FEMALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS ON THEIR SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL FUTURE IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of female university students about their social and educational careers and factors that may promote or hinder their efforts to achieve their targets.

Method: Mixed method research design was followed to achieve the research objectives. Three thousand female university students were selected following a multiphase sampling technique to participate in the close-ended questionnaire that was used to collect the quantitative data in the first phase of data collection. Forty female students were randomly selected from the already selected pool of students in the second phase of data collection. An interview schedule was used to collect qualitative data from these 40 students. The qualitative data were analyzed with the help of NVivo following a thematic analysis approach

Main Findings: The results showed that the female university students are ready to move forward in their education and contribute effectively in the social spheres of life. Various educational, social, academic, and financial factors that hinder achieving their goals are also identified.

Applications of the Study: The results help to make educational activities more systematic, modern, and target-oriented.

Novelty/Originality of the Study: The activity contributes to identifying solutions to problems that are associated with the female students' empowerment and engagement in social and economic activities.

Keywords: Women Activism, Society, Religion, Education, Inequalities.

INTRODUCTION

Females in Pakistan face various challenges in getting access to higher education. These challenges range from personal/individual problems to discriminations in governments prepared policies and implementation plans. Pakistan remained the victim of terrorism for decades. A soft target of terrorists was female students and their institutions. Hundreds of girls' schools were attacked in tribal and remote areas of the country. An atmosphere was built in many areas of the country where it was difficult for women to attend educational institutions. Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) however came forward in many areas and attempted to raise awareness about the importance of women's education and strategies to remove barriers against women's education at all levels (Khan et al., 2018). A decrease in terror incidents in the country in previous years allowed the government to re-construct girls' schools and convince parents to send their daughters for education.

Parents' inconsistent attitude towards daughters' education is another barrier that prevails in Pakistani society. Many parents especially from low-income families see daughters' education in the context of financial return and benefits (Purewal & Hashmi, 2015). Females have the least chances to support their parents after their marriages. Males however are considered the backbone for any family's income. Sons' education, consequently, is the priority of many parents, especially those from low and middle-income families. Girls are generally ignored and deprived in these circumstances. This disparity is higher for higher education due to the high cost of education and other related expenditures. It is found that various factors contribute to determining parents' attitude towards their daughter's education and lack of financial resources is among major factors in this regard (Ali et al., 2015). Parents with middle and lower-middle-class prefer to spend their savings on sons' education rather than on the daughters' education. Such attitude results in a rapid drop out and left out of female students on different levels.

As a part of other factors, the institutional environment with its various components functions to reduce female students' participation in academic activities. Curricula and hidden curricula in educational institutions prepare females to perform domestic functions. In many cases, families and institutions implicitly support each other in demotivating and discouraging female students for higher education and professional career (Abid & Khan, 2017). Females' prime responsibility as depicted in curricula and social norms is caring for family and perform domestic tasks. This type of environment produces a hegemonic sense of self-responsibility in home matters and avoidance from higher education and professional career that are assumed as barriers in performing family and household responsibilities.

Pakistani universities cost very high fees and other charges to undergraduate and postgraduate students. The fees are comparatively higher in medical, engineering, and other professional programs. In many instances, female students cannot afford fees and other associated charges and resultantly remain absent from education (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The high cost of education, in general, is a violation of fundamental human rights. All school, college, and university-going age women are supposed to be enrolled in the respective educational institution. But poverty, lack of financial resources, and high academic costs make achieving this task difficult for the majority of families (Ali et al., 2015). It contributes to marginalizing the already marginalized group in society. Data also reveal regional disparities in women's participation in education. The women in areas with lower average household income have a comparatively lower likeliness to get higher education (Shaikh et al., 2015). The women residing in areas with better income opportunities have a comparatively higher chance of getting an education. This principle is although applicable for the boys' education but the intensity of disparity is higher for female education. The majority of higher education institutions especially for women are established in urban centers which have boosted the migration of families to urban areas.

Unemployment and reduced economic opportunities for educated women is a setback to governments' efforts for promoting women education. Women's participation in economic activities is confined to finding jobs in some particular fields. Many women fail in finding required jobs as per their preference. Socio-economic culture of Pakistan offers minimum opportunity and space to women for initiating businesses or other entrepreneurial activities. A large number of educated females, consequently, remain un-employed (Choudhry et al., 2019). This phenomenon discourages young women and their families to invest in women's education. Fear of unemployment functions as a barrier for women to continue their education and spend time and money on an activity that, in their perceptions, will not pay back to them. A common person who is unaware of the social importance of education sees it useless unless it becomes a source of income and financial stability for her family.

The fifth and tenth sustainable development goals concentrate on empowering women and eliminating all types of inequalities and discriminations against the most vulnerable persons and groups in the societies. Women constitute a major section of these vulnerable groups and the situation worsens where multiple inequalities intersect. The inequalities against women generally commence from the pre-birth care of the child to her social, cultural, and professional acceptability in the society (United Nations Development Program, 2016). Various reports unveil that the situation has been improved in many countries in the last decades but Pakistan could not transform its social and administrative structure making it more welcoming and receptive to women's contribution to the socio-economic development of the country (Yusuf, 2016). The majority of the developing countries used education as an instrument to reduce gender inequalities and increase women's commitment and capacity to participate in the social and educational decision-making processes (Bayeh, 2016; Samarakoon & Parinduri, 2015). Voices are raised in Pakistan in the favor of education as a prerequisite to women's empowerment. Education is accepted as a major contributory factor in developing confidence, autonomy, and self-determination in women to control major aspects of their lives (Malik & Courtney, 2011).

This research explores the views of Pakistani women studying in the universities to understand how university education has prepared them for their social and educational future. More specifically, the study answers the following research questions.

RQ$_1$ -What are the perceptions of female university students in the sample about their social and educational future and what are their plans to achieve their future targets?

RQ$_2$ What are the factors that, according to female university students, support or hinder their progress towards social and educational future?

RQ$_3$ How do the female university students perceive the role of universities in shaping their social and educational goals and plans to achieve these goals?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Women in Pakistan face various types of discrimination and inequalities in many fields of their social and educational life. The human development index places Pakistani women at a significantly lower position in the ranking of the suitability of out of homework environment, access to quality education, share in policymaking, and access to health care facilities (United Nations Development Program, 2016). National and international reports generally focus on the disparities in terms of enrollments, employment, income, and availability of opportunities. The government of Pakistan is a signatory of various national and international agreements to reduce all discrimination against women. Empowerment rests on the freedom of choice and path to achieve life objectives. Two different and opposite forces are in action in society. Education as a promoter of equality and empowerment prepares women for socio-economic struggle. Different social, educational, and cultural factors however work against enlightened sections of the societies (Campbell, 2017). Many people and groups prefer their traditional and old living styles in which equality and well-being of other marginalized individuals and groups are compromised at high levels (Aziz et al., 2021).

Various social and economic factors remained a big barrier in raising women's access to higher education in the country. The state however took various steps to counter these issues. New universities and sub-campuses have been established in remote districts of the country in the last decades. It significantly enhanced access to higher education for both genders residing in disadvantaged areas of the country. The establishment of women's universities in urban centers is also an initiative that supports enhanced women's participation in higher education. Data show that gap between male and female enrollment at higher education level is reducing gradually. It is observed that 667912 female students were enrolled in different postgraduate programs in public and private sector universities in 2016-17 out of a total enrollment of 1463279 in these institutions (NEMIS-AEPAM, 2018). Access to higher education is already significantly low for both male and female university-going age population (16-23 years) due to multiple reasons. But the share of women in this population who got the opportunity to avail higher education is comparatively lower than the males. This phenomenon might be a result of prevailing biases in academic expenditures on the daughter's and son's education (Aslam & Kingdon, 2008). The problem multiplies for the women where multiple deprivations prevail simultaneously (Naseer et al., 2021). One major example of this phenomenon is the rural-based university-going-age females. Females in rural areas have minimal opportunities for higher education. Females' enrollment is compatible with males in many rural areas of the country at the primary level. But it gradually decreases for elementary, secondary, and higher education levels. The major reason for this gradual decline is the lack of higher education institutions in rural and remote areas of the country. People with limited financial resources have no way to send their females to urban centers for higher education. This deprivation consequently produces other social dilemmas like early marriages and deteriorated health conditions of the females (Kosec et al., 2021). Research demonstrates that generally, parents in rural areas are in favour of education for their daughters. It is lack of educational opportunities that stops the girls' education on different levels (Buzdar & Ali, 2011).

Different reports demonstrate that governments' shaking commitments and lowering capacities to better the situation are among major threats to global efforts against all types of discrimination and inequalities. The Pakistani government, despite limited resources, has made significant efforts to reduce social and educational discrimination against women in the country. The share of women in Pakistani parliament reached 20.0% whereas women participation in the neighboring country India was 12.2% (United Nations Development Program, 2016). The disparity in higher education also emerged as a limited (44 %) share of female students in total enrollment in public and private universities at the postgraduate level (Khan et al., 2017). The persistent discriminations in academic and educational contexts have reduced future opportunities for women in practical lives.

Another important aspect of this predicament is the learning contents and contexts in which women are provided education. The Pakistani education system establishes its roots in a religious patriarchal, tribal, agricultural society that is reluctant to adopt western secular and liberal values (Sajjad et al., 2017). We can find a long debate on the gender biases prevailing in the contents and reading materials offered in public and private institutions (Ullah & Skelton, 2013). Critics claim that many of these discriminatory steps are implemented in the name of moral regularization and religious values (Toor, 2007). Government and other representatives of the contemporary education system in Pakistan, however, claim that things are going to be better with time. Curricula review committees have removed objectionable contents from the curricula. Legislations have been made on federal and provincial levels to facilitate mainstreaming of women in the socio-economic development of the country. Efforts are under the process of transforming teaching and instructional discourse under the new policies to achieve human development goals (Malik & Courtney, 2011; Shaukat et al., 2014). Frequent exposure of females to these persistent disparities may influence their expectations and plans about the future. The basic purpose of this activity was to explore the empowerment of female university students for their social and educational future in Pakistan. The female university students' perceptions about the factors that may support or hinder the achievements of their goals are also collected in the study. The analysis traces the role of contemporary education in shaping the students' viewpoints at the end of the inquiry.

RESEARCH METHOD

The major focus of the activity remained on situation analysis. The perceptions of female university students currently enrolled in public and private sector universities are analyzed to reach conclusions. A mixed-method research approach was followed to gain a broad and deep understanding of the issue. The review of relevant literature helped in finalizing the research instruments. A close-ended questionnaire comprising 60 items was developed on a 5-point Likert scale and used to collect female university students' perceptions about different aspects of their future, and factors that support or hinder their efforts. The instrument was validated by collecting expert opinions about the format and structure of the instrument and its pilot testing. The instrument along with the description of the research problem, research objectives, research questions, and major characteristics of the expected sample was presented to 5 academicians/researchers working in the field of sociology of education. Suggestions provided by the experts were incorporated in the draft of the questionnaire. This revised draft of the questionnaire was administered to 200 randomly selected female university students for pilot testing. The participants in this stage were asked to identify any ambiguity and confusion in the statements. It was encouraging that the majority of the

participants endorsed the face and content validity of the questionnaire. Values of Cronbach Alpha coefficients of all 17 factors were calculated. All factors demonstrated high levels of reliability coefficient.

One hundred and eighty-six universities/degree awarding institutions of different categories recognized by higher education commission (HEC) Pakistan were functioning in the country in data collection time. Female students studying in these universities formed the population of this research. Three thousand female university students selected following multiphase sampling techniques were invited to participate in the study. Twenty universities were purposefully selected in the first phase of the sampling. Inclusion of the universities of different categories (general / medical / agricultural / engineering / education / women etc.) was ensured in this process. Five departments from each university were randomly selected in the second phase of the sampling. 30 female students from each department were again randomly selected in the final stage of the sampling.

The selected students were requested to voluntarily participate in the study. Unwilling students were replaced with randomly selected alternates. The researchers personally visited the selected departments and met the participants. They informed students the research topic, major objectives, and purpose of the data collection. The questionnaires were presented in small booklets and the respondents were given ample time to fill them. Collected data are analyzed to reach conclusions. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques are used to analyze the quantitative data.

Two students from the participants of each university were selected for interviews in the next phase of the inquiry. Forty interviews were conducted in total. The purpose of the interviews was to explore the social, cultural, financial, and academic roots of the students' perceptions about their social and professional future. The qualitative data helped in getting a deep understanding of the issue under investigation. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed with the assistance of the NVivo application. The thematic analysis approach was used to reach conclusions. The findings drawn from quantitative and qualitative data analysis are discussed in broader socio-cultural and economic contexts of different areas of the country. The outcome of the proposed activity is a set of guidelines to use education more effectively for promoting women empowerment and reducing all types of inequalities against women.

RESULTS

The female university students provided their perceptions on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). It is observed that the female university students who participated in the inquiry are comparatively more inclined to participate in philanthropic activities (M = 3.64) as a part of their social and educational struggle. The female university students are also optimistic about the fulfillment of their social needs (M = 3.53), social acceptability (M = 3.46), and opportunities for socio-educational empowerment (M = 3.44). The female university students in the sample also show positive perceptions about prospective social inclusion (M=3.24), receiving social support in the future (M = 3.23), social participation (M= 3.22), and personal autonomy (M = 3.15). The female university students who participated in the study did not support their participation in educational activities (M = 2.82) and provision of gender equality (M = 2.93) in their prospective social lives.

As for the female university students' perceptions about their professional future, the accumulative opinion of the students supports the idea that their current education is relevant to their future goals (M = 3.63). The female students' perceptions remained positive for the availability of employment opportunities (M = 3.52) and prospective professional satisfaction (M = 3.45). The majority of the female university students who participated in the inquiry do not show satisfaction with the workplace environment (M = 2.87), availability of professional development opportunities (M = 2.94), and equitable remuneration (M = 2.99).

Table 1: Mean values to show the female university students' views about their social and educational future

Sr. No.	Factors	Mean Values
1	Personal Autonomy	3.15
2	Social Empowerment	3.41
3	Social Participation	3.22
4	Participation in Philanthropic Activities	3.64
5	Educational Participation	2.82
6	Fulfillment of Social Needs	3.53
7	Social Acceptability	3.46
8	Gender equality	2.93
9	Social Support	3.23
10	Social inclusion	3.24
11	Relevance of Education	3.63
12	Availability of Employment Opportunities	3.52

13	Adequacy of Workplace Environment	2.87
14	Professional Development Opportunities	2.94
15	Professional Equality	2.98
16	Professional Satisfaction	3.45

Female university students' perceptions about different factors of their social and professional future show different trends in their beliefs and concerns for practical lives. The female university students show maximum likeness for participating in philanthropic activities in the future. Active participation in educational activities is however least attractive activity for the female university students who participated in the study. The students' perceptions about various factors of their educational future show that maximum university students who participated in the study demonstrate satisfaction with the relevance of their education with their career goals. A major concern of the female university students who participated in the study is about the adequacy of the workplace environment. Similarly, the female university students who participated in the inquiry do not show optimism towards the provision of professional development opportunities, equitable remunerations, and professional equality.

Forty female university students (02 from each selected university) were interviewed in the second phase of the data collection. The focus of the interviews was on exploring the social, cultural, financial, and academic roots of the female students' perceptions and concerns about their future. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed with the help of the NVivo application. NVivo text analysis feature helps in sorting out the relevant texts from the transcripts and extracting themes. Initially, the word tag cloud was generated to assess the frequency of various words used by the interviewees. The word tag cloud is presented in figure 1. It shows that education, society, family, people, teaching, and students are among the most frequently used words in the interviews. The female university students also used the words of future, army job, profession, hurdles, challenges, and support system in significant frequency. The frequency of words shows the trends prevailing in the women university students' perceptions about their future and factors affecting their perceptions.

To further the qualitative analysis of the data, treemaps were generated by searching four frequently used words. These words include society, education, profession, and challenges. It is observed that the word society is mainly used to show the female university students' intentions to involve themselves in social and philanthropic activities. Some female students however show concerns that society might be a hurdle for them in achieving their social and professional objectives. The word education is commonly used to show students' formal learning in educational institutions and the acquisition of social and psychological capital through education. Some students also used the words indicating the education system of the country and the student's intention to invest in the education sector. The use of the word profession is much diversified in the sample. The students unveil their plans using these words and risks associated with selecting their profession in the future. Another word - that is frequently used - is "challenge". The female university students highlight various challenges that they may face in their professional and social lives. The word is also used to represent the female university students' awareness and planning strategies to counter forthcoming challenges in their professional and social practices in their lives.

achievement admission army Job aware Challenges change children confidence content create CSS degree depends education face family father females financial free future getting girls give goal good government guidance help helpful home hurdles inspired institute issue job needy now one open organization people plan practical profession provide providing required social society students study support supportive system talk teacher teaching things think time university want welfare well work

Figure 1: Word Tag Cloud representing a repetition of words associated with different themes

Source: Author[s] themselves

After exploring the qualitative data through word tag and word tree, transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed to extract the themes and sub-themes. Data were coded in five primary and twenty child nodes. The extent of coding against each node is presented in figure 2. The primary extracted themes include perceived professional goals, philanthropic goals, perceived determinants, barriers, and solutions to achieve the professional and philanthropic goals. These themes have different subthemes. Findings unveil the factors determining the female university students' perceptions about their professional and social future. The findings also reveal the female students' perceptions about the potential barriers; they may face in achieving their objectives and their possible solutions. The determinants of the students' perceptions are also extracted and presented in the report.

Cluster analysis was also run to generate visual patterns of the nodes' groupings (Figure 3). Visual graphics presented in Figure 3 reveal connectivity and associations among various nodes. The purpose of generating visual patterns of the extracted nodes is to demonstrate how various themes and sub-themes (denoted as nodes in the graphical presentation) are inter-related. It is also helpful in understanding the common roots of various themes as well as their connecting points.

The graphics show that the female university students' perceptions are widely divided into two major groups which are further divided into sub-groups. Major perceived barriers of the female students are inter-related with their targets. The presence of 'family support' in this category demonstrates that the female students generally talk about family support to solve the issues when they expressed their domestic, social, and financial barriers. A similar connection is found among the students' desire to win scholarships and their perceived barriers as well as their philanthropic targets. Among the determinants of the female university students' perceptions about their social and educational future, family, personal interest and social factors are interrelated. The female students perceived academic barriers have an association with the role of education in solving their academic barriers and they both relate to teachers as determinants of the female students' perceptions. The female university students' desire to get a higher education is connected with their target to get a public sector job. The female university students' desire to start their own business and get private-sector jobs are also interconnected.
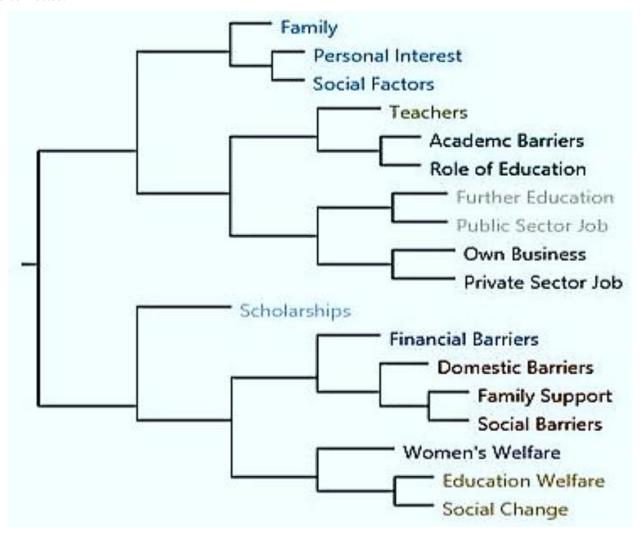

Figure 2: The visualized pattern of nodes' grouping generated through cluster analysis

Source: Author[s] themselves

All themes and sub-themes extracted through the data analysis procedure are reported in the following pages.
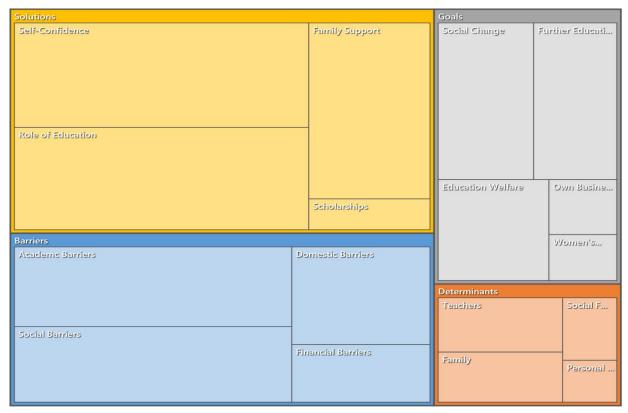
Figure 3: TreeMap - Extent of coding references

Source: Author[s] themselves

DISCUSSIONS

The female students' perceptions about their social and educational future reveal various concerns and fears about their future lives. The participants show uncertainty about their educational participation and the status of gender equality in their social lives. Similarly, they are not strong enough in their perceptions about their autonomy in the future. The female university students, although, do not show negative expressions about other aspects of their social and educational lives but the mean scores to express their agreement levels are less than 3.55 on all indicators on 5 points Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Literature postulates that the religiously motivated social norms have changed the nature of women's role in Pakistani society (Anjum et al., 2019). This study supports this idea. The patriarchal norms have influenced common women's approach to her life and society. The effects of the patriarchal nature of Pakistani society on the female response are of two but opposite types. Many women get strength from the challenges and emerge as more confident and aware people to combat socio-cultural barriers. A part of the findings drawn from qualitative data endorses this idea. The female university students demonstrate great confidence in their abilities and skills and are committed that they will overcome the challenges and achieve their social and professional careers.

The other type of effect on the women emerges is creating psychological distress and pessimism among the women who face challenges. Anjum et al. (2019) have highlighted this aspect of social and cultural obstacles for women. The students' perceptions about their expected educational experiences in the current study endorse the findings of Anjum et al. (2019). Women may demonstrate fear of success in a conservative and suffocated environment as an outcome of pessimism and uncertainty they face in society. These types of sentiments are apparent in the female university students' beliefs about their future. The female university students who participated in the study are least satisfied with the adequacy of the workplace environment, professional development opportunities, equitable remunerations, and professional equality for women. In the qualitative section of the study, the dissatisfaction of the female students was further explored through semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study not only confirm the results of previous research regarding the concerns of Pakistani women about the prospects of their career, but they also unveil the disastrous consequences of these concerns for their future. Among major social barriers, pro-patriarchal religious norms are major hurdles for women in their independent educational and professional lives. This area is frequently explored in various studies in Pakistan (Sarwar & Imran, 2019). This study unveils various academic, domestic, and financial factors as well, which combining the aforementioned barriers, have the

potential to create numerous challenges for female students in achieving their future goals. It is observed that congested and conservative social and educational environments have limited the career choices of educated women.

Teachers, family, and personal interests (to a large extent) on the one side push female students to pursue their goals. Various academic, social, domestic, and financial barriers, on the other side, challenge the women's commitments and compel them towards an unwanted future. Teachers are a major source of inspiration and determinant of their future goals. Many female university students unveil that they set their future goals under the inspiration of their teachers. However, simultaneously the students also unveil various academic barriers in their way to success. For example, the female university students think that the curricula at all levels of education in Pakistan need revision and improvements. The female university students highlighted that the curricula are outdated and focus on cramming rather than creating higher-order thinking skills among the students. Lack of rationality, reasoning, and other higher-order thinking skills reduces the female students' chances of success in socio-educational challenges in their practical lives. The graduates from this system also face challenges in competitive exams for getting jobs and attitude tests for winning scholarships or getting admission in international universities. The inadequacy of curricula must be a long-debated topic in Pakistan (Imran & Wyatt, 2019). It is previously studied in the academic context exploring its negative effects on the students learning and personality-related factors. This study uncovers how inadequate and outdated curricula are creating hurdles for female university students in achieving their career goals, especially in politics. The study highlights the severity of the problem, especially for female students of marginalized and remote areas associating it with prevailing social, cultural, and educational challenges for the women. The students from deprived and marginalized geographic areas of the country invest in education for a better career through obtaining a quality education. The academic barriers create hurdles and constraints for the female students in the given context. A realization that they are subject to gender discrimination in family, society, and workplace prevails in female university students. The participants however demonstrate satisfaction with the relevance of their academic programs with their future goals and availability of employment opportunities. The students' perceptions in interview data reveal that the trends are now changing in the country and female university students are ready to follow diversified and variety of career goals rather than focusing only on getting a public sector job. It is observed that the female university students are interested in getting private-sector jobs and involve themselves in entrepreneurial activities. Similarly, the students show their likeliness to compete for scholarships for getting further education.

Discussing solutions to the challenges, the female university students demonstrate that they have trust in their abilities and skills in this regard. This self-confidence is a major source of inspiration and motivation for them. Education must develop self-confidence and self-trust in women. The role of education in promoting empowerment and autonomy is also supported by various studies conducted in this socio-educational environment (Noureen, 2015). The students however add that family support will also help them in achieving their educational targets. Some students opine that their education enables them to struggle for achieving their goals. Similarly, the students think that they can overcome their financial challenges by winning scholarships.

CONCLUSIONS

The study explores that teachers, family, social support, and the students' interests are among the factors that support women in their social and educational endeavors. Many students see their teachers as role models and get inspiration. Similarly, family members and overall family support are reported as motivating factors for many of the female students' efforts for a better career. Social factors that support female students in pursuing their social, educational, and professional goals are diversified and broad. For example, social prestige associated with politics and different jobs like central superior services (CSS), and teaching compels many students to adopt these professions. Any students who are willing to work for women's welfare and other social welfare fields are also motivated by society and socio-educational factors. The students' interests emerge as catalysts that push them towards attaining their goals.

Thus, this study concludes that despite various drawbacks, education is still a major change agent. The female university students accept that the education has given them confidence and awareness of social and educational matters. The majority of students are inspired by their teachers. Education has helped the female students in setting their goals and devising strategies to achieve their targets. There is, however, a need to make educational activities more systematic, modern, and target-oriented to make them more effective and supportive for female university students.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This activity fundamentally is limited to the analysis of the contemporary situation in this regard and the identification of factors that support or hinder women to achieve their goals. The inquiry has the potential to suggest workable suggestions for promoting women's empowerment through education.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The current study will help to explore the achievement of 5th and 10th sustainable goals in Pakistan. The 5th sustainable goal is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and the 10th goal is to reduce inequality within and among countries.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Muhammad Ayub Buzdar: Devised the main idea of the inquiry and wrote the paper.

Hamid Ikram: Framed the research design and analyzed the data.

Shahnaz Perveen: Contributed to data collection and editing the manuscript.

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