

ABSTRACT

Social consciousness all over the world has brought so many societal problems to fore, among which women empowerment, gender equality and women education are significant. Education plays a phenomenal role in the development and progress of nation. Education is the fundamental right of each citizen of the world. In order to bring social change and development inclusive enlightening strategy is very important where both male and female can take active part in the social and development sector of a country. Higher education plays an important role in empowering women by bringing social awareness and enhancing the living standards of women all over the world.

Chitral district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a unique position on the cultural history of the world. The area is least populated, but the cultural and ethnic diversity is fascinating. The people of Chitral are mostly poor because of age distribution of the population. Majority of the population are young below the age of 19, and which limits the size of workforce, and it becomes difficult for resource generation of the community. Women make almost half of the population between the ages of 20-50.

Due to the patriarchal setup of the society, male members generally dominate almost every field of life specifically socio-economic and political. However, literacy rate in Chitral among women is high as compare to some other regions of Pakistan. Social ratification has compelled women of several communities, to remain indoors and labor in house hold chores. In Chitral, women face many challenges and hurdle in receiving higher education. Social and cultural taboos, religious miss conception about education, co-education system, economic hurdles and lack of proper universities and colleges are the dominant forces affecting women higher education in Chitral. Only public sector university was established in 2017 in Chitral. Before that there were no such facilities for women to get higher education. Still the only university in Chitral in not sufficient to meet the needs of higher education.

This research titled as “Women Empowerment Through Higher Education in Pakistan; A Case Study of District Chitral” is aimed to highlight the role of higher education in empowering women. The study will focus on discussing issues related to women higher education in Chitral, current status of women education and challenges faced by women in higher education.