.3% of respondents do not face transportation challenges, suggesting that a notable proportion of students have adequate access to reliable transportation. This contrast highlights the need for targeted interventions to support students who struggle with commuting,

such as improved transportation options or financial assistance to ensure equitable access to educational opportunities for all students.

Figure 32. Impact of Safety Concerns on Regular College Attendance
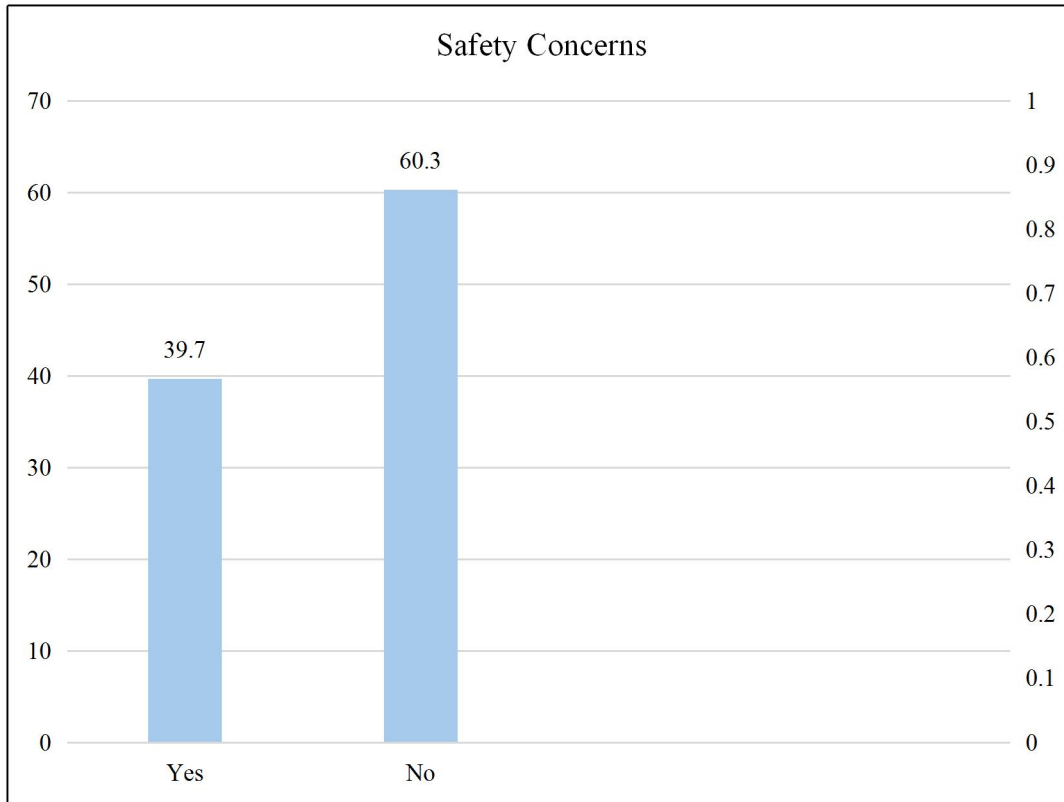
The data indicates that 39.7% of respondents are affected by safety concerns that impact their regular college attendance. This suggests that nearly four out of ten students face issues related to personal safety or security that influence their ability to attend classes consistently. Such concerns could include issues like campus safety, crime rates in the surrounding area, or inadequate security measures. Conversely, 60.3% of respondents report that safety concerns do not impact their regular attendance. This majority indicates that a significant proportion of students feel secure enough to attend college regularly without being hindered by safety issues. The findings highlight a divide in student experiences, with a notable minority facing safety-

related barriers while the majority do not perceive such concerns as a significant obstacle to their academic participation.

Figure 33. Prevalence of Religious Discrimination in College
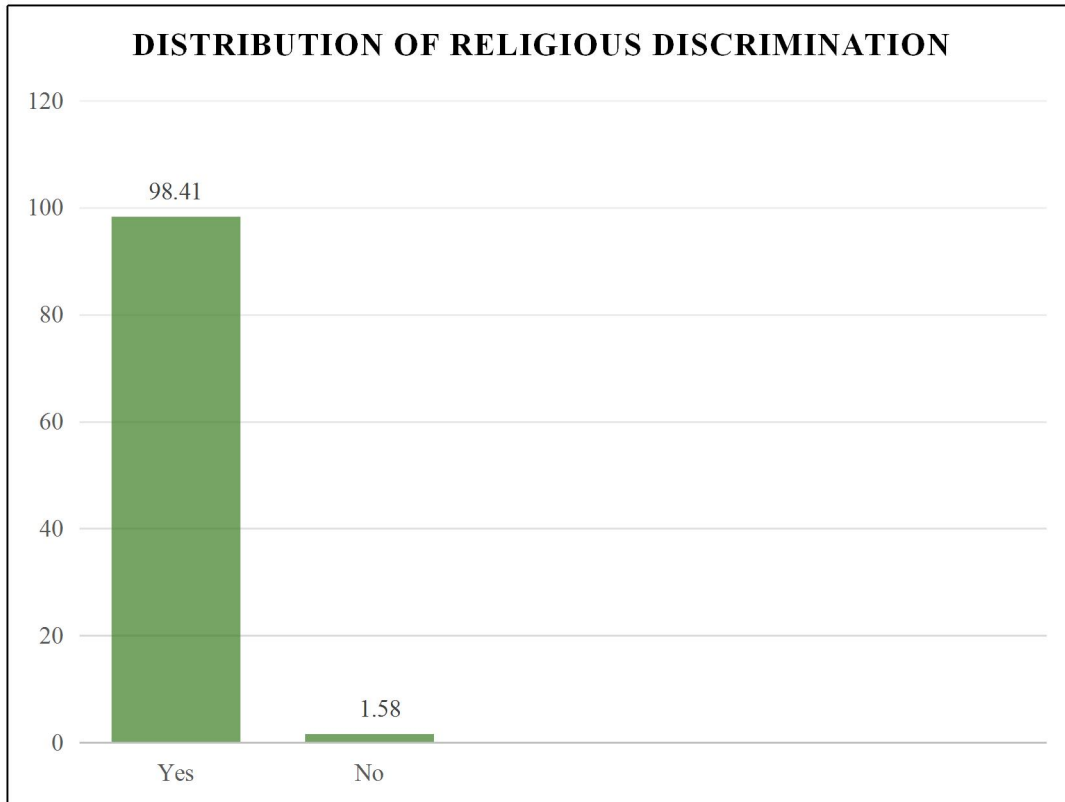
Figure 33 illustrates the prevalence of religious discrimination in college based on religion. The findings indicate that a very small percentage, 1.58%, of respondents report experiencing religious discrimination. This suggests that instances of religious discrimination are relatively uncommon among the student population. In contrast, a significant majority of 98.41% of respondents report not encountering religious discrimination in their college environment. This overwhelming majority indicates that most students perceive their college as a place where religious discrimination is not prevalent. The disparity between the small number of students who report discrimination and the large number who do not highlights that, for the vast majority, religious identity does not significantly affect their college experience. These results suggest that

religious tolerance is largely maintained within the college setting, although the small percentage of affected individuals points to the need for ongoing vigilance and support to ensure a fully inclusive environment.

Figure 34. Influence of Societal Expectation and Family Pressure on Career Choices

CAREER CHOICES PRESSURES
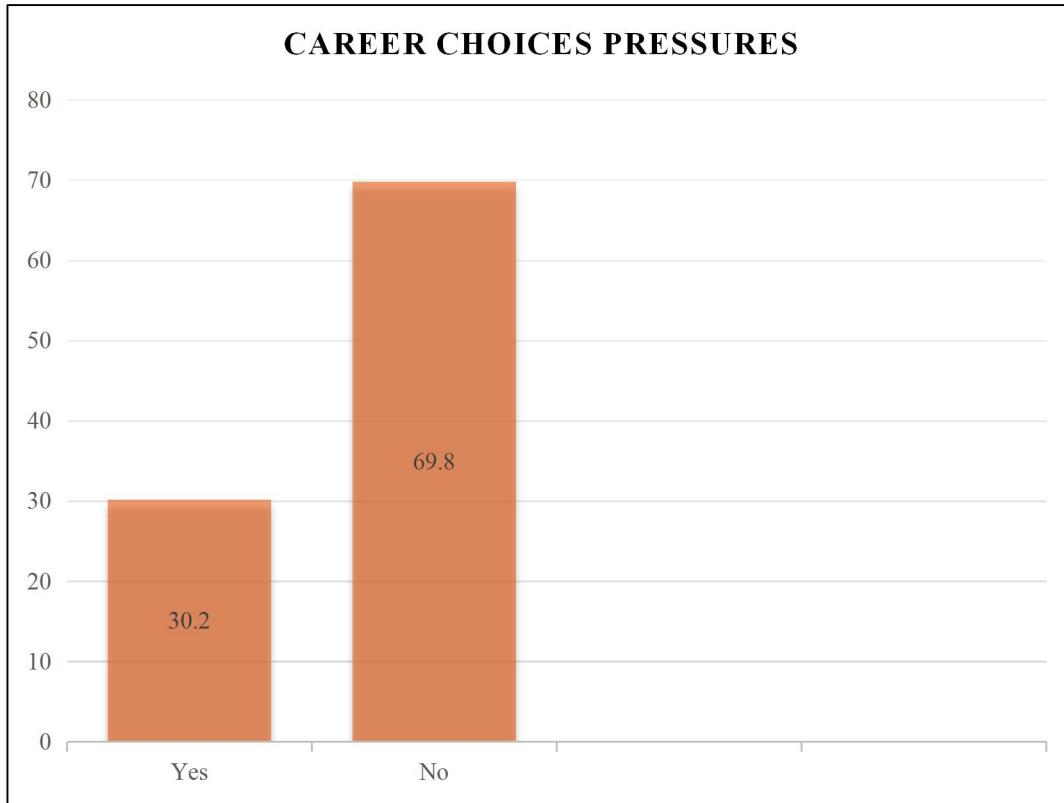
Source : Primary Data

Figure 34 presents the influence of societal expectations and family pressure on career choices. The data reveals that 30.2% of respondents feel that societal expectations and family pressure significantly impact their career decisions. This indicates that nearly one-third of students experience considerable pressure from societal norms and family expectations when choosing their career paths. In contrast, 69.8% of respondents report that societal expectations and family pressure do not significantly influence their career choices. This majority suggests that a larger proportion of students make career decisions based on their personal interests and goals rather

than external pressures. The findings highlight a notable divide: while a significant minority feels constrained by societal and familial expectations, the majority are able to pursue career paths based on their own preferences and aspirations. This discrepancy underscores the need to understand and address the varying degrees of influence that societal and family pressures can have on students' career decisions.

Figure 35. Experiences of Religious or Cultural Discrimination Among Respondents

EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION

Yes
13%

No
87%

- Yes
- No
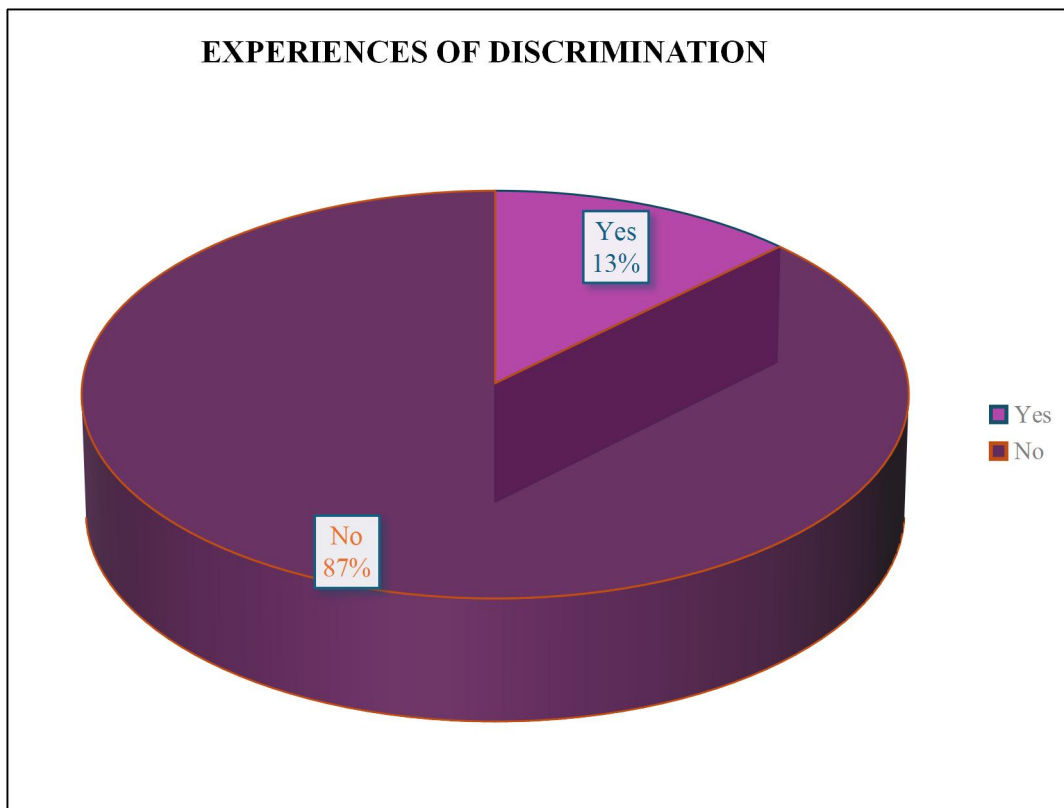
Source :Primary Data

Figure 35 examines the prevalence of religious or cultural discrimination among respondents. According to the data, 12.69% of respondents report experiencing such discrimination within their college environment. While this percentage represents a minority, it highlights a significant issue affecting a subset of students. These experiences of discrimination can impact their academic performance, personal well-being, and overall integration into the college community.

Conversely, 87.3% of respondents indicate that they do not encounter religious or cultural discrimination. This substantial majority suggests that, for most students, the college environment is perceived as inclusive and equitable. The data indicates that the majority of respondents feel that their academic institution supports diversity and maintains a respectful atmosphere.The contrast between the minority who experience religious or cultural discrimination and the majority who do not highlights a significant issue. While most respondents perceive their college environment as inclusive, the experiences of those who do face discrimination reveal areas of concern. The data reflects the importance of acknowledging and addressing these disparities to foster a more equitable academic environment.

Figure 36. Challenges in Balancing Academic Responsibilities and Household Chores
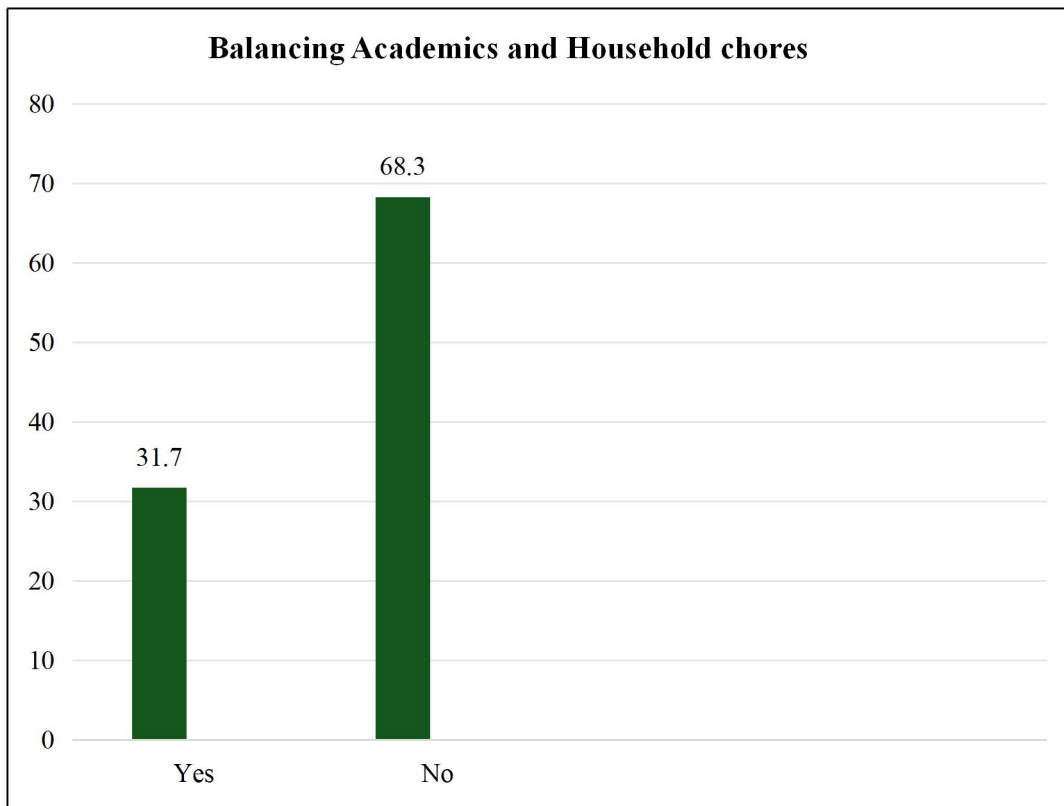
Source : Primary Data

The data reveals that 31.7% of respondents encounter difficulties in balancing their academic responsibilities with household chores. This indicates that a notable segment of students struggles with managing both their coursework and domestic duties simultaneously, which may

affect their academic performance and overall well-being. In contrast, a substantial 68.3% of respondents report that they do not face significant challenges in balancing these responsibilities. This majority suggests that most students are able to effectively manage their academic and household tasks without considerable difficulty. These findings highlight the diverse experiences among students regarding the balance between academic and domestic responsibilities. While a significant minority requires additional support to manage this balance, the majority appears to handle their dual roles successfully.

Figure 37. Respondents Perception of College Inclusiveness and Supportiveness
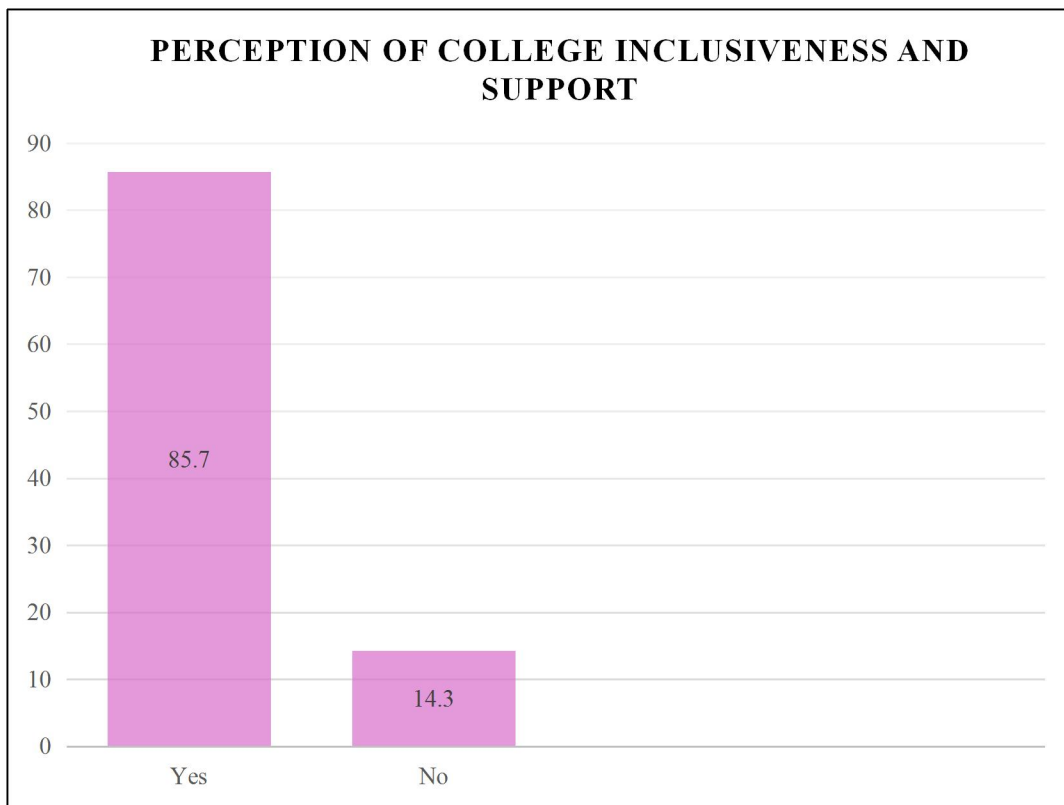
Source : Primary Data

The data indicates that 85.7% of respondents view their college environment as inclusive and supportive. This substantial majority reflects a positive perception among students regarding the college's efforts to create a welcoming and accommodating atmosphere. Such a high percentage suggests that most students feel that their institution effectively supports their academic and

personal needs, contributing to a more positive and equitable college experience. On the other hand, 14.3% of respondents do not perceive their college as inclusive or supportive. This minority indicates that some students may experience challenges or a lack of support within their institution. These individuals might face barriers that hinder their ability to fully engage with the college environment or achieve their academic goals. The findings emphasise the overall effectiveness of the college in fostering an inclusive atmosphere for most students, while also highlighting the need for ongoing improvements to address the concerns of those who feel less supported. This dual perspective underscores the importance of continually enhancing support services and inclusivity measures to ensure a positive experience for all students.

Figure 38. Distribution of Language Barriers Affecting Students Academic Performance
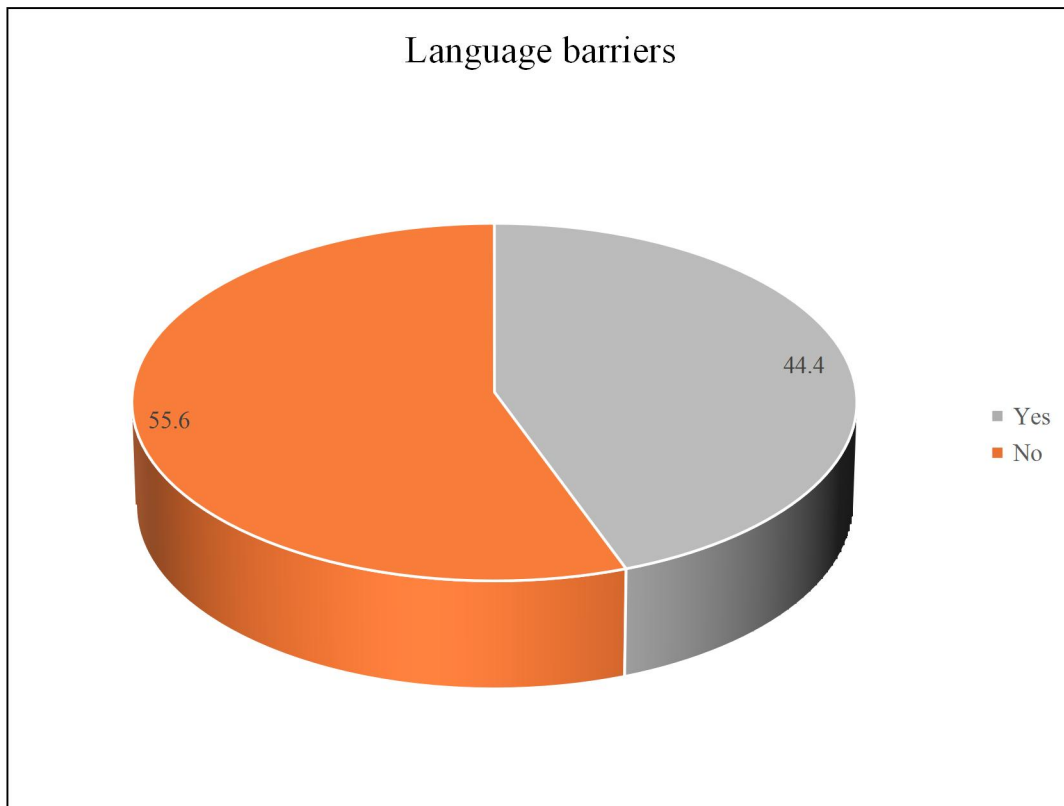
Source : Primary Data

The data indicates that 55.6% of respondents experience language barriers that impact their academic performance. This suggests that more than half of the students face challenges related to language, which can affect their ability to fully engage with course material and perform well academically. In contrast, 44.4% of respondents do not report language barriers affecting their

academic performance. This indicates that a substantial portion of students do not face significant language-related challenges in their studies. The findings highlight that while language barriers affect a majority of students, a significant minority is not impacted by these issues. This underscores the need for targeted support and resources to assist those who struggle with language barriers, aiming to improve their academic experience and performance.

Figure 39. Biggest Challenges Faced by Respondents in Pursuing Higher Education
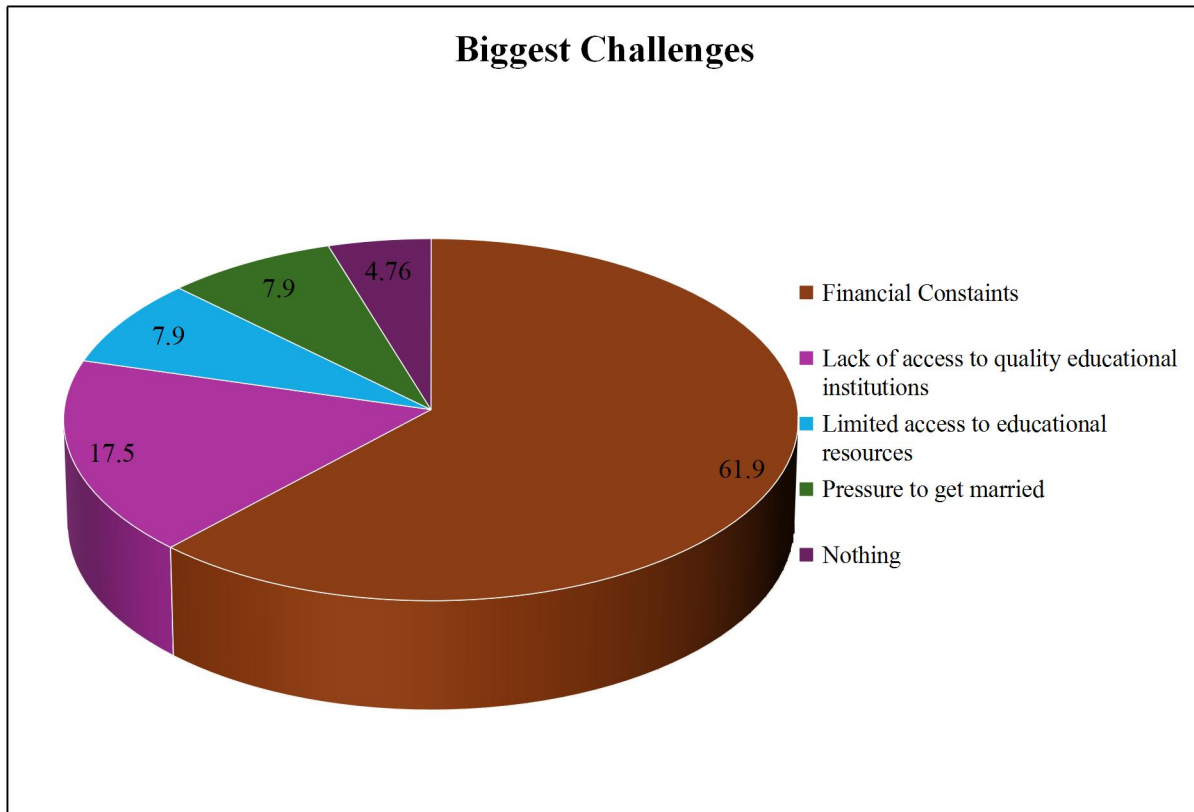
Source : Primary Data

The data indicates that financial constraints are the most significant challenge faced by respondents in pursuing higher education, with 61.9% of students identifying this as their primary obstacle. This suggests that a majority of students struggle with the costs associated with higher education, which can impact their ability to enrol or continue their studies. In addition, 17.5% of respondents face pressure to get married and start a family, which can interfere with their educational goals and aspirations. Another lack of access to quality educational institutions

and limited access to educational resources are reported by 7.9% of respondents each. These issues highlight that a portion of students encounter difficulties related to the availability and quality of educational opportunities and resources. Overall, 4.76% of respondents indicate that they do not face any significant challenges in pursuing higher education. This small percentage suggests that a few students experience minimal barriers in their educational journey.Overall, the findings reveal that financial constraints are the predominant challenge, with other factors such as societal pressures and access issues also playing a role in the difficulties students face in pursuing higher education.

CHAPTER – 5
FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the research on the barriers faced by Muslim girl students in pursuing higher education. The primary objective of this study was to identify and analyse the key challenges these students encounter, with a focus on financial constraints, family support, and the level of parental educational influence. The chapter is organised to first detail the major findings derived from the data analysis, emphasising how these factors impact students' ability to access and succeed in higher education. The findings highlight the significant role of financial difficulties and inadequate family support in hindering students' educational progress. Additionally, the level of parental educational influence emerges as a critical factor affecting students' aspirations and opportunities. The chapter will provide a detailed discussion on these major challenges and their implications for students' academic experiences. Following the presentation of findings, the chapter will offer a comprehensive conclusion that synthesises these results.

5.2. MAJOR FINDINGS

Financial Barriers Experienced by Students

A significant portion of Muslim girl students face financial difficulties in pursuing higher education. Despite some students receiving scholarships or financial aid, a substantial number do not benefit from such support. As a result, these students rely heavily on family contributions to cover their educational costs. However, these contributions are often insufficient to meet the full financial needs required for continuing their education.

Specifically, 65% of respondents did not receive any form of financial aid or scholarship. Among the students, 71.4% rely on their families for financial assistance. Additionally, the financial burden is intensified in households where only one member is working, a situation that affects

52.4% of the respondents. The impact of these financial constraints is significant. 15.9% of students experience financial difficulties that always affect their academic performance, while 46% face these challenges occasionally. This financial strain contributes to increased stress and reduced focus, ultimately impacting students' academic success and progress.

High Level of Family Support for Higher Education

Family support is a critical factor influencing the educational pursuits of Muslim girl students. A majority of students depend on their families for financial and emotional support, which are essential for students as they navigate the challenges of higher education. Effective family support involves providing financial assistance, encouraging academic goals, and offering emotional encouragement, all of which contribute significantly to students' academic success and overall well-being.

The data highlights the significant impact of family support on students' educational experiences. A substantial majority of 55.5% of respondents report that their parental or guardian support for pursuing higher education is very supportive, with an additional 31.7% finding it extremely supportive. This high level of support is crucial for maintaining motivation and overcoming obstacles. Furthermore, 49.2% of students consistently receive encouragement from their families regarding their academic goals, which contributes positively to their persistence and engagement in their studies. In terms of balancing academic and household responsibilities, a notable 87% of respondents prioritise their education over domestic duties. This prioritisation reflects the strong commitment of these students to their academic goals, despite competing demands at home. Parental perception of higher education's importance is also a significant factor. The data reveals that 55.5% of respondents strongly agree, and 36% agree that their parents or guardians view higher education as essential for future success, underscoring the value placed on education within these families. Support for providing educational resources is another critical aspect of family assistance. According to the data, 42.9% of respondents consider parental support in this area to be very supportive, while 33.3% find it supportive. This level of support is important for ensuring that students have access to the materials and resources needed to succeed academically. Additionally, sibling support plays a significant role, with 55.6% of

respondents describing their siblings as very supportive and 31.7% as supportive. Emotional support from the family is also notable, with 84.1% of respondents receiving such support, which is crucial for managing academic pressures and challenges effectively.

Parental Education Strongly Influences Daughters' Pursuit of Higher Education

The educational background and involvement of parents significantly influence the educational aspirations of Muslim girl students. Parents' views on education, particularly those with lower educational levels, play a critical role in shaping students' ambitions. Many students see their parents' educational limitations as a motivating factor, driving them to pursue higher education as a means to elevate their family's socio-economic status. This influence is not just about following in their parents' footsteps but also about striving for something more, using education as a tool for social and economic mobility. The data supports this, revealing that 57.1% of respondents perceive their parents as having a strong influence on their educational aspirations. Additionally, 52.4% of respondents believe that their parents' lower educational levels motivate them to pursue higher education to improve their family's socio-economic status. This demonstrates the significant impact of parental educational background on students' determination to succeed academically.

Pressure from Society or Community to Prioritise Marriage Over Education

The pressure from society and the community to prioritise marriage over education remains a significant barrier for Muslim girl students. Within many communities, cultural norms place considerable emphasis on early marriage, often viewing it as a critical milestone for young women. This expectation can conflict with the pursuit of higher education, creating a dilemma for students who wish to continue their studies. The societal insistence on marriage as a priority often leads to a perception that education is secondary or even unnecessary, especially for women. For many students, this pressure manifests in various forms, ranging from direct expectations from family members to more subtle societal cues that reinforce traditional gender roles. These pressures can lead to internal conflicts and stress as students struggle to balance their academic ambitions with the expectations placed upon them by their community.

The data from the study indicates that 69.8% of respondents have experienced this societal pressure to prioritise marriage over education. This overwhelming majority highlights the persistent and influential role that cultural norms and community expectations play in shaping the educational trajectories of Muslim girl students. The pressure to conform to these norms can hinder their ability to fully engage in and benefit from educational opportunities, ultimately limiting their potential for academic and professional success.

Students Do Not Face Religious Discrimination in College

The study highlights the need for an inclusive and supportive college environment for Muslim girl students. Ensuring that students can pursue their education without facing religious discrimination is crucial for their academic success and overall well-being. The findings suggest that the institution largely succeeds in creating such an environment, as the college does not discriminate against students based on their religion.

The data shows that an overwhelming majority of respondents, 98.41%, report not encountering any form of discrimination based on their religion. Only a small percentage, 1.58%, indicate that they experience religious discrimination. While the occurrence of such discrimination is rare, the findings underscore the importance of the college's ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance its inclusive environment, ensuring that all students feel safe and respected regardless of their religious beliefs.

Financial Stability as a Motive Factor for Pursuing Higher Education

The study identifies several key motives driving Muslim girl students to pursue higher education. The primary motivation for many students is the pursuit of financial stability. This factor is crucial for students, as they view higher education as a means to achieve long-term economic security and improve their socio-economic status. Additionally, career goals, personal interests, and family expectations also influence the decision to pursue higher education, though financial stability remains the most significant motivator.

A detailed analysis reveals that 52.4% of respondents prioritise financial stability when deciding to pursue higher education. This underscores the importance of economic considerations in

shaping students' educational aspirations and highlights the role that higher education plays in enhancing their future financial prospects.

Students as Primary Decision-Makers in Their Educational Choices

The findings underscore the critical role of personal autonomy in educational decision-making among Muslim girl students. A significant portion of respondents making their own educational choices highlights the importance of self-determination and the ability to shape their academic paths according to personal aspirations and goals.

A detailed analysis shows that 63.5% of respondents are responsible for making their own educational decisions. This substantial proportion indicates that most students have considerable control over their academic trajectories, reflecting their independence and self-direction. The freedom to make these decisions is a testament to the support they receive, particularly from their parents, who play a crucial role in providing this autonomy. Parental encouragement and respect for students' decision-making contribute to their confidence and ability to navigate their educational journeys effectively.

This autonomy not only empowers students but also significantly enhances their academic experience. By allowing students the freedom to choose their educational paths, parents facilitate a learning environment where students can pursue opportunities that align with their interests and career ambitions. This support is vital for fostering engagement and commitment to their studies, ultimately contributing to their long-term success and fulfilment in higher education.

College Perceived as More Inclusive and Supportive

The study assesses Muslim girl students' perceptions of inclusiveness and supportiveness within their college environment. The findings reveal a predominantly positive view regarding the college's approach to fostering an inclusive and supportive atmosphere for all students.

A substantial majority of respondents, specifically 85.7%, affirm that they perceive their college as being inclusive and supportive. This high percentage reflects a strong consensus among students that the institution effectively promotes an environment where diverse backgrounds and

needs are acknowledged and valued. The positive perception indicates that the college's efforts in creating a welcoming and supportive setting are largely successful, contributing to a conducive academic experience for the majority of students.

This perception of inclusiveness and supportiveness is crucial as it impacts students' overall well-being and academic engagement. A supportive college environment helps students feel valued and respected, which can enhance their educational experience and success. The findings highlight the importance of continued efforts by the college to maintain and strengthen this positive environment for all students.

Transportation Challenges Faced by Students

Transportation issues represent a notable barrier for many students pursuing higher education. Reliable and affordable transportation is essential for students to maintain regular attendance and fully engage in their academic responsibilities. Challenges in this area can include insufficient transportation options, long commutes, or high costs.

A substantial 58.7% of respondents report experiencing difficulties related to transportation. This high percentage highlights how pervasive these issues are among students. Such challenges can disrupt students' ability to attend classes regularly and effectively engage in their academic activities. Addressing transportation challenges is crucial for enhancing students' access to education.

Effectively Managing College Work and Household Chores

A significant majority of students effectively manage their college work and household chores. This capability is critical for maintaining their academic performance and overall well-being. 68.3% of respondents report that they do not encounter major difficulties in balancing their academic responsibilities with household chores. This high percentage indicates that for many students, managing both areas is a manageable task, allowing them to meet their educational obligations while fulfilling domestic duties. This balance is essential as it helps students avoid stress and interruptions in their studies, contributing to a more stable and successful college experience. The ability to handle these dual responsibilities efficiently reflects the students'

organisational skills and resilience, which are vital for their continued academic and personal success.

5.3. CONCLUSION

Higher education serves as a vital pathway for individual and societal advancement, offering opportunities for personal development, economic stability, and social mobility. For Muslim girl students, pursuing higher education is not only a means to achieve academic and career goals but also a significant step toward breaking socio-economic barriers and enhancing community welfare. This research highlights the crucial importance of higher education for Muslim girl students and the unique barriers they encounter. Family support emerges as a central theme, with a substantial portion of students benefiting from financial and emotional backing from their families. This support plays a critical role in overcoming challenges and sustaining motivation throughout their academic journey. Financial difficulties emerge as a significant barrier, with many students relying heavily on their families to cover educational expenses. The burden of these financial challenges is compounded by the limited availability of scholarships and financial aid, which leaves a substantial number of students struggling to balance their academic aspirations with the realities of their economic circumstances. The pressure to contribute to family income, alongside the cost of education, often forces these students to make difficult decisions that could compromise their educational pursuits. Family support, however, stands out as a decisive factor in enabling these students to overcome such barriers. The emotional and financial backing provided by families is crucial, offering a foundation upon which these students can build their academic careers. The influence of parents, particularly in terms of their educational background, plays a pivotal role in shaping their daughters' aspirations. Many Muslim girls are driven to pursue higher education not only as a means of personal development but also as a strategy to uplift their families' socio-economic status. This drive is particularly strong among those whose parents have lower levels of formal education, as these students see education as a pathway to improving their family's circumstances.

Nevertheless, societal pressures, particularly those related to gender roles and expectations around marriage, create additional hurdles for these students. In many cases, there is an

underlying tension between the desire to pursue higher education and the societal expectation to prioritise marriage and family life. This societal pressure can lead to internal conflicts and stress, making it even more challenging for these young women to focus on their studies. Despite these pressures, the determination and resilience of these students, coupled with the unwavering support of their families, enable them to persist in their educational endeavours. This study highlights the critical importance of understanding and addressing the unique challenges faced by Muslim girl students in their pursuit of higher education. By recognising the significance of family support, addressing financial barriers, and challenging societal norms that hinder educational progress, we can work towards creating an educational landscape where these young women are empowered to fully realise their potential and contribute meaningfully to society. The resilience and determination demonstrated by these students, despite the numerous challenges they face, serve as a powerful reminder of the transformative potential of education, not just for individuals but for entire communities.

APPENDIX 1. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 2. QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name :

2. Age.   :

3. Marital status :

4. What is your family's monthly income?

5. What is the highest level of education completed by your father?

- No formal education
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Higher secondary education
- Diploma/Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree

6. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?

- No formal education
- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Higher secondary education
- Diploma/Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree

7. What type of family do you belong to?

- Nuclear family
- joint family

- extended family
- Single parent family

8. How many siblings do you have?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

9. How important higher education for you?

- Not important at all
- Somewhat important
- Very important
- Extremely important

10. Have you experienced difficulty choosing a field of study or career path due to societal expectations or family pressure?

- Yes
- No

11. Have you experienced discrimination or bias due to your religion or cultural background?

- Yes
- No

12. Do you face pressure from your family or community to prioritize marriage over education?

- Yes
- No

13. How supportive are your parents/ guardians of your decision to pursue higher education?

- Not supportive at all

- Somewhat supportive

- Very supportive

- Extremely supportive

14. How often do you feel encouraged by your family to pursue your academic goals?

- Never

- Rarely

- Sometimes

- Often

- Always

15. How often do your parents/guardians attend academic events or meetings with you?

- Never

- Rarely

- Sometimes

- Often

- Always

16. Do you feel comfortable discussing your academic goals with your family?

- Yes

- No

17. What factors motivate you to pursue higher education?

- Family expectations

- Personal interest

- Career goals
- Financial stability

18. Do you feel that your family understands the importance of higher education for your future?

- Yes
- No

19. How do you think your parents' education levels have influenced your decision to pursue higher education?

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

20. How often do your parents discuss their own educational experiences with you?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

21. What is the biggest challenge you face in pursuing higher education?

- Financial constraints
- Lack of access to quality educational institutions
- Family or societal pressure to pursue a specific field of study
- Limited access to educational resources (e.g. books, online resources

- Other (please specify)

22. How does your parents' education level impact your higher education aspirations? (Select one or more)
    - My parents' higher education level motivates me to pursue higher education
    - My parents' lower education level encourages me to pursue higher education to improve our family's socio-economic status
    - My parents' education level has no impact on my higher education aspirations
    - My parents' higher education level creates pressure on me to pursue a specific field of study
    - My parents' higher education level provides me with a role model for academic success
    - My parents' lower education level makes it harder for them to guide me in my academic decisions
    - Other (please specify)

23. What is your father's occupation ?

24. What is your Mother's occupation?
25. How do you think your parents' education levels have influenced your decision to pursue higher education?
26. Do you think your parents/guardians' education level has influenced your own educational aspirations?
27. Does your father's education level motivate you to pursue higher education?
28. Does your mother's education level motivate you to pursue higher education?
29. How often do your parents discuss their own educational experiences with you?
30. How does your parents' education level impact your higher education aspirations?
31. Do you face pressure from your family or community to prioritize marriage over education?
32. Do you face any transportation challenges in attending college?

33. What is the biggest challenge you face in pursuing higher education?

34. How do your parents feel about you studying in a different city/state/country?

35. Are there safety concerns that hinder your ability to attend college regularly?

36. Have you experienced discrimination at college based on your religion?

37. Do you find balancing academic responsibilities and household chores challenging?

38. Do you feel your college environment is inclusive and supportive?

39. Do you face any language barriers in your studies?

40. Do you have access to a computer or laptop at home?