

## **Professional and Social Adjustment of Women Employees in Higher Education**

### **Institutions: A Regional Perspective**

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#### **Abstract**

*To safeguard the rights of women for professional and social adjustment in a society, higher education institutions can play a vital role. This study was designed to find the factors that affect the professional and social adjustment of women employees concerning gender discriminating culture in higher education institutions. Women employees from 4 universities were conveniently taken as a sample of the study. The sample size was (n=160). Inferential statistics; t-test and one-way ANOVA were used. The study concluded that women employees were satisfied with: recruitment and selection process; assignment of wages; workload; leaves rules; promotion process; dealing of head and professional development practices, while, they were not satisfied with: duty hours; career development; decision-making process, existing co-working environment and social adjustment. No effect of age, qualification, designation except experience on professional as well as on social adjustment was significantly observed.*

**Keywords:** Professional and Social Adjustment, Gender, Discrimination, Higher Education

#### **Introduction**

Women University and academies staff members faced different discrimination which has negative effect on motivations and jobs of women. According to Cook (1994), Discrimination against women is becoming a national and international human rights issue. One of the main objectives of education is the social development or social adjustment of a person. A person should adjust himself according to the environment for his survival. Because adjusted person can think with more clarity, act hopefully, and cope with the challenges more effectively. He can play his best role for the betterment of his society. Adjustment is important in the teaching profession too like any other profession. A well-adjusted teacher can balance between the needs and circumstances. If a teacher is satisfied in his desires, it reflects in his behavior. We can say that the future of our generation depends upon how a teacher is well adjusted. The students are the reflection of their teachers' behavior. A well-adjusted teacher always plans, thinks, and acts pragmatically and he is dedicated to his profession and can help his students to adjust according to the environment. Various studies have been done on the adjustment of teachers and the purpose of the following study is to find out the professional and social adjustment of female employees regarding the gender discriminant culture of the universities.

According to UNESCO (2009), social and constructed differences in the roles of both men and women and their responsibilities vary in different cultures. When men and women are not discriminated against to avail opportunities, they can play their roles in bringing changes in social, political, economic, and cultural aspects and social development. Learning organizations are the results of the disparities that happen in society. They are depending for their existence in society but societies lead to a continuation of discrimination. Societies also depend upon these institutions for their development. Gender equality in society and how to treat the opposite gender are the results of those activities in academic institutions. To improve gender disparity in society external forces should impart their roles in institutions.

According to the UNDP Human Development Report (2014), there is greater inequality in Africa regarding men and women's status and their usage of potential for development. For example,

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most women still have fewer chances to approach education, employment, and income-generating opportunities, information, and parliamentary representations. In the post-structural perspective, notions of identity including gender must be acknowledging in schooling. There are many components of post-structuralism including a concept of blame schooling as a post-colonialist institution that interrupts the power of local and original knowledge (Unterhalter, 2005). The human rights approach relies on the concept that education is a universal human right that is codependent with other basic human rights. The approach was mainly based on the belief that education is the right of all including traditionally degraded people, girls and women, native persons, special persons, and minorities (UNICEF, 2007).

### **Statement of the problem**

The world is changing very rapidly and these changes demand that we adopt or adapt ourselves according to the situation. It is considered important for the survival of an individual to adapt himself according to his social environment. Female comprises almost half of the world's population so women must have a better status in the society. The equal status of women helps them to adjust to society. For women employees, they must be adjusted not only professionally but socially as well. Although the women's rights movements globally bring amendments in policies but in practices the study assumes that women employees do not feel comfortable both professionally and socially in gender discriminating culture. Gender discrimination and inequalities present at the workplace make it an inhospitable place for women employees. The study explored the professional and social adjustment of women employees working in either academics or non-academics departments of higher education institutions in Punjab, Pakistan.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were to

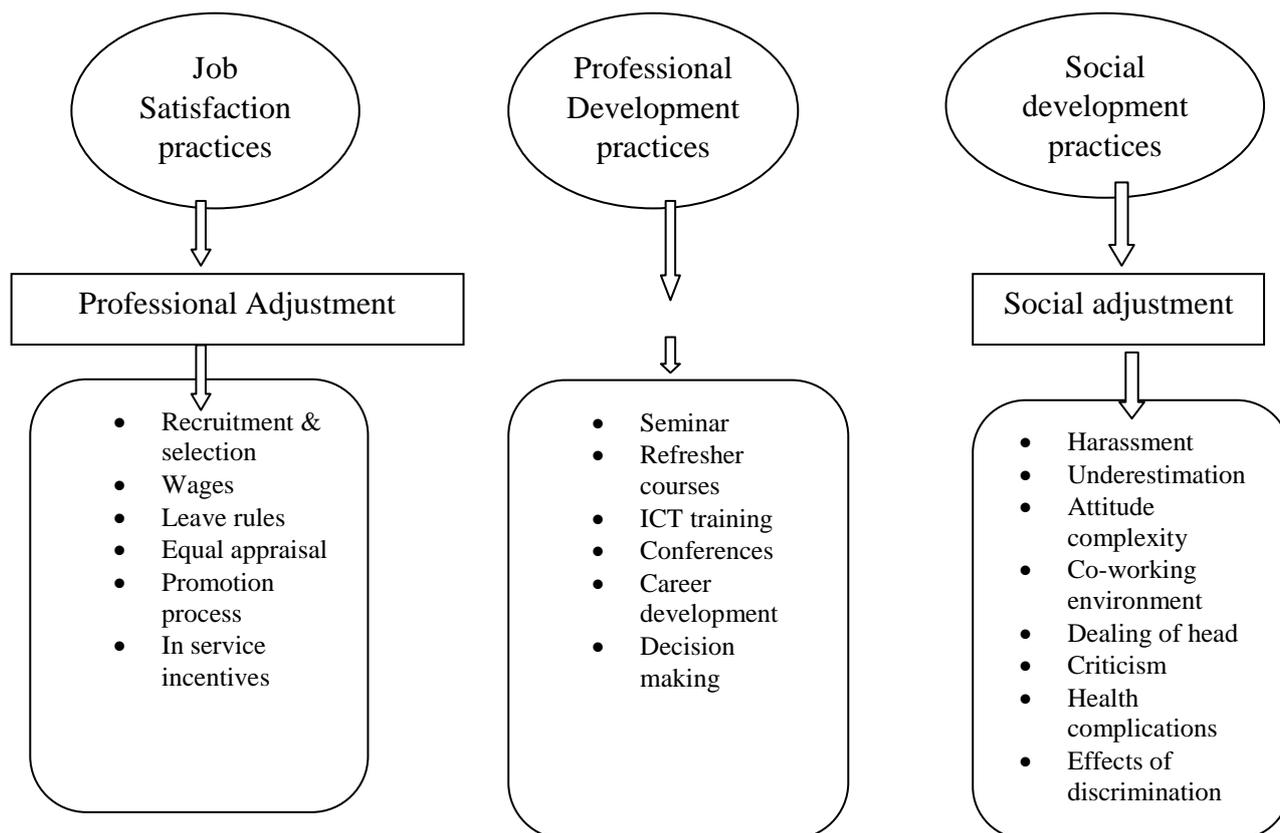
1. Examine women employees' professional and social adjustment in higher education institutions.
2. Find out the factors that affect the professional and social adjustment of women employees in higher education institutions.

### **Research Questions**

- 1- Is there any difference in the professional adjustment of women employees regarding age level?
- 2- Is there any difference in the professional adjustment of women employees regarding qualification level?
- 3- Is there any difference in the professional adjustment of women employees regarding experience level?
- 4- Is there any difference in the professional adjustment of women employees regarding universities?
- 5- Is there any difference in the mean score of teaching and non-teaching staff regarding professional adjustment?
- 6- Is there any difference in the social adjustment of women employees regarding age level?
- 7- Is there any difference in the social adjustment of women employees regarding qualification level?
- 8- Is there any difference in the social adjustment of women employees regarding experience level?
- 9- Is there any difference in the social adjustment of women employees regarding universities?
- 10- Is there any difference in the mean score of teaching and non-teaching staff regarding social adjustment?

### **Significance of the study**

Universities are a great means to bring social change. Women employees have a crucial role in Universities in today's world to bring this social change. The quality of universities depends upon the professional and social adjustment of women employees. Universities maintain a balance between need and circumstances. The quality of professional and socially competent women employees depends on multiple factors that may contribute to the development of professional and social adjustment or affect the social and professional development of women employees. This study found professional and social adjustment and the factors that affect women employees' professional and social adjustment in higher education institutions.



**Research Methodology**

It is consisted of the design of the study, the population, the sample, the sampling technique, the instrument for data collection, is discussed.

**Research Design**

The study was designed to find out the professional and social adjustment of female employees regarding the gender discriminant culture of universities. The nature of the study was descriptive and it was quantitative research. To collect information and data about the professional and social adjustment of female employees, the survey research method was used.

**Population**

Due to time and financial constraints, the researcher couldn't visit the universities of other provinces so only universities of province Punjab, Pakistan were selected. All the teaching and non-teaching faculty of all general public sector universities of Punjab, Pakistan included in the population of the study.

**Sample and Sampling Technique**

A multi-stage sampling technique was used, following are the steps:

From a total of twenty-six universities of province Punjab, four universities were conveniently selected. All the departments that meet the requirements have regular female employees (teaching and non-teaching) from selected universities were selected.

Female employees (teaching and non-teaching) from each department were selected on an availability basis on the visited day. Forty female employees from the University of Sargodha, Punjab University, Government College University, and Agriculture University Faisalabad, were selected. Total One hundred and forty female employees were taken as a sample of the study.

University wise data collection detail

Sr. No	University	Teaching staff			Non-teaching staff		
		Total	Received	Percentage	Total	Received	Percentage
1	University of Sargodha	30	27	90%	20	13	65%
2	Punjab University	30	27	90%	20	13	65%
3	University of Agriculture, Faisalabad	30	22	73%	20	18	90%

4	Government University, Faisalabad	College	30	24	80%	20	16	80%
5	Total		120	100	83%	80	60	75%

**Research Instrument**

The research instrument was constructed regarding the professional and social adjustment of female employees after studying the literature. The scale was developed in the form of a five-point Likert scale i.e. strongly Agree=5, Agree=4, Undecided=3, strongly Disagree=2, and for Disagree=1. The questionnaire consisted of 39 items under major three factors i.e. Job Satisfaction Practices, Professional Development Practices, and Social Development Practices. The questionnaire was presented in the English language. For the validation of the instrument experts' opinions were sought from three experts. These experts were Ph.D. in the subject of Education with sufficient academic and research experience. All the experts were requested to review the instrument and check the content validity. They also judged the statements and suitability of the items concerning the local environment. After incorporating suggestions of the experts, the instruments were pilot tested. To ensure the reliability of the developed scale, the researcher carried out the pilot study. Female Employees of the University of Sargodha were selected for this purpose. Two teachers from each department were administered the research instruments for a pilot study. The obtained data from employees was analyzed to find out the reliability coefficient 'Cronbach Alpha'. Its value for the developed scale was= .802 which was good. According to (George & Mallery, 2003) provide the following rules of thumb for 'Cronbach Alpha' (a): '> .9 = Excellent, > .8 = Good, > .7 = Acceptable, > .6 = Questionable, > .5 = Poor and < .5 = Unacceptable.'

**Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection was a difficult phase but essential part of the research study. A survey technique was used for data collection. The data was collected through self-approach from female employees of the University of Sargodha, Punjab University, Government College University, and Agricultural University of Faisalabad. The data collection process was started in mid-October and completed after two months in mid-December.

**Data Analysis**

Quantitative data analysis of this study was carried out. Data were analyzed through the application of Frequencies, Mean, Stand Deviation, Independent sample t-test, and ANOVA with the help of the SPSS-22 software package.

**Table: 1 Comparison of Professional Adjustment of female employees regarding Age level.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
25 to 30	51	99.7255	16.20874	1.212	4	.308
31 to 35	51	99.6275	13.74330			
36 to 40	30	93.1000	20.39329			
41 to 45	18	101.9444	13.02700			
Above 45	10	97.1000	16.34659			
Total	160	98.5375	16.09324			

Table: 1 shows the comparison of all the levels of age of female employees (teaching & non-teaching staff) with professional adjustment. F value (1.212) with df =4,155,159 and p-value = .308>0.05 shows that there is no significant difference of professional adjustment of female employees regarding age level.

**Table: 2 Comparison of Professional Adjustment of female employees regarding Qualification level.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
M.A	39	100.4615	15.58313	1.369	3	.254
M.Phil.	64	97.0469	15.86293			
Ph.D.	39	96.4103	18.24211			
Others	18	104.2778	11.87586			
Total	160	98.5375	16.09324			

Table: 2 shows the comparison of all the levels of qualification of female employees (teaching & non-teaching staff) with professional adjustment. F value (1.369) with df =3,156,159 and p-value = .254>0.05 shows that there is no significant difference of professional adjustment of female employees regarding qualification level.

**Table: 3 Comparison of Professional Adjustment of female employees regarding Experience level.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
1 to 5	56	98.6964	15.83657	.680	4	.607
6 to 10	51	98.0784	17.97648			
11 to 15	35	99.0857	15.10818			
16 to 20	10	103.8000	7.68548			
20 above	8	91.3750	17.83205			
Total	160	98.5375	16.09324			

Table: 3 shows the comparison of all the levels of experience of female employees (teaching & non-teaching staff) with professional adjustment. F value (.680) with df =4,155,159 and p-value = .607 >0.05 shows that there is no significant difference of professional adjustment of female employees regarding experience level.

**Table: 4 Comparison of Professional Adjustment of female employees regarding Universities.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
Sargodha University	40	97.025	17.31679	.178	3	0.911
Agricultural University	40	98.8	15.01999			
Government College	40	98.725	19.34834			
University						
Punjab University	40	99.6	12.34712			
Total	160	98.5375	16.09234			

Table: 4 shows the comparison of professional adjustment of all universities of female employees (teaching & non-teaching staff). F value (0.178) with df =3,156,159 and p-value = 0.911>0.05 shows that there is no significant difference in professional adjustment of female employees of all universities.

**Table: 5 Comparison of Social Adjustment of female employees regarding age level.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
25 to 30	51	41.0392	5.98652	2.329	4	0.059
31 to 35	51	39.549	6.36023			
36 to 40	13	36.6333	8.14305			
41 to 45	18	38.6667	6.76496			
45 above	10	37.2	7.40570			
Total	160	39.2313	6.83611			

Table: 5 shows the comparison of all the levels of age of female employees (teaching & non-teaching staff) with social adjustment. F value (2.329) with df =4,155,159 and p-value =0.059 >0.05 shows that there is no significant difference in social adjustment of female employees regarding age level.

**Table: 6 Comparison of Social Adjustment of female employees regarding qualification level.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
M.A	39	40.8974	5.64192	2.745	3	0.45
M.Phil.	64	39.0938	5.90593			
Ph.D.	39	36.9487	8.21728			
Others	18	41.0556	7.98876			
Total	160	39.2313	6.83611			

Table: 6 shows the comparison of all the levels of qualification of female employees (teaching & non-teaching staff) with social adjustment. F value (2.745) with df =3,156,159 and p-value =0.45 >0.05 shows that there is no significant difference in social adjustment of female employees regarding qualification level.

**Table: 7 Comparison of Social Adjustment of female employees regarding experience level.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
1 to 5	56	41.2857	5.81445	2.529	4	0.043
6 to 10	51	37.5294	7.55077			
11 to 15	35	38.9714	6.87487			
16 to 20	10	36.7	4.00139			
20 above	8	40.0	8.56905			
Total	160	39.2313	6.83611			

Table: 7 shows the comparison of all the levels of experience of female employees (teaching & non-teaching staff) with social adjustment. F value (2.529) with df =4,155,159 and p-value = 0.043<0.05 shows that there is a significant difference in social adjustment of female employees regarding experience level.

**Post Hoc Test**

Experience(I)	Experience(J)	Mean Difference	Std. Error	p-value
1 to 5	6 to 10	3.75630	1.29845	.004
	16 to 20	4.58571	2.53550	.048

Table shows that social adjustment of female employees having experience 1 to 5 years is more than female employees having experience 6 to 10 years & 16 to 20 years. Female employees having experience 1 to 5 years as indicated by mean difference 3.75630, 4.58571 and p-value .004<0.05.

**Table: 8 Comparison of Social Adjustment of female employees regarding Universities.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
UOS	40	39.925	6.54526			
UAF	40	39.425	6.69055		3	
GCU	40	39.125	7.52155	0.321	156	0.810
PU	40	38.45	6.72138		159	
Total	160	39.2313	6.183611			

Table 8 shows the comparison of social adjustment of all universities of female employees (teaching & non-teaching staff). F value (0.321) with df =3,156,159 and p-value =0.810 >0.05 shows that there is no significant difference in social adjustment of female employees of all universities.

**Table: 9 Comparison of Professional Adjustment between teaching and non-teaching female employees of all universities.**

Designation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
Teaching Staff	100	98.0600	17.02631			
Non-Teaching	60	99.3333	14.50852	1.031	158	.311

Table 9 shows the comparison of professional adjustment between teaching and non-teaching female employees of all universities. F value (1.031) with df =158 and p-value = .311>0.05 shows that there is no significant difference in professional adjustment of teaching and non-teaching female employees of all universities.

**Table 10: Comparison of Social Adjustment between teaching and non-teaching female employees of all universities.**

Designation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	df	p-value
Teaching Staff	100	37.8500	6.99693			
Non-Teaching	60	41.5333	5.93029	1.004	158	.318

Table: 10 shows the comparison of social adjustment between teaching and non-teaching female employees of all universities. F value (1.004) with df =158 and p-value = .318>0.05 shows that there is no significant difference in social adjustment of teaching and non-teaching female employees of all universities.

**Finding**

1. There was no significant difference in professional adjustment of female employees of all universities as indicated by F value (0.178) with df =3,156,159 and p-value = 0.911>0.05. There was no significant difference in professional adjustment of teaching and non-teaching female employees of all universities as indicated by F value (1.031) with df =158 and p-value = .311>0.05. There was no significant difference in social adjustment of teaching and non-teaching female employees of all universities as indicated by F value (1.004) with df =158 and p-value = .318>0.05. There was no significant difference in social adjustment of female employees regarding age level as indicated by F value (2.329) with df =4,155,159 and p-value =0.059 >0.05. There was no significant difference in social adjustment of female employees regarding qualification level as indicated by F value (2.745) with df =3,156,159 and p-value =0.45 >0.05.
2. There was a significant difference in social adjustment of female employees regarding experience level as indicated by F value (2.529) with df =4,155,159 and p-value = 0.043 <

0.05. A greater mean (4.58571) showed that the social adjustment of female employees having experience of 1 to 5 years is better than female employees having experience of 6 to 10 years & 16 to 20 years. There was no significant difference in social adjustment of female employees of all universities as indicated by F value (0.321) with  $df = 3, 156, 159$  and  $p\text{-value} = 0.810 > 0.05$ .

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The findings of the study showed that women employees were not satisfied with the job satisfaction practices because the selection of women was not on a quota basis, discrimination in time table with them, no suitability with the working schedule, and also leaves rules that did not cater to employees' needs. They were not satisfied with the career development process because they were not provided equal opportunities to advance into top leadership positions and had not more career openings fields at the management level. Women employees were not satisfied with the decision-making process and their opinion was not considered as important while taking any decision to perform a task. The women's representation in the process of decision-making is fewer. They were found to be less involved in academics' decisions. The reason behind this may be the internal structure of the organization or communication problem. (Drudy, Martin, Woods & O'Flynn 2005; Lang, 2010). Women employees were not socially adjusted because they felt stress due to bullying and underestimation by their counterparts. Male employees considered themselves more empowered and outcomes-oriented in the organizations while women faced criticism for their dressing style, indulged in stress and mood swings, and depression at the workplace. Women employees were not satisfied with the co-working environment because working in a co-gender environment was more challenging for them and they faced more problems as compared to their male counterparts. The study concluded with some of the suggestions that working hours should be flexible for women employees. Awareness campaigns in higher education institutions can play their role in minimizing the gender discrimination effects on women's professional and social adjustment. Such campaigns may facilitate women employees' counterparts for extending their cooperation to burgeon gender-biased free environments in higher education institutions. This will not only help women employees to adjust socially but also professionally. Perception for women employees about work and practices must be dissolved by providing a healthy work climate for them. Consistent workshops and seminars on gender equality should be promoted for bringing something positive for women employees in men's empowered environment in higher education institutions.

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