

# Women universities as agents of change

Outline

1. Introduction

2. Conceptualizing "Women Universities as Agents of change"

3. How women universities are agents of change?

3.1 Educating women and men equally empowers political culture and strengthens democracy

Case in point: haski about democracy

3.2 Better living standards are ensured when women are educated

impressive

Full

41/100

(no interrogative sentences)

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Case in point: Scandinavian  
Countries

3.3 Reduced gender disparity  
in women educated societies

Case in point: WEF Report  
2023 - Philippines

3.4 Vocational education makes  
women financially independent

Case in point: Skill based  
programmes in  
Punjab

3.5 Educated women are more  
likely to stand against  
gender - based - violence

Case in point - 41% educated  
women, 24%  
uneducated

3.6 Education enlightens peace  
and tolerance if provided  
equally

Case in point: Hellen Keller  
on Education and Tolerance



3.7 Women in authority are in a better position to understand women issues

Case in point: Women in policy making

Barriers that halt women to excel in life:

4.1 Lack of resources make parents unable to educate their daughters

Case in point: 3.4 million people live in poverty in Pakistan - World Bank

4.2 Cultural barriers do not let women get education

Case in point: Tribal areas

4.3 Transport issue is another barrier that curtails women's progress

4.4 Societal norms prefer early-age marriages over education

4.5 Harassment at educational institutions ✓

4.6 Lack of vocational training institutes ✓ in the country ✓

4.7 No internet access to enroll in online courses is ~~another challenge women face~~

Case in point: 21% females have access to internet in Pakistan while 72% male.

5. Pragmatic measures ~~can be taken~~ to curtail the ~~barriers~~

5.1 Provision of internet access to women for online education ✓

5.2 Establishing vocational educational institutes to provide skill-based education ✓

5.3 Anti-harassment cells in educational institutes ✓

5.4 Feasible transport service ✓



to girls  
5.5 Provision of scholarships  
to counter poverty

## 6. Conclusion



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It was the education that made the transformation of human from an animal to a civilized living-being. Education is crucial to every human being regardless of gender. Likewise, educating women is of the utmost importance that provides various positive outcome. This include: strengthening democracy through political culture empowerment it improves the living standards, gender disparity is reduced, more women participation in workforce enhances economic empower and encouraging women to stand against gender-based-violence. Conversely, challenges are there; such as, lack of resources and prevailing poverty, cultural barriers, lack of safe transport and early-age marriages are one of those barriers. However, every cloud has a silver lining. Some mitigate measures can help to improve women's education. Providing



Free internet access to women, engraving skill-based education through vocational training, and establishing anti-harassment cells at workplace are one of those solution-oriented measures.

Hence, women universities are agents of change, as they empower women to excel in life. However, there are some formidable challenges that hinder the growth of women in every walk of life. Therefore, pragmatic measures need to be taken to dispel the ominous clouds of doom.

Women universities as agents of change conceptualize women's education. It underscores the notion of women's education in bringing change. The change can be in any walk of life. Nelson Mandela has blatantly said: "Education is a weapon that can be used to change the world." Thus, education brings change when provided equally to

Women universities are agents of change that can be evidenced from the various facts.

Primarily, when education is provided equally to both girls and boys, it strengthens political culture. Political culture strengthens democracy. Without women's education and participation, no democracy can flourish. Laski has rightly said on the relation of education and democracy, "Democracy is the only system that recognizes the worth of an individual, and empowers citizens through their participation in governance". Hence, equal provision of education especially to girls, and democracy go hand in hand.

Secondly, with the empowerment of women's education better living standards are ensured. Better living standards refer to the provision of all necessities of life. Such as,



better healthcare, proper hygiene, friendly environment, and a peaceful society. When women are educated, they can take care of the family, home, and professional life more wisely and prudently. For example, Scandinavian countries always rank top in Human Development Index (HDI) because they have higher literacy rate with equal opportunities for women in education as well as in workforce. As a result, women's education improves the standards of living for the society.

Moreover, there is no gender disparity in countries where women are educated equally. Gender disparity refers to the term of gender inequality. In gender equality women lag behind than men in every walk of life.

For instance, in WEF's Report of 2023, Pakistan ranks 142 out of 146 countries

while Philippines ranks number one in Asia. Such difference is due the fact that Pakistan lags behind in providing education to women. While countries with better educational opportunities for women are least prone to gender disparity. Thus, women's education alleviates gender disparity.

Furthermore, vocational education empowers women economically. Vocational educational institutes are skill-based training institutes that are established in different parts of Pakistan, especially in Punjab. Such institutions should be encouraged to develop in rural areas of Pakistan as well. This will allow women to learn skills and become financially independent to sustain their economic needs.

Additionally, educated women are more likely to file complain against Gender-based-violence as compared to



uneducated women. Educated women are better at decision making. They are more confident about what they want and what they deserve. They do not tolerate any kind of oppression like Gender-Based-Violence.

such as According to recent statistics, forty one pc women are educated and twenty four pc are uneducated out of those who filed against complain against gender based violence in Pakistan. Thus, education makes empowers women to stand against Gender-Based-violence by making them more empowered.

Likewise, education enlightens peace and tolerance among citizens if provided equally. The act of tolerance is acknowledged through education; socially, morally and religiously. When there is tolerance in

society, there will be peace as well. As Hellen Keller has rightly said: Education promotes tolerance and peace.

So, in order to ensure peace in society both girls and boys should be provided with quality education. As a result, education empowers societies to promote peace through tolerance.

In addition to that women in authority are in a better position to understand women issues. Many reasons of women issues remain unresolved because men in policy making devise women-centric policies. They are unable to understand women-centric issues. Thus, only women in policy making can make better decisions for the nation's women. In Pakistan,



multifarious challenges lie in the way of women's progress, and halt women to excel in life.

First, lack of resources make parents unable to educate their daughters.

In Pakistan, deteriorating and fluctuating economy have made people's life deplorable. According to a recent World

Bank report, 3.4 million people live in poverty in Pakistan.

Such quagmire make forces parents to choose only their boys to ~~to~~ education ~~them~~.

Girls lag behind due to poverty. Hence,

poor parents educate prefer ~~educating~~ boys ~~instead of~~ girls.

Second, cultural barriers lie in the way of women's educational growth. Cultural norms and traditions too bid

women's education as they believe that women are made only for household chores. They are responsible for taking care of children, family and husband. So, they should not waste time on education. As in the tribal areas of Waziristan, women are not even allowed to get primary education. Such patriarchal mindset shatters the dreams of many girls. Hence, women lag behind in education due to deep rooted patriarchal mindset.

Third, safe transportation facility is not provided in the country. This becomes a challenging hurdle in the way of women's education. Many families do not allow girls to go to



school, colleges and universities because of fear of public place harassment.

Due to this fear women cannot go to educational institutes by themselves. They are gazed and harassed in public transport as well. This way parent either stop their education at primary level or do not let them go for higher studies.

Fourth, societal norms prefer early age marriages over girls' education. Despite the

legal age of marriage being 18, people get married at the age of 15 or 16. It is believed that if they do not marry them early, they will not get any good proposals later. As a result,

such traditional mindset promotes child marriages and discourages education.

Fifth, harassment at educational institutions is another factor that halts women's education.

Students, especially girls, get supplies in exams when they do not conform to their mentors notoriously. Then they are harassed and pressurized to not to say a word against them. Recent incident of Islamia University Bahawalpur highlights such living example. Such cases are growing day by day in Pakistan. Hence, parents often do not allow girls to go for higher education due to harassment issues.

Sixth, there are not enough educational



institutes for vocational training in rural areas. Areas that remain deprived of such opportunities do not progress. Girls in that area cannot afford to go to outer cities for education. As a result, they lag behind in skill development. Seventh, lack of access of women to internet services make them unaware of the current developments. Those who cannot go to other cities for education can take online classes. However, no internet access to girls do not allow them to get education. According to a survey, in Pakistan seventy-two percent of males have internet access. While only twenty-one

percent of females have access to ~~most~~ internet.

Such digital gender gap causes women's lack of progress in education.

Despite all the odds, women in Pakistan can still make progress if some pragmatic measures are taken diligently and promptly.

Primarily, provision of internet access to women for education should be encouraged. There should be free Wi-Fi facility in school, college, and universities libraries. Parents should be counselled on such matter. Government should purchase online courses from international universities for qualitative and diversified education. (govt has purchased)

Moreover, vocational training institutions should be established in rural



areas then girls from remote areas can have access to skill-based education. Such skill development will make them grow financially and socially.

Then, there is a dire need of the establishment of anti-harassment cells in educational institutes.

Due to growing crime rates in the country, government should devise such policies by taking all the stakeholders in confidence.

Furthermore, feasible transport service should be provided to girls. This will reduce the harassment incidents in the country. As initiative of the pink bus service taken by the Government of India, this is only for girls. Such initiatives should be

taken by the other provinces  
as well.

lastly, scholar ships  
should be provided to  
the needy girls. Those  
families who cannot afford  
their educational expenses  
will be at ease. Girls  
when get scholar ships,  
will more likely to  
attain higher education.

In a nutshell women  
universities are agents of  
change in a number of  
ways. However, hurdles are  
there that can be  
curtailed by taking  
pragmatic measures. Women  
universities bring change as  
they stand against Gender-  
Based violence, they are  
more tolerated and bring  
peace in society. Likewise,  
women in policy making  
are better to understand  
women issues. However, societal  
norms, harassment, and



no internet access halt <sup>B</sup>  
women's progress. Every cloud  
has a silver lining,  
and every problem has  
a solution. Internet  
access, providing educational  
vocational training, establishing  
anti-harassment cell and  
provision of scholarship  
are some key measures  
to make women excel  
in every walk  
of life.

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