



Journal of Childhood Literacy and Societal Issues

Peer-reviewed, Open-access, HEC-recognized Y-category

Journal DOI: <https://doi.org/10.71085/joclsi>

P-ISSN: [3006-7863](#) E-ISSN: [3006-7871](#)



Behind Closed Doors: Unveiling the Causes of Gender Stereotypes Against Female University Students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Fazal Rahman¹

Dr. Haji ur Rahman²

Dr. Shakeel Ahmad³

²Lecturer, ³Assistant Professor, ¹Department of Sociology, Hazara University Mansehra Pakistan.

Correspondence: Dr. Haji ur Rahman, Email: hajirahmanburki@gmail.com

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.71085/joclsi.05.01.94>

Article information

Article History:

Received: 2026-03-04

Received in revised form:
2026-04-07

Accepted: 2026-06-16

Published Online: 2026-06-30

Keywords:

Gender; Gender Stereotypes;
Gender Discrimination;
Patriarchy; Culture

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of gender stereotypes exists in our society, which directly affects women. This research study aims to know the nature and causes of gender stereotypes at the university level. To understand the nature and causes of gender stereotypes, we conduct a qualitative study, and data was collected through in-depth interviews from female respondents at Hazara University, Mansehra. Data was collected through a simple random sampling technique, and data was analyzed thematically. We identified three themes: gender discrimination, patriarchy, and culture, which serve as root causes of stereotyping. The results show that gender discrimination is a barrier to female education. In such an environment, women are limited to household activities. Male-dominant societies push women to the margins in order to sustain masculinity and patriarchy within society. Additionally, cultural factors in Pathan society restrict women from attaining higher education, resulting in fewer opportunities for them to achieve academic success.



© 2026 by the Authors. Licensee Rahman, Rahman & Ahmad. This article is an open-access distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Introduction

Stereotypes are often described as comparatively rigid and simplistic assumptions about individuals or groups. Despite some authorities incorporate positive social exaggeration in their concepts of stereotypes, in reality they tend to concentrate on negative, undesirable qualities (Brylla, 2023). The Greek words *stereos*, which means solid, and *tupos*, which means picture or imprint, come from the verb *tuptein*, which means to hit (Shepard, 1955). In his seminal work *Public Opinion* (1922), Walter Lippmann modified the term stereotype for its current use. Originally, a stereotype was a solid printing mold or plate that was hard to modify once cast. Lippmann was the first to introduce the "cognitive miser" idea, which holds that stereotypes play a crucial role as cognitive simplifications that help us manage the finances of a world that might otherwise be too complicated for us to handle (Lippmann, 2017). Sociologists who study labeling theory have highlighted how stereotypes may elicit strong emotional reactions in deviant individuals and members of minority groups (Fiske, 2011; Adler & Laufer, 2023). Psychology's frustration-aggression theory also highlighted the motivated character of many of our preconceptions and sparked curiosity in the mechanics of prejudice (Dollard et al., 1939).

The way gender is constructed in society produces distinct expectations for men and women, which in turn results in distinct actions (Haque, 2025). Femininity and masculinity are described as the extent that individuals observe oneself as masculine or feminine, based on societal norms of what constitutes a man or a woman. Masculine and feminine roles are not oppositional but rather two distinct aspects (Pinna, 2020). The female and male roles produce some stereotypes concerning females in learning institutions (Simovicova, & Urbancikova, 2023). The gender stereotypes are brought about by society roles and demands, which are dependent on physical sex disparities and culture, leading to the division of labor that dictates societal conventions on gender (Eagly and Wood, 2012). Although the distribution of genders

in the workplace has changed, the studies indicate that the stereotypes perceived as both explicit and implicit regarding gender are still deeply rooted in the working environment. As an illustration, there are still certain jobs perceived as being mostly male even when the gender rating is explicitly declared as being gender neutral (Somani & Wani, 2025). Gender stereotypes constitute stereotypes in general about how women and men are expected to think and act in different situations in society (Browne, 1998).

Unlike the male, women are usually judged primarily based on their appearance but not their achievements (Heflick et al., 2011). This overemphasis on the physical beauty is carried into situations which it should not matter and thus leads to humiliation of the women (Hu et al., 2025). Hence, the beauty of a woman can be easily linked to her physical looks, and it seems to perpetuate the traditional biases and objectification (Rollero & Tartaglia, 2016).

The presence of stereotypes about gender, in particular, about scientific careers, creates significant barriers that can slow down the ambitions of students (Schmader, 2023). The perpetuation of out-dated gender stereotypes can even suppress the abilities of students and hinder innovation in the sciences, occasionally discouraging women to take up high status jobs in science and mathematics. Peer standards, family expectations for daughters, male perceptions of STEM, and conflicts with personal objectives may all discourage girls from pursuing STEM throughout their teenage years (Qirjo, 2025). Rather than gender inequalities in interests or skills, societal norms and the masculine atmosphere that permeates STEM disciplines have a greater impact on gender gaps in these fields (Cheryan et al., 2017).

Statement of the problem

Stereotyping is a social issue in developing countries such as Pakistan. The majority of females in developing countries suffer from these issues. They face barriers to political participation, economic opportunities, and higher education.

Females face discrimination due to societal stereotyping. Therefore, it is important to conduct a study on stereotyping within educational institutions.

Study Objectives

To explore the nature of stereotyping in educational institutions towards females

To find out the root causes of gender stereotyping

To give suggestion on the basis of study findings

Literature Review

Background

In a world that is changing quickly, distinctions and changes are becoming more noticeable in every aspect of life, and the educational sector is one that is always dealing with these issues. This evolution highlights the need of accepting human variety, tolerance, and the utilization of resources from seemingly unknown and unusual sources (Van de Werfhorst, 2014). The need to establish an education accessible to all individuals, rooted in the principles of the right to education and belonging, has become more evident in both national and international settings, hence influencing the development of an inclusive schooling (MITTLER, 2005). Persons who have disabilities have historically been linked to a wide range of labels and stereotypes. The terminology itself has evolved over time, reflecting shifts in attitudes and views on disability and differences (Longmore, 1987; Green et al., 2005). The nomenclature used in this profession has many consequences for influencing attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and policies (Winter & O'Raw, 2010). Stereotypes, although often possessing a negative connotation, are not inherently detrimental (Lambert et al., 1997). Stereotypes of individuals outside our reference group are mostly unfavorable compared to those of in-group members, even when the qualities are derived from good characteristics (Simon & Hamilton, 1994). Gender stereotypes in school keep prejudices alive that affect how female students do

in school, what careers they choose, and how they see themselves. These preconceptions frequently show up in topic segregation (for example, STEM areas being mostly male), teacher expectations, and school rules that unintentionally favor male pupils (Brown, & Stone, 2016). Gender stereotypes in schools have affected the academic experiences, chances, and self-image of female students for a long time, frequently making structural disparities worse. In the past, schools were set up with boys in mind, which led to profoundly ingrained prejudices that still exist today (Dahiya, 2024; Beroiza-Valenzuela & Salas-Guzmán, 2025).

Gendering in our Society

Gender roles for men and women might be categorized as unconventional, egalitarian, or traditional. Conventional activities assigned to women consist of non-egalitarian activities such as caring of home, and absence of the labor market (Knight and Brinton, 2017). Nonetheless, conventional roles that are assigned to males are such as the one of the financial provider and the head of the family (Simge, 2011). In other words, in a traditional perspective, the concept of masculinity is commonly attributed to such attributes as aggression, competition, dominance, strength, bravery, and control (Sultana and Lazim., 2011). Traditional wisdom holds that women are more caring, understanding, valuable, sympathetic, soft, loving, and expressively oriented and males are more aggressive, competitive, decisive, self-confident, determined and effectively oriented (Liu, 2021). Similarly, based on the conventional concepts of feminine roles, women taking care of the home and children are considered women of lower status and low ethical values compared to men, whose task in most cultures is to earn money and take care of their families (Çoban, 2022). Thus, traditional ideas of masculinity and femininity are characterized by power imbalance in the classroom, house and community (Volodzkiene, 2025). The existing differences in power relations between men and women, along with the harmful nature of masculine culture are the main sources of

this violence. The traditional mastery of masculinity and femininity can be considered one of the major factors that contribute to the occurrence of violence against women (Sultana and Lazim, 2011).

Gender Roles and Patriarchy

Gender role stereotypes touch on education and career paths, and the shaping of personalities to a great extent. The first contacts with gendered norms have always been found to affect the choice of academic subjects, student participation in the classroom, and self-perceived ability in certain fields (Beroiza-Valenzuela et al., 2025). In case, male students may choose not to study humanities, nursing, or early childhood education because of the existing societal stigmas, and female students may not want to study mathematics, engineering, or the physical sciences because they think that these subjects are more likely to correspond with male abilities (Arshad et al., 2025). The decisions are conditioned by the tendency to follow the socially approved gender norms instead of being determined only by personal interest or talent. These initial educational decisions support the phenomenon of occupational segregation and are often long-term regarding their impact on career options, earnings and social contributions (Undilashvili, 2024). To a large degree, the degree to which these prejudices are challenged or reinforced depends on the institutional culture in place (Arshad et al., 2025).

Gender inequality, discrimination and stereotypes.

Sex discrimination and prejudice is another giant issue in most aspects of life; social, economic, cultural among others. These issues continue inequality and limit opportunities of individuals of both genders. The studies indicate that highly ingrained biases, including the notion about women being nurturing and males being assertive, facilitate traditional genderization and influence careers, opportunity to become leaders, and wage disparities (Beroiza-Valenzuela and Salas-Guzmana, 2025). Institutional discrimination includes biases at the job place, and women and

non-binary individuals have a hard time recruiting, advancing, and earning equal wages (Bates et al., 2021). These differences are perpetuated by cultural narratives as well as media representation where women are presented as inferior and males as superior, which supports unhealthy norms (Seluman et al., 2024). Our solutions to these issues require that we un-freeze the preconceptions by creating awareness, ensuring that people are treated equally, and that we ensure that all aspects of societal life are reflected.

Gender Equality

Through policies and curriculum, role models can make students challenge the preconception and develop critical thinking skills through universities that endorse gender equality, inclusivity, and equal representation. Nevertheless, those businesses that neglect or silently encourage traditional gender conventions are likely to be the perpetrators of the old customs (Wu, 2024). In South Asia, including the institutions of Pakistan, gender dynamics are influenced by religious, cultural and economic influences. The intricate interrelation between old social framework and new education purposes at times leads to mixed messages about gender roles and appropriate conduct to young men and women (Riaz & Raza, 2024). Male presence contributes the greatest on the serious challenges that women have faced in their work places (Rahman et al., 2025). Pakistan's patriarchal system has resulted in a clear gender gap in sectors including education, employment opportunities, and decision-making. In the past, males have been seen as having a higher position within the organizational structure of many organizations, groups, and workplaces, while women have been sidelined and reduced to a secondary rank (Rahman et al., 2024). One factor that sustains gender stereotypes in educational environments is the concealed curriculum. Classroom conversations, peer interactions, and institutional rules may all convey implicit, unsaid signals that uphold conventional gender norms, even when formal legislation promote equal (Keating & Baker, 2025).

Methodology

This section contains the methods and techniques of this research study.

Research method

A qualitative study was conducted in a higher educational institution to explore gender stereotypes towards female within the university.

Research Design

Phenomenological research design was used to explore the lived experience of gender stereotypes among the university students with focus on female students.

Population

The targeted institution was Hazara University Mansehra, and the targeted population was the female students at Hazara University Mansehra.

Tools of Data Collection

An interview guide was designed with the help of existing literature, and data was collected with the help of the interview guide. The interview guide consisted of details about the study and questions on gender stereotypes to achieve the objectives of the study.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Data was collected through a simple random sampling technique from 8 respondents, while the researcher reached the 8th in-depth interview at the saturation point and stopped data collection. Before data collection, we take verbal consent from the respondents.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed through thematic analysis as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). We transcribed the data from the local language to English, then read it again and again and extracted the themes from the collected data. Three major themes were extracted from the collected data, including gender discrimination, patriarchy and culture.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher strictly follows research ethics. We assure the respondent's confidentiality and anonymity while collecting the data. We obtained verbal consent from the respondents prior to conducting interviews. Further, we informed the respondent that the data is solely for the research purpose.

Results

We conducted a thematic analysis of the data by following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis.

Figure 1.



Theme #1 Gender Discrimination

There is tremendous gender inequality throughout the world which is primarily perpetuated by common-held stereotypes that dictate the roles and the manner those of men and women should act in day-to-day living. Such stereotypes act divisive not only in private development but also in creating unequal opportunities for study, job, political participation, and social life. The researcher conducts a comprehensive interview and the respondent 1 (R-1) narrates that:

"We are living in a male dominant society where female face various problems including gender stereotyping. They face discrimination in educational institutions, workplaces, public transport and also face discrimination in verbal communication. Gender stereotypes leads women to poverty, whenever society keep the deprive from the right of education. In this condition they also have lesser opportunities of employment. As a woman, I believe in equality, and as a member of society we can contribute to the society as male do".

An in-depth interview was conducted with another respondent and respondent (R-2) stated that:

"Stereotypes give rise the gender discrimination within various social settings. It harms the dignity of women in our society. Male think of women, that they are emotional, vulnerable, powerless and less confident. The rigid culture of our society also push back women, it keeps them deprive from economic and educational endeavors."

Theme #2 Patriarchy

Throughout many cultures around the world, such as that of Pakistan and most certainly in such places as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the domination of patriarchy has been solidly established, keeping male near hegemony in the fields of political and economic power as well as social status. The gender stereotypes, where certain roles are directly attributed to male and female gender fail to challenge this system and help form societal norms which give inequality a

place for growing. The respondent 3 (R-3) and respondent 4 (R-4) narrates that:

"In this patriarchal society, male violate various basic women right to maintain male dominancy within the society and to push women to marginality. They keep women deprived from higher education after their schooling or college. They face discrimination in health facilities, such as, they prioritize male being in the condition of sickness. In this modern era, the society keep us limited to household activities. Within the family, parents also prioritize male that give birth to other patriarchal minds."

Other respondents (R-5 and R-7) states that

"The modern stereotypes give us hope to be educated and to participate in economic activities. They think that women have the right to education, and an educated woman can make a difference within the society. The educated mother can change the patriarchal mindset. The more we have women educated population the greater they have economic and employment opportunities. Equal treatment makes a society healthy and prosperous."

Theme #3 Culture

Culture defines our life in society: our morals and our customs and the people that we include in our group. However, if cultural boundaries are too rigid construing stereotypes they can limit others to narrow social roles based on gender, class or ethnicity. In some areas such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where much influence has been exerted on it by the Pashtun code of honor, the customs of the area often dictate how the people of either gender are to act themselves. Boys learn how to turn into bull Unbending guards. It is believed that girls live modest and submissive lives to maintain their honor. Respondent 6 (R-6) stated that:

"Gender stereotypes affect women in various social settings, especially in Pathan society. They do not permit women to get education after school level. Economic and employment opportunities in that society is very scare and rare. Women can

work within the premises of home, like doing domestic work and take care of their children. The prominent issue in Pathan society is, women get married at their early ages. Child marriage also deprive them from various fundamental rights.”

Another respondent, respondent 8 (R-8) narrates that:

“Cultural barriers prevent women to get higher education. Parents do not permit their female children to get higher education because of the coeducation. The occurrence of harassment with female students also spread fear in the society, where parents are scarier to permit their female child for higher education. The male teacher attitude also affects our education because of their unwelcoming attitudes towards female students.”

Discussion

This study explores the causes of gender stereotypes existing in educational institution that affect female's students. The first theme and cause were gender discrimination in educational institution. Cultural stereotypes that are latent in the society of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cause the constant gender discrimination that then holds progress in education, economy and the workforce. Eager to defend their values Pashtun society tends to segregate roles – men are left with leadership and financial roles while women have to perform household and caregiving roles. Religious, cultural, and economic issues also influence gender dynamics in South Asia, particularly in Pakistani institutions. Conflicting messages about gender roles and appropriate behaviour for young men and women may sometimes arise from the intricate interplay between traditional societal structures and contemporary educational objectives (Riaz & Riaz, 2024). These stereotypes, effectively, constrain women's opportunities for education, particularly rural ones as conservative beliefs of society prevent girls from going further in education than a primary level, intensifying fears concerning mobility, honor, and the perception that education is not important for them in their role as future wives and mothers. Through their

policies, courses, and role models, universities that support gender equality, inclusivity, and equitable representation may inspire students to challenge stereotypes and develop critical thinking skills. However, businesses run the danger of continuing antiquated practices if they disregard or subtly encourage traditional gender standards (Wu, 2024). Solutions to deal with such stereotypes are effective strategies like adoption of specific measures aimed at school incentives, secure transport systems and anti-harassment laws, together. In order to avoid stunting KP's socioeconomic development it is crucial that these interventions are adopted in order to address gender disparities. Males are mostly to blame for the major barriers that women face in the workplace (Rahman et al., 2025).

The second cause and theme was patriarchy. The patriarchal structure mean male dominance affects women and boost stereotypes within the society. Underneath such slogans as “patriarchy” or “male dominance” lie real human life experiences, what mothers compromise their dreams for, daughters, pushing their victories into the shadows, to have the “family honor”, sons burdened with the perpetuity of the task to be ready to provide. According to research, deeply ingrained stereotypes, such as the notion that men are "assertive" and women are "nurturing," support traditional gender roles and have an impact on leadership opportunities, career choices, and economic disparities (Beroiza-Valenzuela & Salas-Guzmán, 2025). In villages of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a father may choose to let her daughter out of school, not out of malice, but because generations have built the image. A young man who grew up thinking that emotions is a weakness might take his struggles to anger rather than expressing through, “I'm struggling” never learnt to do it. Such stereotypes do not end at limiting women's opportunities. Gender role stereotypes have a substantial influence on the development of personal identities as well as educational and professional paths. It has been repeatedly shown that early exposure to gendered norms affects academic topic choice, classroom

participation, and self-reported competency in certain fields (Beroíza-Valenzuela et al., 2025). This means that men are usually thrust into narrow roles where kindness and openness are viewed as manly weakness. Men's and women's gender roles might be classified as traditional, egalitarian, or nontraditional. Non-egalitarian duties like housework and not working are examples of traditional jobs that are attributed to women (Knight & Brinton, 2017).

Another cause is the culture of Pathan society that restrict women up to household activities. When customary beliefs crystallize into rigid stereotypes, accidentally, they can generate an environment that suppresses non-conformists. sample representation A bright girl, whose dreams are not fulfilled due to the old concept, "women should not be in school", a fragile boy who has been backed by the idea of "men should be fearless" so that he exits the crowd with aggressive behavior, and parents who cannot understand how to balance their cultural origin. It is often believed that men are more aggressive, competitive, decisive, self-assured, driven, and effectively orientated, whereas women are more expressive, soft, loving, understanding, valued, empathetic, and caring (Liu, 2021). Similar to this, women who look after the house and children are seen as having a lesser status and less moral character than males, whose purpose in many civilisations is to support their families and engage in competitive earning, based on conventional ideas of feminine duties (Çoban, 2022). These are lived realities dramatizing in quiet daily struggles, in the after effects of crying around boys, or in the soft sensibility a woman gives when she closes her goals. Every instance of a father being a part of his daughter's school life without being afraid of judgements or a mother teaching her son that true courage also consists of tenderness means that one steps beyond the traditional story. The main causes of this violence are the unequal power relations between the sexes and the negative elements of male culture. One might argue that the traditional ideas of masculinity and femininity have a major role in the high rate of violence against women

(Sultana & Lazim., 2011). Cultural change of its greatest substance usually takes place from within rather than through formal assertions. The society needs cultural transformation to give a friendly environment to female in our society because without female we cannot progress in any field.

Limitation and Future Research Directions

It is difficult for the researcher to cover the whole geography of Khayber Pakhtunkhwa or universities within the province. We selected Hazara University as a sample for the study and carried out the study at Hazara University, Mansehra. It is convenient for the researcher and easy to collect data within the university. The demography of the university is diverse, and we collect data from the students who have various demographies.

The present investigation is a qualitative study that contains a phenomenological research design. We suggest to the future researcher to conduct a mixed-method study at different universities by using the exploratory sequential method and collect data from both genders, males and females.

Conclusion

The study was conducted on the causes of stereotypes in higher educational institutions. The findings reveal that gender discrimination is the main cause which prevents women from attaining higher education or a barrier to women's education. Gender discrimination pushes women to poverty and illiteracy; it also affects the confidence level of women. In addition, they have fewer economic and employment opportunities in the job market than males have. They face stereotypes, such as males considering them weak, emotional, and powerless. Patriarchy also serves as a cause of gender stereotyping. Male-dominant societies violate the basic rights of women; such as access to education or higher education. In the contemporary world, males keep women limited to household activities. The rigid culture in our society is also a factor that gives birth to various stereotypes. Such as in Pathan society, women

have limited opportunity to take higher education as compared to other societies. Women in Pathan

society are prevented from pursuing education because they are married off at a young age.

Author Contributions

Fazal Rahman: Formulate introduction, collect the data through in-depth interviews, transcribe the collected data and analyze the data.

Dr. Haji ur Rahman: They work on literature review, discussion section and check the paper grammatically in detail.

Dr. Shakeel Ahmad: Design the methodology section, conclusion and abstract. Also guide on thematic analysis. Dr. Shakeel Ahmad also edit and organize the whole paper in appropriate format for the journal.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors in this work declare no financial interest.

Funding Statement

We did not receive any funding for this research project.

References

- Adler, F., & Laufer, W. S. (Eds.). (2023). *New Directions in Criminological Theory: Volume 4, New Directions in Criminological Theory*. Taylor & Francis.
- Arshad, R., Qureshi, M. S., & Qazi, W. (2025). Gender Role Stereotypes: A Comparative Study Among Male and Female University Students. *Social Science Review Archives*, 3(2), 1297-1308.
- Bates, T., Thomas, C. S., & Timming, A. R. (2021). Employment discrimination against gender diverse individuals in Western Australia. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 40(3), 273-289.
- Beroíza-Valenzuela, F., & Salas-Guzmán, N. (2025). Gender Stereotypes and Language Processing: Cognitive and Social Insights from a Decade of Research (2012–2023). *European Journal of Education*, 60(2), e70063.
- Beroíza-Valenzuela, F., & Salas-Guzmán, N. (2025). Redefining academic trajectories: A comprehensive analysis of the factors and impacts of the gender gap in STEM higher education. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 26(4), 928-947.
- Beroíza-Valenzuela, F., & Salas-Guzmán, N. (2025). Redefining academic trajectories: A comprehensive analysis of the factors and impacts of the gender gap in STEM higher education. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 26(4), 928-947.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Brown, C. S., & Stone, E. A. (2016). Gender stereotypes and discrimination: How sexism impacts development. *Advances in child development and behavior*, 50, 105-133.
- Browne, B. A. (1998). Gender stereotypes in advertising on children's television in the 1990s: A cross-national analysis. *Journal of Advertising*, 27(1), 83–96.
- Brylla, C. (2023). Why Do Stereotypes Exist?. In *Documentary and Stereotypes: Reducing Stigma through Factual Media* (pp. 23-52). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Cheryan, S., Ziegler, S. A., Montoya, A. K., & Jiang, L. (2017). Why are some STEM fields more gender balanced than others? *Psychological Bulletin*, 143(1), 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000052>.
- Çoban, S. (2022). Gender and telework: Work and family experiences of teleworking professional, middle-class, married women with children during the Covid-19 pandemic in Turkey. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 29(1), 241-255.
- Dahiya, K. (2024). A Review on Gender Stereotypes and Career Preferences Among Students. *Library of Progress-Library Science, Information Technology & Computer*, 44(1).
- Dollard, J., Doob, L. W., Miller, N. E., Mowrer, O. H. and Sears, R. L. (1939), *Frustration and Aggression*, New Haven, CT.
- Eagly, A. H., & Wood, W. (2012). Social role theory. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, 2, 458–476.
- Fiske, S. T. (2011). *Envy up, scorn down: How status divides us*. Russell Sage Foundation.

- Green, S., Davis, C., Karshmer, E., Marsh, P., & Straight, B. (2005). Living stigma: The impact of labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination in the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families. *Sociological inquiry*, 75(2), 197-215.
- Haque, R. (2025). Reflection of Gender Stereotypes in Social Freedom. In *Contemporary Gender Transformations in South Asia: Transcending the Archetype of Womanhood* (pp. 89-106). Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Heflick, N. A., Goldenberg, J. L., Cooper, D. P., & Puvia, E. (2011). From women to objects: Appearance focus, target gender, and perceptions of warmth, morality and competence. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 47(3), 572–581.
- Hu, Y., Tian, H., Hou, Y., Zhu, M., & Gao, X. (2025). Social networking sites use exacerbates appearance anxiety in young Chinese women: The moderating role of self-concept clarity. *Psychology of Popular Media*.
- Keating, S., & Baker, C. R. (2025). Gender equality matters: a precious “GEM” to tackle gender inequality through a whole-school community educational programme. *Educational Review*, 77(3), 710-730.
- Knight, C. R., & Brinton, M. C. (2017). One egalitarianism or several? Two decades of gender-role attitude change in Europe. *American Journal of Sociology*, 122(5), 1485-1532.
- Lambert, A. J., Khan, S. R., Lickel, B. A., & Fricke, K. (1997). Mood and the correction of positive versus negative stereotypes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72(5), 1002.
- Lippmann, W. (2017). *Public opinion*. Routledge.
- Liu, H. (2021). Redeeming leadership: An anti-racist feminist intervention.
- Longmore, P. K. (1987). Uncovering the hidden history of people with disabilities.
- MITTLER, N. P. (2005). The global context of inclusive education: the role of the United. In *Contextualizing inclusive education* (pp. 38-52). Routledge.
- Pinna, M. (2020). Do gender identities of femininity and masculinity affect the intention to buy ethical products?. *Psychology & Marketing*, 37(3), 384-397.
- Qirjo, E. (2025). *Cultivating Mindsets of Persistence: Experiences of Undergraduate Women Students in STEM Programs at a Public Research University* (Doctoral dissertation, Florida Atlantic University).
- Rahman, F., Rahman, K. U., & Masroor, M. (2025). Unveiling the Effects of Workplace Harassment on Women Workers in the Higher Education Institutions, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Journal of Social Sciences Research & Policy*, 3(1), 165-171.
- Rahman, K. ur, Rahman, F., & Nawaz, S. (2024). Exploring Workplace Incivility and Harassment against Women at University Level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: A Qualitative Approach. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 5(4), 64–72. [https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2024\(5-IV\)07](https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2024(5-IV)07).
- Riaz, M., & Riaz, M. R. (2024). Exploring the Nexus of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Cultural Climate, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Higher Education: Challenges, Opportunities, and Insights. *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Higher Education: Challenges, Opportunities, and Insights* (September 03, 2024).
- Rollero, C., & Tartaglia, S. (2016). The effects of objectification on stereotypical perception and attractiveness of women and men. *Psihologija*, 49(3), 231–243.

- Schmader, T. (2023). Gender inclusion and fit in STEM. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 74(1), 219–243.
- Seluman, I., Eguono, A., Gbenga, A. P., & Aimiomode, A. (2024). Stereotypical portrayal of gender in mainstream media and its effects on societal norms: A theoretical perspective. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation*, 5(1), 743-9.
- Shepard, C. F. (1955). The Stereographic Image. *Clinical and Experimental Optometry*, 38(6), 159-163.
- Simge, Z. (2011). Development and psychometric properties gender roles attitude scale. *Journal of Education*, 40, 409-42.
- Simon, B., & Hamilton, D. L. (1994). Self-stereotyping and social context: the effects of relative in-group size and in-group status. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 66(4), 699.
- Simovicova, S., & Urbancíková, N. (2023). Managing gender stereotypes in STEM and enhancing vocational education for employability. *Management Research and Practice*, 15(4), 29-44.
- Somani, P. P., & Wani, P. (2025). Breaking Barriers Redefining Gender Roles in the Digital Age Workforce. In *Support Networks for Entrepreneurs: Social Capital and Strategic Collaborations* (pp. 25-54). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.
- Sultana, A M., & Lazim, S (2011). Gender Studies in Teacher Education: An Empirical Research. *Asian Social Science*, 7 (12), 168.
- Undilashvili, S. (2024). Understanding Wage Gaps in Georgian Labor Market: Gender, Ethnicity and Age.
- Van de Werfhorst, H. G. (2014). Changing societies and four tasks of schooling: Challenges for strongly differentiated educational systems. *International Review of Education*, 60(1), 123-144.
- Volodzkiene, L. (2025). 4 Gender Equality. *Societal Challenges and Opportunities of Low-Carbon Energy Transformations*, 139.
- Winter, E., & O'Raw, P. (2010). *Literature Review of the Principles and Practices relating to Inclusive Education for Children with Special Educational Needs*. The National Council for Special Education.
- Wu, J. (2024). Enhancing Policies on Promoting Gender-inclusive and Equitable Quality STEM in Higher Education. Directions and challenges from a comparative analysis between Italy and China.