

# Women Literacy in Balochistan: Challenges and Way Forward

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## Abstract

This study dealt with women literacy challenges and way forwards addressed by government of Balochistan, Pakistan. This study proposes a ‘female educational challenges model’ by analyzing plans and policies from 1989 to 2016. The model was further statistically evaluated from the data of 365 female students. The challenges model proposed interconnected effect of sociocultural, religious, political and economic challenges on female students’ learning. Structure equation model (SEM) shows that sociocultural challenges have significant positive effect on political, economic and learning challenges. Religious challenges have significant positive effect on sociocultural and political challenges whereas sociocultural and political challenges significantly positively predicted learning challenges.

**Keywords:** literacy, education, challenges, policies, culture, politics, religion, economy, learning, government, terrorism, ethnicity, multiculturalism

## 1. Background of the Study

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are constructed to accentuate development in the world as a whole particularly for third world countries. These goals were comprised of imperative issues in the world. Education is one of the major concern, regardless of gender, in the goals which is second in priority in the summit. The goal is to achieve universal primary education (Goal 2)<sup>1</sup> and the establish target (Target 3) to accomplish the task reads,

“Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling” (UN Millennium Project, 2015).

Keeping in view the MDGs, Pakistan is also striving to increase its educational level which is growing yearly (see table 1) by establishing some major targets following MDGs such as

1. “To expand public provision of primary education
2. To increase enrolment faster than the growth in population
3. To provide and ensure equal educational opportunities to all the citizens of Pakistan
4. To put great stress on the primary level education because it forms the core of the literate population

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<sup>1</sup> Indicators of the goal are (a) Net enrolment ratio in primary education (b) Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 (c) Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds” (UN Millennium Project, 2015)”

5. To improve the functioning and utilization of existing schools, improve the quality of education and increase enrolments
6. To improve access to education and expand the primary education” (PSLM, 2014-15, p. 5).

**Table 1:** Description of national literacy rate

Indicators	1990-91	2004-05	2007-08	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
NPER <sup>1</sup> (5-9 years)	46	52	55	56	57	57	57
C/SRG <sup>2</sup> 1 to 5	50	67	52	49	50	-	-
LR <sup>3</sup> (%) 10 years & above	35	53	56	58	58	60	58

Source: Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2013-14; <sup>1</sup>Net Primary Enrolment; <sup>2</sup>Completion/Survival rate Grade; <sup>3</sup>Literacy Rate.

Overall literacy statistics showed educational progress like only 1% of increase among ≥10years children who ever attended school from 2012-13 to 2014-15 whereas in urban areas the proportion was 77 % while it was 53% in rural areas. Interestingly, the proportion of male was higher (72%) than female (51%) in the country (PSLM, 2014-15, p.6).

The spatial educational description would reveal that which province or city is educationally vulnerable and needed to be concentrate effectively more than others. The table 2 showed that Punjab has highest percentage of primary (95%), secondary (95%) and youth (87%) education (overall literacy rate was 63% in 2014-15) whereas Balochistan has lowest primary (65%), secondary (45%) and youth (51%) education (overall literacy rate remained same, 44%, in 2013-14 and 2014-15). Generally, Balochistan is lacking in educational growth which is one of prominent barrier to accomplish MDG 2<sup>nd</sup> goal.

**Table 2:** Literary rate by province

Indicators	Punjab	Sindh	KPK	Balochistan
PE <sup>1</sup> (Age 5-9 years)	0.95	0.81	0.74	0.65
SE <sup>2</sup> (Age 14 to 15)	0.95	0.84	0.62	0.45
YL <sup>3</sup> (15 years & above)	0.87	0.77	0.60	0.51

Source: Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2013-14; <sup>1</sup>Primary Education %; <sup>2</sup>Secondary education %; <sup>3</sup>Youth Literacy %.

Gender based statistics showed that male literacy rate is higher (60%) than female (25%), in urban areas also male literacy rate is higher (74%) than female (43%) and same is the case in rural areas where male literacy rate is 55% and female is 17%. Overall, in urban areas literacy rate is higher (59%) than rural areas (38%) (PSLM, 2014-15).

District Quetta educational level is also worth mentioning because the study is based on Quetta city. Quetta district is surrounded by 2653 Square kilometers, encompassing 759941 population size with the population density of 286.4 per square kilometer. The district has two subdivisions, 66 union councils, 45 Mauzas, one municipal corporation and one cantonment. It is comprised of 87091 housing units in which 94.07% houses have facility of electricity, 79.75% houses have piped water and 77.53% houses have gas for cooking. The literacy ratio (above 10 years) of the district is 57.1%, male literacy is 67.27% and female 44.53% (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

## 2. Introduction

Balochistan has long history of internal ethnic conflicts and insurgences against federal policies that caused provincial-federal political flouts, objurgations and several military operations. Provincial government, ethnic solidarity and tribal structure hold central government accountable for political

discrimination (Swidler, 1992) while demanding, somehow by force (Fair & Chalk, 2006), liberation and higher share in national budgets because of its democratic rights, geostrategic conceit and gallimaufry resources (Ali, 2005; Akhtar, 2007; Alamgir, 2012). The alleged dismantling accusation of central government's deliberate discrimination exacerbates political relations. Such tribal and ethnic recriminations more often resulted in military operations like operation against tribal leaders e.g., Nawab Akber Bugti and Bloch Nationalists e.g., Nawab Muhammad Baloch in 2006 and 2009 respectively (Khan, 2007). Additionally, the cause of current terrorism has been allegedly pronounced is Afghan immigrants, so called jihadists, Taliban and Indian intelligence agency in the province (Kfir, 2008; Nasir, Rehman, & Orakzai, 2012). Thus, national security and internal disputes are imperative political challenges in the province. On the other hand, federal government justifies its meticulous policies of appropriate budgeting, sustained war against terrorism and democratic liberty in the province while acclaiming political value of other provinces simultaneously.

The federal-provincial conflict directly affects the development sustainability of each institution in the province; education is one of the affected institutions (Sarwar, 2011). One way to measure its slow progress is its lowest literacy rate comparing with other provinces. However, political challenge is not the only profound challenge that educational institution is confronting with rather also sociocultural diversity, stringent religious inflictions, economic vulnerability and liabilities to enhance infrastructure, staff, enrollment, technical gadgets etc.

Conventional cultural beliefs supported by perceived religious impositions restrict female education while cultural clichés (Titus, 1998) accoladed patriarchy that imposed female subjugation. Although, several aspects of conventional cultural are transiting into modern echelons e.g., extended family into nuclear family system, yet a collective chauvinistic belief exists that abrogates female education. Such impervious cultural clichés justified by Islamic principle teachings which local clerics and tribal leaders are inclined to impose, hoaxing it as a greater good and honor for them and for the community as a whole (Paterson, 2008). Female are acquiescing to these collective beliefs therefore encountering cultural challenges in education because these collective beliefs are strictly against coeducation which is an acclaimed higher education pattern. Thus, majority of the families compelled their female family members to get enrolled into women universities if they desired to acquire higher education (DeStefano, Hartwell & Benbow, 2004). This process, on the one hand, escalates females' low literacy rate and on the other hand, if somehow, they manage to get enroll in university, decrease survival rate due the parents' fear that studying in coeducation may bring dishonor and disgrace in their family.

Likewise, the social section of province is almost intermingling with cultural and religious part. Socially, the cultural and religious beliefs construct a structure that divulges its supremacy over females' educational decision making. This structural imposition accrues submissive actors regardless of gender. This structure is composed of sub-cultures that represents multiculturalism i.e., Baloch, Pashtoon, Hazara etc. Each subculture has its own normative structure of confined socialization especially ethnic priorities (Kennedy, 1993). Therefore, multiculturalism in the province indorse ethnocentrism (Titus, 1998). This cultural ethnocentrism is prone to provoke internal ethnic disputes among actor's due to the ancestrally acquired beliefs of ascribed superiority that included linguistic, caste and economic distinctions. In such multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic milieu, education systems seem scattered intrinsically while educational policies are susceptible to these diversification (BESP, 2013-18). Students endure this burden of diversity as one of the challenges of education because this diversification also includes multilingual teaching styles (Coleman, 2010). A pashtoon student would be unable to learn in Balochi or Persian similarly a teacher faces the same challenge. However, national or international language more often use to deliver lectures the reduced the risk of learning deficiencies.

Economic challenge also cannot be neglected because majority of the population is belonged to lower class in the province (Chaudhry & Rahman, 2009). At school level, this challenge increased the likelihood of low crude and net enrollment rate. However, governmental policies like the pledge of free

basic education somehow mitigate the matter yet Balochistan enrollment rate is lowest in the country because the socio-ethnic and cultural clichés supported by perceived religious beliefs against female education. Thus, the imperative challenge is sociocultural in nature and interconnected in to other challenges e.g., economic and political. Hence, the major objective of the study is to expose the gravity of sociocultural challenges to other challenges that would be possible by building a challenges model grounded in data. Secondly, to evaluate the generalizability of propose model. The former objective would be by qualitative methods whereas the later will be appraised by quantitative approaches. To arrive the challenges interconnected model, a history of challenges and possible way forwards at each stage would be discussed ab initio so that policy pitfalls to deal with challenges and inadequate way forwards could be exposed.

### **3. Educational Challenges and Way Forwards in Balochistan**

#### **3.1 First Initiative: Challenges and Way Forwards (1989-1999)**

Balochistan Education Development Program (BEDP) 1989-99: In 1980, Balochistan educational level was worse, only 10.3% population of the province was literate, male literacy was 43% in urban and 9.8% in rural, female literacy was 18.5% in urban and 6.2% in rural areas (Census, 1981). Based on the drastic educational situation in the province, provincial government planned to enhance basic education with the help of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and United State Agency for International Development (USAID). The collaboration of international organization and the provincial government launched a new project: Primary Education Development Program (PEDP), to increase primary enrollment rate in the province. USAID announced the budget of 240 Million in installments whereas only two installments were received: 24 Million dollars and 20 Million dollars for KPK (formerly NWFP) and Balochistan (Study on flow of funds, 1991, p.2).

The abeyance of the project makes alternative funding from The World Bank. The UNDP report on the project reads,

“The Government of United States of America entered into an agreement with the president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to assist Government of Pakistan (GOP) in accelerating the pace of primary education..... Further installments are not likely to be received by GOP because the process of USAID has been interrupted” (Study on flow of funds, 1991, p.2)

The project was temporarily, specifically economically, stopped because of the nuclear power projects of Pakistan in 1992 which resulted to revoke several international funding and projects in, and implemented sanctions on, the country (Anzar, 1999). The province, somehow, managed to receive funding of 330 Million dollar from 1993 to 1999 from World Bank, specifically to increase and girl's education (World Bank, 1993). This transition of funds changed the name of the project form Primary Educational Development Program (PEDP) to Balochistan Primary Education Project (BPEP) whereas the main objectives and purposes of the former project were retained and followed in which establishment of new schools, scholarship opportunities, teachers training etc. were salient features of the programs (World Bank, 1993). Mainly, the programs initiatives were as follow:

- I. Restructuring education management to create a strong base for education reforms.
- II. Improving education quality through teacher training and curriculum reforms
- III. Involving communities in expanding primary education for girls, especially in rural areas.

Afterward, keeping view the progress of the project, several donors i.e. UNICEF, Habib Bank, local NGOs, The Trust for Voluntary Organizations, The Netherlands Government, The Asian Development Bank, were indulged financially in the project. At each stage of the program several challenges were encountered and appropriate way forward was taken place.

The first challenge was insufficient concentration of official or administrative body on primary education in the province. To deal with the challenge, government of Balochistan establish a new position of additional director of primary education who was responsible to report director of

education, to implement of primary education plan and to cooperate with donors and government. The office of additional director was supported with technical staff including the representation of donors' staff such as UNICEF and World Bank. This make the regular evaluation of the project possible, cross cultural understanding to enhance cooperation to make the out-cultural staff possible to understand the local cultural problems.

The second challenge was insufficient the numerical data of the province because there were no comprehensive school survey data available. In fact, before the survey introduced and executed in the project, no school survey was conducted. To resolve the second challenge, a new office was established under the caption of Balochistan Education Management Information System (BEMIS). The additional director with the cooperation of foreign staff had to identify educationally vulnerable areas and pitfall in the educational system. BEMIS, first time ever in the province, comprehensively collected data and arranged computerized offices to analyze it. This initiative at its best make it possible to comprehend the accurate educational situation in the province statistically because before the survey only verbal responses noted on a paper without any proof of the response had been acknowledged and used as the educational representative picture of the province.

The third challenge was gender restriction in the education sector. This problem was religio-cultural structure of the province. Large amount of male staff was ineffective to communicate with female teacher staff which was persistently increasing communication and flow of information problem. Secondly, locale was very stringent on gender roles and mobility. To deal with the matter, a post of female District Education Officer (DEO) was introduced in 26 districts of Balochistan which, on the one hand, make effective and efficient flow of information along reduction in local response to gender roles' restriction and, on the second hand, it empowered female at large scale.

Lastly, the most difficult challenge was the revision and implementation of new curriculum to replace 50 years old text book with the aim to improve educational quality. To deal with the matter, the program, initially, Primary Education Curriculum Reform was established to reform curriculum. The future Deputy Director of Curriculum Unit with his important officials visited Egypt and Jordon in 1992 to review the curriculum development in the countries. On their arrival back to the province, they suggested three major classification of material in the class. The first was student centered, pilot tested book, the second teacher guides and lastly supplementary material.

Additionally, Balochistan Instructional Material Development and Training Cell (BIMDTC) was developed in 1993 with the prime objectives to (a) train teachers and (b) to develop supplementary material because teachers strictly negatively respond to the new curriculum which was harder for them to comprehend and delivered to students. BIMDTC was strengthened with the passage of time by hiring staff and technical assistance. The teacher response was due to their lower qualification, for example most of the female teachers in rural areas were only have eight grade passed certificate. Here, the revised curriculum was problematic for teachers and secondly their proper training was necessitated but "Paradah" was major cultural barrier to arrive at training session. Therefore, Mobile Female Teacher Training Unit (MFTTU) was established to train teachers at their home towns instead of calling them for training in training session for long time.

The Educational Policy 1992-2002 and 8<sup>th</sup> five-year plan 1992-1998 was constructed and executed with the aim to elevate education level to meet international standards but an important political change occurred: Dictatorship of Prevez Musharraf.

### **3.2 Second Initiative: Challenges and Way Forward (1998-2010)**

The era of late 90s and 20s is very important in for the country because political shift –from democracy to dictatorship –in the country. On October 12, 1999, Pervez Musharraf took over PML-N political regime. President Musharraf's regime introduces several revolutionary educational reforms and development such as establishment of Higher Educational Commission. Whereas, before his dictatorship, 112 per million population PhDs and engineers were reckoned, universities increased to 130 (in 2007) from 48 (in 1999), 3508 students enrolled in PhD and 3800 were sent abroad for PhD In

the long 10years dictatorship tenure 14117 schools/colleges, 81 universities (Achievements of President, 2009). Additionally, 9 engineering universities were developed with the budget of 96.5 billion, education was given four percent of the GDP, 99319 educational institutions were built and literacy rate increased from 45% to 53% (in 2005) (Habib, 2012).

Although Musharraf's government did not have fair diplomatic and political relation with Balochistan, his policies has some positive effects in the province because he made it special focus. In his regime, 88.50 million were announced for needy students' scholarships, 438 million to retain required missing facilities for education, five new universities, 9 engineering universities, 58 colleges and 556 schools were built and made them functional while 1239 people were recruited in universities (Achievements of President, 2009).

Above all, this regime was failed to understand the cultural setting of the province which become the major reason of provincial-federal conflict resulted in the Balochistan army operation and death of influential feudal which made several latent and manifest effects on almost every federal policy in the province. The geostrategic and other politicoreligious condition of the province produce one major challenge: Terrorism. The regime was aware of only one method to deal with the challenge that was Army Operations. The aggressive way forwards took by the government did not produced the desired results rather it made the situation even worse which is still being dealt by the same method and still is the same drastic. Thus, the policies remained ineffective not only at provincial level but nationally.

### 3.3 Current Situation: Challenges and Way Forward

Keeping in view the failure of National Education Policy (1998-2010) regarding educational quality, desired outcomes, approach to MDGs and Dakar Framework of Actions Education for All<sup>2</sup> (EFA), revised National Education Policy (2009) was executed with the promises of free primary education, 7% allocation of national GDP to education and 86% literacy rate by 2015. The NEP also desired to include Deeni Madaris in mainstream education by introducing nationally prescribed curriculum in Madaris (NEP, 2009). To make the national policy most effective each province was directed to develop spatial policies. To serve the purpose, Balochistan government introduced a comprehensive, well designed flexible and inter-organizational coherent policy named Balochistan Education Sector Plan 2013-2018 (BESP). BESP shares international and national educational standards and policy recommendation, for example it solely pledges to accomplish MDG second goal, to follow EFA and NEP recommendations and to implement Article 25A<sup>3</sup> of the constitution of Pakistan (BESP, 2013-18, p.18). The policy will be implemented at three interrelated levels i.e. oversight and monitoring, dissemination and decentralization (BESP, 2013-18, p.20).

The policy encompasses almost all factors which have been neglected in previous educational policies e.g., it took into account mainstream culture and religious factors. Terrorism was a serious challenge in the province allegedly accrued by religious education and Pak-Afghan migration: afghan refugees. Secondly, multicultural priorities (i.e. Baloch, Pakhtoon, Hazaras etc.) have always been a challenge to implement a centralized national or provincial education policy (p.47). Thirdly, gender parity is have never been succeeded and, fourthly, enhancement of student leaning (p.37), teacher training (p.42 and 57) and educational infrastructure (p.44). These all challenges are being dealt by taking serious policy implementation and evaluation consistently by major radical way forwards of the policy which are, some important measures, as follow:

Persistent teachers' professional trainings, its quality review (p.40) and in relation to teacher student environment and school infrastructure, development of local socio-cultural school friendly environment and improved infrastructure (p. 45-47 and 57). Gradual reduction of lingua franca problematic and set up of international (English), national (Urdu) and local language (mother tongue)

<sup>2</sup> EFA Plan Balochistan (2011-15) covers early childhood, primary and adult education

<sup>3</sup> The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manners as many be determined by law.

in educational sector whereby local language optional course at primary and secondary level must be taught and teaching academies would be built (p. 47-50). At higher education level, four years bachelor education program would be implemented (at least in two colleges of Quetta city within first three years of program will be selected, one male and one female college) within 10 years period with revised curriculum (p. 68-69).

Above all to these challenges and way forwards, chronologically not a single policy dealt with challenges in a systematic way to make interconnected comprehensible. At each stage of the policy construction and its implementation, spontaneously emerging challenges were treated haphazardly but never a comprehensive plan to reduce challenges were constructed. Therefore, the above-mentioned challenges have never eliminated because they were never treated or comprehend in an organized way. Thus, in the study, we developed an organized model of challenges make it comprehensible. The model revealed which challenge is leading to other challenges whereby it made it easier to understand that which challenges should be dealt preferably.

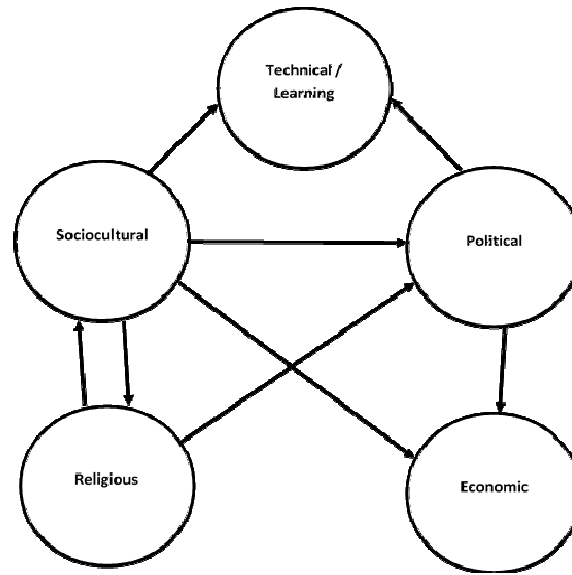
#### **4. The Propose Challenges Model**

The review of previous challenges and way forwards in education revealed that females had to face sociocultural problem ab initio. The requirement of foreign aids signified economic vulnerability at government and political inability to construct autonomous policies to increase enrollment rate. Furthermore, one neglected aspect of donors and government collaboration in educational policies construction is religious-cultural bound in the province. The study proposed that religion in practice is strongly connected with sociocultural practices. Explicitly, the assumption claimed religion in practice, not what religion imposed in its fundamental principles. The macro or external challenges are interconnected and directly and indirectly influencing female education in the province. Qualitative data was collected to introduce the model in the study. The data was collected from female students of universities. They were interviews about the challenges they were facing in to get educated.

The challenges females have to face are diversified but interrelated. The most important challenge is sociocultural practices in the province represents multiculturalism while ethnocentric feelings and devised rules, somewhat, preferred more than national law make female passive actors. Sociocultural barriers include 'pardah' (veil), coeducation, family dignity, fear of disgrace and dishonor from females, tribal structure, ethnicity and language barrier. Samna said,

*“Father, mother, brother, uncle, aunty and relatives (inflicted): do veil!*

Similarly, other sociocultural challenges also restrain female to get education like tribal structure where females have second class citizen rapport, dignity and value. Moreover, they are supposed to be in home to sever family. The situation is even drastic in villages where coeducation is a fear of parents that may bring disgrace to family. Lubna and Farzana said respectively,

**Figure 1:** The constructed model of challenges

*“In my village, girls are not allowed to study, I am the only one reached this far, struggling to jump over the wall”*

*“I wanted to study in University of Balochistan but parent didn’t allow me because of coeducation”*

Sociocultural challenges are strongly associated with religious challenges in the province because religious factors drive culture and it in return affect religion in practice. However, the odds of sociocultural effects on religious practices are higher like majority of the people are Muslims and Islam does not prevent female education but ethnicity, tribal and family structure does. Rameeza and Shazia said,

*“I am pashtoon and in my ethnicity, girls are not allowed to get higher education. Somehow, if a female arrives at the stage, she had to face serious ethnic discouragement”*

*“Islam does not prevent female education but our religious and tribal leaders do.”*

Furthermore, these sociocultural and religious factors directly increase political challenges because almost all tribal are political leaders also. However, if a religious leader is not a political leader, it has strong influence on local community then the community influence directs political decision. Thus, the political challenges sociocultural and religious challenges driven. Additionally, macro level political policy construction, dictated by federal authorities cannot be neglected. Apart from sociocultural and religious influences, political challenges unable to provide several prerequisites facilities for female education such as proper convenience, internet facility, security assurances and implementation of unbiased quota system. Rakhshanda and several other respondents said the same,

*“I am not facilitated by proper convenience”*

*Samina, Rashida, Raheela and Mahpara said,*

*“At least quota system should not be bias, we also have right to enroll by proper meritocracy”*

Ambreen asserted,

*“Well, the city is under constant terrorist threat, when leave for university, I am not sure whether I’ll arrive back home alive”*

In fact, such national security directly effects the economic condition of a family. Secondly, half of the total workforce (females) are not allowed to get educated would ultimately reduce gross



domestic product of a country. Lowering economic status results poverty which economical restrain female education in such cultural context as Shabana said,

*“In my family, female education is equal to wastage of money”*

Conclusively, all these factors affect learning of female students because they are center of all these problems, encountering each day these barriers and struggling to cope with them. Possession of all these barriers persistently effects their performance and in fact build a learning as one of the challenges for them because most of the female students were first to get enrolled in university within their tribes or villages that makes them role model for the ethnicity. Therefore, they were afraid getting low marks or failed otherwise several females their areas would not be allowed to for higher education while referring failed females as evidence of educational disgrace. This sociocultural, political, religious and economic burden they take on their shoulders and move ahead.

#### **4.1 Rationale and Significance of the Study**

Balochistan is the least literate province of Pakistan. This may be partially due to the lack of connectivity in the province which accounts for 44% of the land area or due to the security issues or lack of people will or motivation to improve the condition of the province. People in the Balochistan are in the midst of poverty and cannot afford to send their children specially females to Quetta for quality education. Women in Balochistan are confronted with numerous complex issues with very limited access to education. Women remain deprived of their rights including right to education due to poverty, domestic works, early marriages, lack of girls' schools and colleges, unavailability of qualified female teachers etc. in the tribal areas of Balochistan with dominant feudal and religious influences, women's access to education seems to be dream. It is unfortunate that education of women in not considered a mean for social change or a process by which they can learn question, thin and become agents of change.

The prime objective of the study is to assess the current situation and publish research analysis and informed discussion on women literacy in Balochistan: Challenges and way forward. This study aims to explore the challenges in the existing education process on the grass root level to higher education depending social attitudes and academic biases that obstruct a holistic understanding of the role of family, particularly of its women members, community and a wider polity. The research's main objective will be to generate and disseminate knowledge regarding women literacy in Balochistan: Challenges and way forward as current literacy rate of female of Balochistan is 15%. The researcher will explore, identify and explain specific issue related to women education in Balochistan in order to advocate for an affirmative plan of action for girl's education both at higher and school level. An extensive literature will be searched and reviewed with will help the researchers to identify the main themes and sub themes for further investigation. Primary data will bel collected from the women in Quetta City and afterwards results will be shared through seminars, workshops, trainings, discussion forms and further publications. In this regard, the study explored below mentioned objectives. The present aimed to investigate the ground realities of the present issue in Balochistan. This research will be helpful in understanding the phenomena and sensitizing the mass to develop appropriate strategies for female education in the province.

#### **5. Methodology**

The present study was conducted in Quetta, Balochistan. Qualitative and quantitative research designed was used while targeting female in the union councils and its schools, colleges and universities. Qualitative data collection was followed by quantitative survey. Initially, students were interviewed by using interview guide. They were asked about major challenges they faced in studies. The data was recorded with their permission. However, to ensure their privacy, fictitious names were given to the respondents. Moreover, cluster sampling technique was used due the large geographical area and scatter population for survey to collect quantitative data. Clustering population make it possible to

homogenize the heterogeneous population. Initially, an appropriate sample size was drawn by using Cochran (2007) formula. The process of sample size determination is as follow:

$$n_1 = \frac{z_{1-\alpha/2}^2 \hat{p} (1 - \hat{p})}{d^2}$$

Where:

- α: is the confidence level, and z is a constant which relates to the normally distributed estimator of the specified level. For a confidence level of 95% (α = 0.05), the value of z<sub>1 - α/2</sub> is 1.96 (z<sub>1 - α/2</sub> = 1.64 when α is 0.1; z<sub>1 - α/2</sub> = 1.28 when α is 0.2);
- p: is the assumed proportion of households giving a particular response for one given question. The “safest” choice is a figure of 0.5, since the sample size required is largest when p = 0.5;
- d: is the required precision on either side of the proportion. A typically used figure in similar surveys is d = ±0.05, based on the argument that lower precision would produce unreliable results while a higher precision would be too expensive as it would require a very large survey. This precision may be considered at highest scale of intervention. Estimates at lower administrative scale should be assessed with lower precision; i.e. d = ±0.10 or ±0.15.

$$n_1 = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.39 (1 - 0.39)}{(0.05)^2} = 365$$

Sample Size (n<sub>1</sub>) = 365<sup>4</sup>

After the selection of suitable sample size, a tool for data collection was developed. The tool was comprised of major demographic profile of the respondents and challenges in education. To collect the data, a team of enumerators were selected. A proper professional training of data collection was given to the team and each team were assigned a particular zone for data collection. The collected data were analyzed by using SPSS software.

## 6. Results

**Table 1:** Demographic Profile of respondents

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Family Structure	Joint	194	56.7
	Extended	43	12.6
	Nuclear	102	29.8
Living Area	Rural	112	35.4
	Urban	221	64.6
Financial Support of Studies	Father	254	74.3
	Mother	20	5.8
	Brother	45	13.2
	Self-Support	14	4.1
	Any other	7	2.1
Total Family Income	< 20000	49	14.3
	20000 - <40000	46	13.5
	40000 - <60000	80	23.4
	60000 - <80000	41	12.0
	80000 - <100000	42	12.3
	≥100000	84	24.6

<sup>4</sup> Due to the incomplete responses by 23 respondents, the sample size was reduced to 342 especially in structure equation model because of its inability to deal with missing data.

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Father's sector of job	Governmental	186	54.4
	Semi-Govt.	22	6.4
	Private	86	25.1
	Unemployed	39	11.4
Mother's sector of job	Governmental	45	13.2
	Semi-Govt.	09	2.6
	Private	22	6.4
	Unemployed	236	69.0
Challenge elimination first	Cultural	93	27.2
	Political	73	21.3
	Educational	73	21.3
	Religious	58	17.0
	Economical	36	10.5
	Any other	04	1.2

Figure 2: Structure equation model of challenges

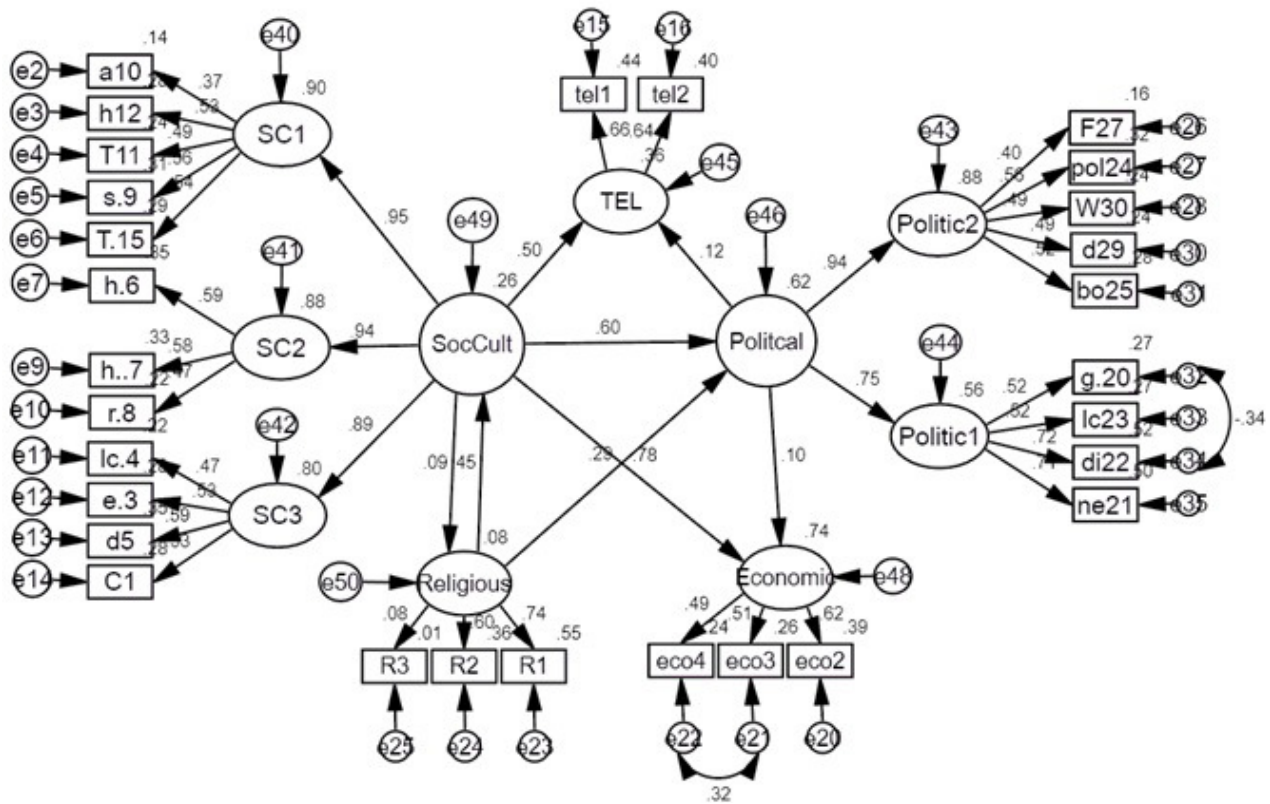


Table 2: Descriptive statistics of challenges

Challenges	Mean	Std. Error	SD	$\alpha$
Sociocultural	40.43	.488	8.290	.85
Economic	11.98	.143	2.534	.70
Political	31.66	.312	5.590	.79
Religious	5.44	.088	1.62	.62
Technical and Learning	11.21	.137	2.497	.60

The above-mentioned table showed that most of the respondents were belonged to joint (56%) and nuclear (29%) family system and living in urban areas (64%) while very few of the respondents were belonged extended family system (12.6%) and living in rural areas (35%). It was found that majority of the respondents were being supported by male family members financially (father = 74%, brother = 45%) while only 5.8% of the respondents were getting financial support from their mothers. Interestingly, it was found the least numbers of female respondents were managing their study expenses by themselves (4.1%). It was also explored that majority of the respondents' father were employed (governmental = 54.4%, private = 25%, semi-government = 22%) whereas mothers were unemployed (69%). The cumulative results showed female's economic dependency and vulnerability. Lastly, the cultural constraints were preferred to be reduced or eliminated ab initio (27%) to deal with existing educational problems in the province. However, political and educational problem itself were also reported to be deal simultaneously as both of these were equally weighted, 21% for each.

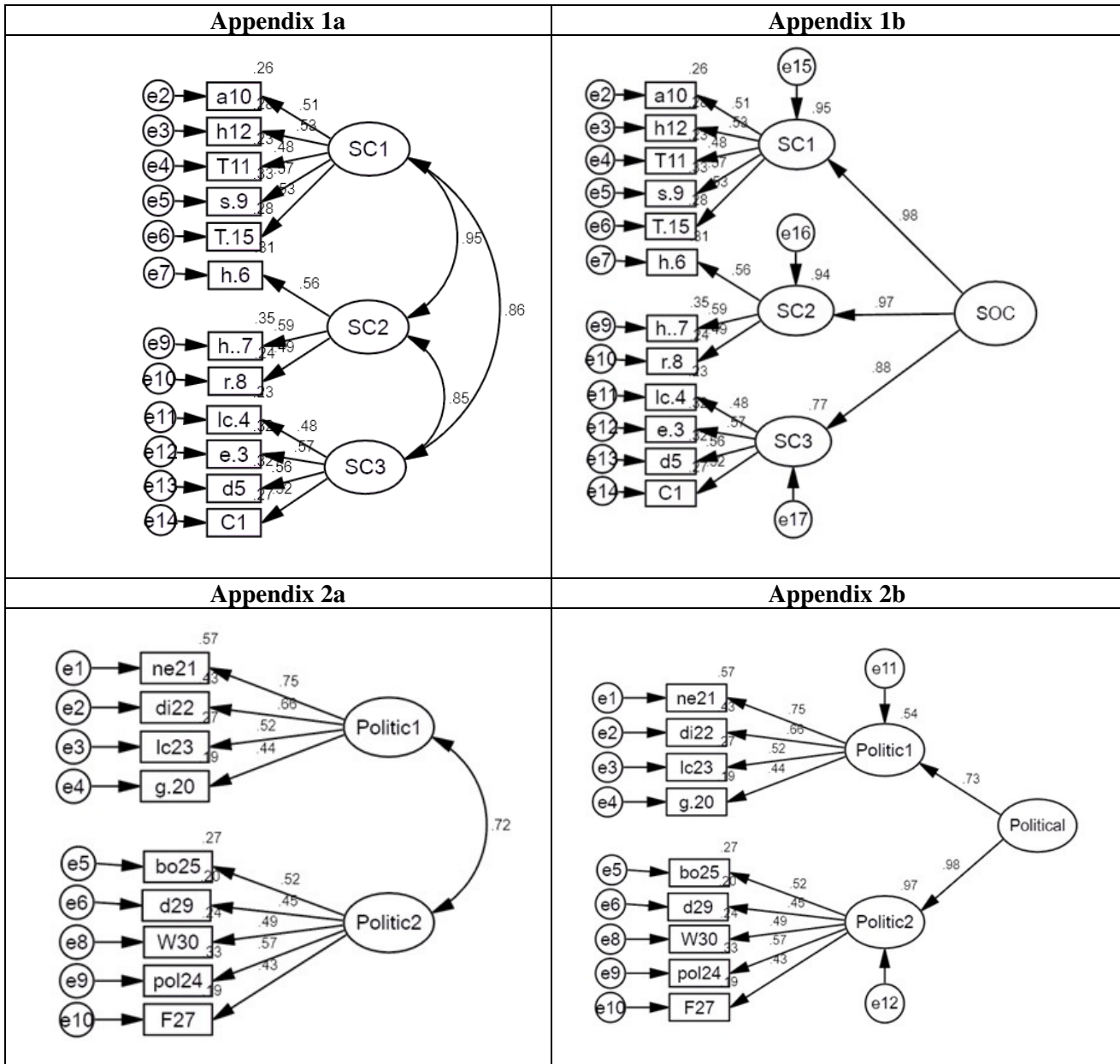
Table 2 showed description of all educational challenges encountered by female students in Balochistan. The table revealed that items in sociocultural, economic and political challenges scale have good internal consistency whereas religious and technical learning challenges scale have acceptable reliability.

Figure 2 showed structure equation model. Initially, in addition to first order CFA ( $\chi^2 (153) = 193.9, p < .05, CFI = .970, RMSEA = .020$ ) of sociocultural barriers, second order CFA was constructed (all factors loaded significantly,  $p < .05$ ) (see appendix 1a and 1b). Similarly, a second order CFA of political barriers was developed ( $\chi^2 (26) = 73.2, p < .05, CFI = .905, RMSEA = .073$ , all factors loaded significantly) (see appendix 2a and 2b). However, due to the one factor extraction of religious, economical and learning barriers, no second order CFA was constructed. Keeping in view our hypothetical predictions of challenges in proposed model, regression lines drew to develop structure equation model. The structure equation model showed that the model is fitted to the data,  $\chi^2 (1094) = 1781.62, p > .05, GFI = .851, AGFI = .823, CFI = .835, RMSEA = .030$  (see figure 1). The model showed that religious barrier has significant positive effects on sociocultural barriers ( $\beta = .45, p < .05$ ) while sociocultural barriers has significant positive effect on economic ( $\beta = .78, p < .05$ ) and political barriers ( $\beta = .29, p < .05$ ). Interestingly, sociocultural barriers have positively higher significant effect on learning barriers ( $\beta = .50, p < .05$ ) than political barriers ( $\beta = .12, p < .05$ ). It is important to mention that chi-square must be non-significant for model to be best fitted with data. In the analysis, due to the large sample size the chi-square result is significant which is can be tolerated here.

## 7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusively, the challenges in education are interconnected. It was found that sociocultural and religious challenges strongly predicted other challenges. However, political and economic challenges, like others, interconnected whereas all these challenges conjointly increased learning challenges among female students. In nutshell, the propose model of challenges was validated quantitatively. Furthermore, considering previous challenges through literature and implemented way forwards, it was detected that at each point to deal with a challenge temporal mitigated strategy were applied which did not produced sustainable results rather increased the problems. Thus, while proposing the interconnection of all challenges in the province, I suggest dealing with all these challenges coherently simultaneously and effectively immediately.

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