

The Social Problems of Female Research Scholars During Research: An Investigation

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the social and academic problems faced by female research scholars while conducting their academic research. This study has used a survey-based quantitative research design. The female scholars in the faculty of social sciences, university of Peshawar is the population for this study. University of Peshawar has thirteen departments in the faculty of Social Sciences. The total population is 257 while a sample of 86 female scholars has been taken for this study. The sample includes M. Phil. and Ph. D. scholars of these 13 departments. Data regarding the problems faced by these female scholars while conducting their researches was collected by using a questionnaire. The questionnaire gathered the data in the form of a Likert Scale. The above mentioned thirteen departments of social sciences were personally visited for collecting primary data from the scholars. It was noted during the survey that if classes are arranged in the morning it will be easy for the female students to attend. A mixed approach was found after analysis of the data. Many students were found to be happy and fully satisfied with the arrangements in their respective departments while many others placed their concerns regarding the issues they were facing during their research. According to their responses, transportation to/from university, unavailability of printing facility and the unsatisfactory hostel accommodation were the common issues faced by many of them which become a hurdle in the smooth progression of their academia and research. It was also found that travelling in the local transport compels a number of students to leave their studies. The findings of the study show a significant impact on the research and academia of female scholars due to the above-mentioned issues.

Keywords: social, academic, problems faced by female scholars, challenges

Background of the study

It has been observed that female scholars face numerous problems during research studies due to multiple responsibilities. Because of their engagements with families and jobs they may not be able to give full

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attention to their studies. That's the main reason why I have chosen to work on my study titled " The social and academic problems faced by female scholars during their academic research" in order to enlighten the main causes which become a hurdle in the academia and research of female scholars. The researcher is looking to explore if these problems influence the personal life of females or not? And up to what extent these problems may affect their academic assignments? The researcher wants to investigate how women balance their studies, employment and family errands alongside kids?

Compared to bachelor's females, the situation for working females pursuing further studies after marriage is different. Working females require more assistance and special treatment from their spouses at home, colleagues in the office, and teachers at learning places.

This study contributes to the understanding of the degree of collaboration that a female may demand that she gets various fellows of the social order in order to carry out her responsibilities efficiently. In the general public, each individual face various difficulties. So, women also face obstacles in the nature of scholastic pursuits.

Literature Review

Importance of Research

Education is regarded as a positive aspect of any country's progress. It not only plays a crucial role in improving an individual's knowledge, ambition, and vision, but it also plays a crucial role in a country's economic and social development. The understanding of this truth has increased the necessity and desire to start and construct educational programs immediately, not only for financial development but also for social harmony and well-being (Noureen & Awan, 2011). Achieving a higher level of education provides a person with several advantages. Higher education has a significant impact on one's authority to make decisions; for example, it will bring one's emphasis closer to voter engagement and societal commitment. (Dee, 2004). It improves distinct accountability toward societal effort. People with a higher level of educational attainment appreciate their social responsibility and are more

likely to join social organizations and volunteer for progressive causes. (Brand, 2010).

Societies strive to maximize the value of their human capital in order to achieve social and economic development, and providing a higher level of education to both men and women is a crucial component of this. (Fatima, 2010). Additionally, it is expected that female participation in higher education would not only result in increased labor pressure but will also improve quality of life. Furthermore, particularly well-educated women can contribute to a population that is healthier and better-nourished (Jejeebhoy, 1995) Despite various initiatives to reduce gender disparity in education, it continues to exist internationally and across the country. (Education for All National Review Report, 2015).

Challenges Faced by Female Research Scholars

There are various problems indicated for female seeking higher education, one of them is the financial issue. It has been observed that a low relation of females enrolling in higher education is typically owing to a deficiency of funding to support higher research (Khalid & Mujahid-Mukhtar, 2002), Parents having more choice for sons' schooling than daughters (Maqsood, Maqsood, & Raza, 2012). Along with the hurdles, there are a number of strategies suggested for girls pursuing higher education ambitions if they work on their time management capabilities so that they could have a balance between family and their studies and create an effective domestic connection with excellent academic results. (Forster & Offei-Ansah, 2012).

Limited Study on the Problems of Female Scholars

Developing a comprehensive understanding of the powerful motivational factors that encourage them to obtain a degree, as well as the issues they are facing and the coping strategies they use to counteract them, should not only help us to identify existing impediments and how they were overcome, but also assist career advisors/professionals and

policymakers in considering such women's experiences when addressing current problems.

If we focus on the previous researches and look into the experiences of Pakistani women who pursued the higher education at the post graduate level, we can easily conclude that how much they are determined and motivated for higher education and as well as the problems they had in achieving their academic goals and the strategies they employed to achieve them. The availability of inspiring instructors as role models, as well as an understanding of employment expectations, has shifted the major motivators for women to pursue higher education. It has been found that instructors have an important role in inspiring students and to interact them in a learning centered way (Allen, Witt, & Wheelless, 2006). Women in the modern era referred to their female instructors served as an inspiration and source of motivating for them to seek further education. A male teacher was not mentioned as a source of inspiration by any of the female scholars.

Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter covers research methods, the nature of the study, the study's population, sample size and techniques, the study's design, research instruments, data analysis procedure and ethical issues.

Data Collection Tools

The study is descriptive in nature and mixed method research. In which large-scale quantitative data and small-scale qualitative data is obtained to investigate the social and academic problems faced by female scholars during their academic research. The finest examination of the subject under inquiry is provided by the research plan. The study is a descriptive survey that necessitates a qualitative description and analysis of the issues and their influence on female scholars' performance. A questionnaire and an interview guide were used to collect data. In which large-scale quantitative data was collected first, followed by small-scale qualitative data. The questionnaire was used for collecting quantitative

data and interviews for qualitative data. The study's major goal was to learn more about the social and intellectual issues that female researchers encounter when conducting research. A questionnaire is an effective tool for data collection in survey type of research (Roopa & Rani, 2012).

Population of the Study

A population is a collection of people who share qualities that the researcher is interested in (Best & Khan, 2008). The study's participants were members of the University of Peshawar's faculty of social sciences. Total departments in the faculty of the Social Sciences University of Peshawar are 13. The names of the departments are mentioned below.

Institute of Education and Research
Political science department
Psychology department
Economics department
Statistics department
Criminology department
Gender studies
Regional studies
Sociology department
Peace and conflict
Social anthropology
Law college

Sample of the Study

Systematic sampling approaches are less time-consuming, yet they still provide the benefits of a random sample (Brown, 1947). Systematic sampling is a form of probability sampling approach in which individuals of a bigger population are chosen at random from a larger population but at a definite, periodic interval. By dividing the population size by the required sample size, the sampling interval is computed. (Bryman & Bell 2003).

In the same way that basic random samples are created, the researcher creates a list of every single female scholar in her demographic. After that, she just selects every *k*th member on her list to create a

systematic sample. But what is k , and where does one start the selection process from the list of population elements? The selection interval, or the distance between the components you choose for inclusion in the research, is denoted by the letter k (Davis 2005).

Researcher wants to survey 86 female scholars of social sciences department university of Peshawar, and in the department, there are total 257 female's availability is there. Her selection interval, or k , is 3. She divides the total number of population elements by the sample size she desires to arrive at 3. Sample of this study is consisting of only 86 female scholars, through the following formula the sample size may obtained.

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{\text{Population size}}{\text{Interval}}$$

We have taken the interval 3, while the population size is 257, so the sample size we obtained is 86.

Table of the age of respondents of questionnaire is given below

Age of Respondents		
Construct	Options	Frequency
Age	25 Years Less	15
Age	30 Years Less	33
Age	35 Years Less	23
Age	40 Years Less	15
Total		86

Marital Status of Respondent Female Scholars is Given Below

Marital Status	No of Female
Married	37

Un-Married	49
Total	86

Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaires and interviews were used as a data collection tool. The questionnaire was used to collect data from female research scholars. The interview was performed to gather information from department heads.

Questionnaire as Tool of Research

A questionnaire is a research tool that consists of a set of questions (or other forms of prompts) designed to collect data from respondents. The Statistical Society of London devised the questionnaire in 1838. (Gault, RH 1907). Questionnaires offer several advantages over other forms of surveys in that they are inexpensive, do not take as much work from the questionnaire as verbal or telephone surveys, and frequently include standardized responses that make data collection easy. (Kumar, R. 2011).

The questionnaire was comprised of four parts demographic section, social and academic problems, the effect of social and academic problems, and cooperation while there was a total of 61 questions. The questionnaire was used to collect relevant information regarding the social and academic problems faced by female scholars. Information was collected about the level of cooperation females get from the family and society.

The researcher received a permission letter from the Director of the Institute of Education and Research, University of Peshawar, after the proposed study was approved. The letter was used to ask the heads for permission to administer the survey and conduct the interviews. The major focus was on gathering data using efficient and dependable resources. The information was gathered with attention using design devices such as questionnaires and interview schedules. Self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data.

The questionnaire was filled by females of M.Phil. and Ph.D. program to get information regarding their academic problems, the impact of these problems on their studies, and how they keep a balance between their multiple tasks. Five-point Likert scales was used for this purpose. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher herself and then was cross-checked by her supervisor and from H. O. D of Gender studies. The researcher personally visits concerned departments to collect reliable data.

Number of respondent scholars from each department is given in the table below

Table

S. No	Departments	No of Scholars Sample
1	Department of Education	13
2	Department of Political Science	7
3	Department of Psychology	7
4	Department of Economics	6
5	Department of Criminology	5
6	Department of Gender Studies	7
7	Department of Regional Studies	6
8	Department of Sociology	6
9	Department of Peace & Conflict	5
10	Department of Social Anthropology	7
11	Department of Law	6

12	Department of International Relations	5
13	Department of Social Work	6
	Total	86

Piloting the research instrument (questionnaire)

For piloting and refining the questionnaire 13 research students of I E R, University of Peshawar were requested to fill the questionnaire. Among these 13 female respondents, six were married and five were unmarried. They all were willing to participate in the piloting process. The responses were then analyzed for refinement. As an amendment, three questions in the questionnaire were added. Other amendments were also made to the final version of the questionnaire in the light of the points raised by the respondents.

Semi Structured Interview

A semi-structured interview is used as a data gathering tool which is one of the most helpful methods for qualitative educational research (Scott & Usher, 1999). It is the most effective method for obtaining other people's interpretations and descriptions (Stake, 1995). Because of its flexibility, the interview is an essential method for data collection in the social sciences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) and helps researchers in getting insight into a person's knowledge, perceptions, values, and beliefs (Tuckman, 1972). The semi structured interview is most suited for drawing out participants' opinions and perspectives on difficult problems. It also enables the researcher to elicit further information, clarification, and elaboration from the respondent (Barribal & Whiles, 1994; Cohen Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Interview Schedule

The research questions guided the semi-structured in-depth interview schedule. Before creating the final draft of the interview schedule, previous research and other reading material were carefully analyzed. The interview was constructed using two sources: a survey of related literature and the researcher's own experience as a scholar at Peshawar University institute of education and research.

The researcher made use of the interview guide for the collection of data from the head of departments regarding their experiences as supervisors of female scholars. Since the aim of the study was to investigate the social and academic problems of female research scholars, a semi-structured interview was used to gather data, formulating questions during the fieldwork; the researcher has asked to follow up questions on an issue that was important for the study. The questions were asked by the head of departments of University of Peshawar's Faculty of Social Sciences. The responses of heads were recorded during the interview and then transcribed entirely. The transcription was followed by an analysis of the interview, the analysis was done through thematic analysis, where the data has been coded and then organized in themes.

Table of Head of Department is Given Below

S. No	Departments
1	Department of Education
2	Department of Political Science
3	Department of Psychology
4	Department of Economics
5	Department of Criminology

6	Department of Gender Studies
7	Department of Regional Studies
8	Department of Sociology
9	Department of Peace & Conflict
10	Department of Social Anthropology
11	Department of Law
12	Department of International Relations
13	Department of Social Work

Objective of the Study

1. To explore different social and academic problems faced by female scholars while conducting research.

Research Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between social and academic problems of female researcher while conducting research

Analysis of Data

The collected quantitative statistics have been tabulated in the way as shown below:

Table 1

Social and academic problems

S. No	Statements	A	SA	D	SD	U	Chi P-Value
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Your classes are arranged in morning	39 (57.4)	20 (29.4)	0 (0)	9 (13.2)	0 (0)	20.3 .000
Your classes are arranged in late timings.	6 (8.8)	9 13.2	34 50.0	11 (16.2)	8 11.8	39.2 .000
Your classes are arranged on holydays	11 (16.2)	5 (7.4)	29 (42.6)	15 (22.1)	8 (11.8)	25.8 .000
It is easy for you to take classes in late timings.	8 (11.8)	5 (7.4)	12 (17.6)	29 (42.6)	14 (20.6)	25.3 .000
It is easy for you to take classes on holydays.	8 (11.8)	17 (25.0)	8 (11.8)	27 (39.7)	8 (11.8)	20.9 .000
Your department has good security system.	51 (75.0)	5 (7.4)	0 (0%)	4 (5.9)	8 (11.8)	91.1 .000
Your library is closed in evening.	29 (42.6)	24 (35.3)	9 (13.2)	0 (0%)	6 (8.8)	22.2 .000
Your department has generator facility.	43 (63.2)	17 (25.0)	8 (11.8)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	29.1 .000
You avoid going to supervisor in late timing.	24 (35.3)	9 (13.2)	29 (42.6)	0 (0%)	6 (8.8)	22.2 .000
You have printout facility in your department.	11 (16.2)	5 (7.4)	25 (36.8)	25 (36.8)	2 (2.9)	34.9 .000

You have separate common room.	36 (52.9)	28 (41.2)	0 (0)	4 (5.9)	0 (0%)	24.4 .000
Your university is near to your home.	23 (33.8)	12 (17.6)	19 (27.9)	14 (20.6)	0 (0%)	4.3 .226
In local transport traveling is difficult for you.	20 (29.4)	14 (20.6)	25 (36.8)	9 (13.2)	0 (0)	8.5 .035
Due to transport problem females avoid to admit their selves in studies.	22 (32.4)	5 (7.4)	14 (20.6)	7 (10.3)	20 (29.4)	16.8 .002
You wish that your department provides you transport facility.	38 (55.9)	30 (44.1)	0 (00)	0 (00)	0 (00)	.94 .332
Internet facility is available in your department.	27 (39.70)	24 (35.3)	9 (13.2)	6 (8.8)	2 (2.9)	36.8 .000
Environment of your university is secure.	36 (52.9)	15 (22.1)	3 (4.4)	8 (11.8)	6 (8.8)	51.8 .000
Due to university environment parents discourage their daughters from higher studies.	18 (26.5)	7 (10.3)	15 (22.1)	13 (19.1)	15 (22.1)	4.9 .293

Item no 1 indicated that 86.8% of the respondents agreed to the statement "your classes are arranged in morning", 13.2% of the respondents disagreed to the statements whereas only 0% were undecided. Item no 2 indicated that 22% of the respondents agreed to the statement "Your classes are arranged in late timings", 66.2% of the respondents disagreed to the statement whereas only 11.8 % were undecided. Item no 3 indicated that 23.6 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "Your classes are arranged on holydays", 64.7 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 11.8% were undecided. Item no 4 indicated that 19.2 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "It is easy for you to take classes in late timings", 60.2 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 20.6% were undecided. Item no 5 indicated that 36.8 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "It is easy for you to take classes on holydays", 51.5 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 11.8 % were undecided. Item no 6 indicated that 82.4 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "your department has good security system", 5.9 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 11.8 % were undecided. Item no 7 indicated that 77.9 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "your library is closed in the evening", 13.2 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 8.8 % were undecided. Item no 8 indicated that 88.2 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "your department has generator facility", 11.8 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 0.0 % were undecided. Item no 9 indicated that 48.5 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "You avoid going to supervisor in late timing", 42.6 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 8.8 % were undecided. Item no 10 indicated that 23.6 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "you have printout facility in your department", 73.6 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 2.9 % were undecided. Item no 11 indicated that 94.1 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "you have separate common room", 5.9 % of

the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 0.0 % was undecided. Item no 12 indicated that 51.4 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "Your University is near to your home", 48.5 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 0.0 % were undecided. Item no 13 indicated that 50 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "In local transport traveling is difficult for you", 50 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 0.0 % were undecided. Item no 14 indicated that 39.8 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "Due to transport problem females avoid admitting their selves in studies", 30.9 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 29.4 % were undecided. Item no 15 indicated that 100 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "you wish that your department provides you transport facility", 0.0 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 0.0 % were undecided. Item no 16 indicated that 75 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "Internet facility is available in your department", 22 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 2.9 % were undecided. Item no 17 indicated that 74 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "Environment of your university is secure", 16.2 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 8.8 % were undecided. Item no 18 indicated that 36.8 % of the respondents were agreed to the statement "Due to university environment parents discourage their daughters from higher studies", 41.2 % of the respondents were disagreed to the statements whereas only 22.1 % were undecided.

Table 2

Correlations between social problem and academic performance of research scholar

	Academic problem	Social problem
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Academic problem	Pearson Correlation	1	.544**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	68	68
Social problem	Pearson Correlation	.544**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	68	68

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Data presented in Table shows Pearson correlation. The result showing significant positive correlations between social problem and academic performance of research scholar $r = .544$, significant value is 0.000 the sample size is 68. Hence there is positive correlation between social problem and academic performance of research scholar

Conclusion

Social and Academic Problems: In the light of the collected data the academic problems of the female research scholars were concluded. Collected data shows that research scholars enjoy a lot of facilities like the majority of females respond that their classes are arranged in the morning and it is easy for them to take classes in the morning. Their university has a good security system. Their department has a generator facility, internet facility, separate common room. The females were satisfied with the environment of the university. But there were some issues which serve as a hurdle in achieving their academic tasks eg they wish that their department provide transport facility to them so that they can travel easily and safely. Due to travelling problem in local transport, many female research scholars start thinking to get rid of studies. They were having no printout facility within the department. Some research scholars staying in the university hostels were not satisfied with hostel conditions. All these problems put a very significant impact on scholar's academics.

Recommendations

1. Government may try to give education, welfare and health to male and female scholars on an equal basis.
2. Government at the national and provincial level and administrations of universities may try to control the violence faced by females in their institutions and workplace, which may raise the confidence of scholars and may improve the environment of institutions as a result of enrollment of females in research studies may increase.
3. Females better understand the problems faced by females so a chance to be a part of the economic sector of institutions may be given to females so that they may make such policies which may be more suitable for female students of higher studies.

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