



# FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

**Legal Awareness Among Female University Students in Lahore, Pakistan**

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### **1.1 Abstract:**

The purpose of this study was to examine the variables influencing women's legal knowledge of female university students in Lahore. It examines the impact of education level, social capital, and socioeconomic status on the knowledge of women's rights laws among female students using a quantitative methodology. Through convenience sampling, participants were selected from various universities in Lahore. An online survey form was distributed among female university students in Lahore. The study discovered a positive correlation between the social capital of female university students and their awareness of women's rights laws. Additionally, cocurricular activities and having more professors to be comfortable talking with, correlated positively with increased legal awareness. However, the influence of parental education on legal awareness and the impact of the number of friends on knowledge acquisition were found to be statistically insignificant. These findings contribute valuable insights into the factors shaping women's legal knowledge among university students in Lahore.

## 1.2 Introduction

The Sustainable Growth Goal 5 (SDG 5) of the United Nations seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, emphasizing gender equality as a fundamental human right and a major factor in social and economic growth (United Nations, 2015). Women continue to experience discrimination, abuse, and unequal access to opportunities and resources throughout the world despite recent advancements (World Bank, 2021).

Legal rights, which are statutory rights that are provided to everyone by the law, are a crucial tool for reducing gender disparity. According to liberal feminism, gender-based discrimination should be ended and women should have the same legal rights and opportunities as men (Young, 1990). Even in nations where cultural and traditional norms uphold gender inequity, the mere fact that these laws exist does not guarantee their effective application (Mukhopadhyay & Bhattacharjee, 2021).

The understanding and application of women's laws are especially important yet understudied in developing nations like Pakistan, where women confront difficulties because of cultural norms and socioeconomic institutions (Masood & Nisar, 2020). This study aims to address this gap by researching the level of awareness of women's laws among Pakistani women and understanding the extent to which the awareness of these laws is affected by one's social capital.

Education, socioeconomic position, and exposure to legal rights are some of the elements that this research will uncover as contributing to increased awareness and successful execution of women's laws (Malhotra & Boender, 2002). By understanding these aspects, strategies can be developed to improve the implementation of women's laws and increase awareness of women's legal rights.

The value of this work resides in its potential to advance knowledge of women's legal rights, particularly in developing nations (Cohen, 2006). The results ought to make governments, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties aware of how critical it is to advance gender equality and better administer women's laws.

### 1.3 Literature Review

Problems for women in Pakistan are caused by entrenched social norms that marginalize them. Although there are legislative frameworks in place to support and defend the rights of women, their application and enforcement are insufficient, leaving women vulnerable to prejudice and violence (Jafar, 2005)

Pakistan's Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act 2006 is a noteworthy piece of law. This law makes crimes like acid attacks, domestic abuse, and forced marriages, all of which are regrettably common in Pakistan. It offers women who encounter such violence legal redress. Reports indicate that the law's implementation and enforcement, however, are poor, which contributes to the violence against women's continuance (Sadiq, 2017). Numerous instances of violence against women continue to go unreported or unpunished, indicating a wide disconnect between the law and actual practice (Noor, 2004)

Another important regulation for Pakistani women is the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance of 1961, which regulates problems like marriage, divorce, and support in Muslim families. All marriages must be registered, and it gives women legal options in maintenance and divorce proceedings. The law, particularly regarding divorce, where men have more autonomy and privileges, has come under fire for being intrinsically biased against women (Abubakar, 2019). The gendered power dynamics in the personal sphere are emphasized which points out that women frequently encounter insurmountable obstacles when trying to obtain judicial redress in the event of marital conflict. (Becker, 2003)

Pakistan also has various legal bodies and frameworks to advance gender equality and safeguard women's rights in addition to these laws. For instance, the National Commission on the Status of Women, founded in 2000, (Khan, 2021) has the responsibility of observing how laws and policies about women's rights are being put into practice. Established in 2017, the Punjab Women's Protection Authority offers legal assistance and other sorts of help to women

who are victims of violence (Munshey, 2016). These programs frequently run against societal and institutional issues that reduce their effectiveness.

Despite these legislative protections, gender-based violence, discrimination, and unequal access to opportunities and resources are still problems for Pakistani women. The continuance of gender inequality is attributed to several factors, including deeply rooted cultural and traditional values, a lack of education, and the economy (Tarar & Pulla, 2014). These cultural elements seriously undercut legal protections, leading to a situation in which laws are unable to fully guarantee gender equality or defend women's rights. (Kabeer & Mumtaz & Sayeed, 2010)

There is an urgent need for greater research to examine the efficacy of the current laws and policies relating to women's rights in Pakistan given these ubiquitous issues. As a result, initiatives to advance gender equality and defend women's rights in the nation could be informed (Weiss, 2012). Such research could help identify gaps and areas for improvement in implementing and enforcing these laws. By examining the degree of understanding and application of women's laws among Pakistani women and the factors that impact them, this study seeks to contribute to this much-needed dialogue.

#### **1.4 Theoretical Underpinning**

The current study is based on the liberal and socialist feminisms, which combined offer a comprehensive framework for examining women's legal awareness in Pakistan. Liberal feminism serves as the main theoretical underpinning for this investigation. This point of view emphasizes how important it is to achieve gender equality through legislative change and fair access to opportunities for work and education (Young, 1990). Advocates argue that institutional and legal frameworks need to undergo drastic adjustments to overcome the differences in gender discrimination, which they claim stems from society and

cultural norms. This theory is in line with the main objective of the study, which is to investigate women's legal knowledge and the factors that can affect it. These factors include social networks, education, and media exposure, all of which could aid in the understanding and realization of gender equality.

In addition to the liberal feminist perspective, the study employs a socialist feminist lens. This concept emphasizes the interconnectedness of gender with other forms of oppression, such as those based on race and class (Hartsock, 1983). It presents the case that social and political changes alone will not be sufficient to eradicate gender disparity. The study of how social networks and social capital can improve women's legal literacy is guided by this point of view. It also highlights how the media may challenge conventional wisdom and support marginalized communities.



## 1.5 Methodology

### Research Design:

The study utilized a quantitative methodology to facilitate the collection of data on the factors influencing women's legal awareness in Pakistan.

### Hypothesis:

H1: There will be a positive relationship between the social capital of female university students and their level of legal awareness.

### Variables; Conceptualization and Operationalization:

#### I. Dependent Variable:

- Level of awareness of women's laws

Conceptualization: The dependent variable in this study is the level of awareness of women's laws amongst female university students in Lahore. This variable refers to the extent to which participants are aware of the laws/legislation particularly designed to protect women's rights.

Operationalization: The following items were used to measure the level of awareness of women's laws:

1. Are you aware of any laws in Pakistan that are designed to protect women's rights?
2. Don't Know    No    Yes
3. Based on recall, on average, how many laws in Pakistan can you identify that are directly related to women's rights?
4. No laws        1-2    3 or more
5. Please list as many laws related to women's rights as you are aware of. (Open-ended response) [Exact wording of laws not required]
6. Are you aware that there are laws related to women's property rights in Pakistan?
7. Don't Know    No    Yes

8. Are you aware that there are laws restricting forced dowry and bridal gifts in Pakistan?
9. Don't Know No Yes
10. Are you aware that there are laws to penalize acid attacks on women in Pakistan?
11. Don't Know No Yes
12. Are you aware of any government organizations that can be contacted in case of domestic abuse?
13. Don't Know No Yes
14. Are you aware of any Non-Governmental Organizations that provide legal support to women in case of abuse?
15. Don't Know No Yes
16. Are you aware of any legal support services provided by the Government to women in case of abuse?
17. Don't Know No Yes
18. How confident do you feel in your knowledge of women's laws?
19. Not at all confident Slightly confident Somewhat confident Quite confident  
Extremely confident.

**Scoring:**

- For items 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, participants receive a score of 0 for "No" and "Don't know" responses, and a score of 1 for "Yes" responses.
- For item 2, participants receive a score of 0 for "No laws" responses, a score of 1 for "1-2" responses, and a score of 2 for "3 or more" responses.
- Item 3 does not receive a score as it is an open-ended response meant to provide qualitative data.

- For item 10, participants receive a score of 0 for "Not at all confident", a score of 1 for "Slightly confident", a score of 2 for "Somewhat confident", a score of 3 for "Quite confident", and a score of 4 for "Extremely confident".

It is significant to note that, in addition to the operationalization strategy, there is currently no validated scale available to assess women's legal awareness in Pakistan. To verify their validity and reliability, the items provided here will undergo pre- and pilot-testing before being utilized in the study. This will entail giving the survey to a select set of respondents to spot any problems with the questions or any confusion they may cause. To make sure the items are suitable for use in the study, the pretest findings will be used to change and refine them as necessary. The accuracy and dependability of the results will be improved by this method.

## **II. Independent Variable:**

- Education
- Social Capital

Conceptualization:

Education level: This variable refers to the academic qualifications of the participants, classified as undergraduate students and postgraduate students

Social capital: This variable refers to describing a participant's network of connections and relationships that can give them access to knowledge and resources.

Operationalization: To measure the independent variables, the following items will be used:

### **Education level:**

1. Are you a:

Undergraduate Student

Postgraduate Student

2. What is the highest degree you have completed or the current program, you are enrolled in:

Currently enrolled in Bachelor

Currently enrolled in Masters

Currently enrolled in a PhD

3. Major Subject in your current: \_\_\_\_\_

**Scoring:**

- Item 1 will be scored as 1 for Undergraduate Students, 2 for Postgraduate Students
- Item 2 will be scored as 1 for Currently enrolled in Bachelor, 2 for Currently enrolled in Master, and 3 for Currently enrolled in PhD
- Item 3 will be re-coded as Social Sciences/Pure Sciences

**Social Capital: (As measured by the Social Capital Assessment Tool, SocCAT)**

1. How many friends do you have in your university?  
None 1-2 3-4 5 or more
2. How often do you attend social events with your friends?  
Never Rarely Sometimes Often
3. How many professors or instructors do you feel comfortable approaching for academic help or career advice?  
None 1-2 3-4 5 or more
4. Have you participated in any extracurricular activities or clubs at your university in the past year?  
Yes No

**Scoring:**

- For item 1, participants receive a score of 0 for "None" responses, a score of 1 for "1-2" responses, a score of 2 for "3-4" responses, and a score of 3 for "5 or more" responses.
- For item 2, participants receive a score of 0 for "Never" responses, a score of 1 for "Rarely" responses, a score of 2 for "Sometimes" responses, and a score of 3 for "Often" responses.
- For item 3, participants receive a score of 0 for "None" responses, a score of 1 for "1-2" responses, a score of 2 for "3-4" responses, and a score of 3 for "5 or more" responses.
- For item 4, participants receive a score of 0 for "No" responses and a score of 1 for "Yes" responses.

In this study, social capital is calculated using the Social Capital Assessment Tool (SocCAT). An individual's social networks, participation in social activities, and perceived access to resources through their social relationships are evaluated using the SocCAT, a validated questionnaire.

### **III. Socio-demographic Variables**

#### **Socioeconomic status**

Conceptualization: This variable refers to elements including income, education, occupation, and family history, this variable describes the individuals' social and economic standing.

Operationalization:

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your monthly household income (approx.)? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the highest level of education completed by your father?
4. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?

**Data Collection Methods and Tools:**

Structured survey questionnaires, developed with a focus on the research objectives and informed by the literature review, were employed to gather quantitative data.

Administered in person, the survey incorporated a mix of closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended responses were utilized to gather information on participants' social networks, socioeconomic status, educational levels, and demographic characteristics. In addition, open-ended questions were strategically included to elicit respondents' perspectives and experiences related to their legal knowledge. This comprehensive approach aimed to provide quantitative insights into the extent and distribution of legal awareness among women.

**Population:**

The research involved the participation of undergraduate and postgraduate students representing various universities in Lahore, Pakistan.

**Sampling:**

Convenience sampling was used in the study to choose participants.

- Depending on their desire to engage in the study, undergraduate and graduate students from various departments and programs were contacted for recruitment.
- Google Docs, social media sites, and posters/flyers posted on campus bulletin boards were used to find participants.
- The sample size was decided by the viability of data collection and recruitment within the allotted time and financial restrictions.
- To maximize the generalizability of the findings, efforts were made to ensure diversity in terms of age, and educational status.

**Analysis Strategies:**

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data in this study. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the data and give a general picture of the research variables, including measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode), measures of dispersion (standard deviation, variance), and frequencies.

Statistical software like SPSS was used to undertake all data analysis processes. Tables, graphs, and narrative summaries are used to present the analyses' findings. The results are presented in the research report with clarity and succinctness after being interpreted considering the study questions and hypotheses.

ANOVA and t-tests were two statistical methods used in the study to evaluate mean differences in legal awareness concerning independent factors. This method offered insightful information about how diverse factors affect the differences in legal awareness. Factor loadings greater than 0.3 were considered acceptable (Tavakol & Wetzel, 2020).

**Budget:**

The study required funds for data collection, analysis, and report writing. The estimated total cost of the study was approximately 10,000 PKR.

**Timeline:**

The study was conducted for over six months, from June 2023 to November 2023.

The timeline for the study is as follows:

- June 2023: Pretesting of the survey questionnaire
- July-August 2023: Data collection
- September 2023: Data analysis
- October-November 2023: Report writing and dissemination of findings.

**Ethics:**

To ensure participant safety and the validity of the research, the study abides by the following moral standards.

- The study, based on self-reported surveys, poses minimal risk to participants. They are informed of their right to refrain from answering or withdraw at any point if questions cause discomfort.
- The study involves female students from various universities in Lahore all above the legal consent age in Pakistan (18 years).
- Participation is entirely voluntary, with participants informed of their right to exit the study without consequences.
- Respondents' anonymity is safeguarded, and confidentiality is maintained throughout data collection, analysis, and presentation. Personal identifiers are concealed or deleted, with only the research team having access to the securely stored data on password-protected computers.
- Access to data is restricted to the lead researcher and approved team members. After the study, data will be securely retained for five years on password-protected servers, followed by proper disposal.
- Surveys are conducted in public settings, both on the university campus and online platforms, ensuring the safety of the researcher.
- The study, conducted with the highest ethical standards, aims to contribute valuable insights into women's legal awareness without compromising the reputation of Forman Christian College University.
- The research declares no conflicts of interest, maintaining transparency. The sole objective is to investigate factors influencing women's legal awareness in Pakistan.

Participants informed consent is diligently sought before data collection, and clearance from the relevant institutional ethics review board is secured before commencing the project.



## 1.6 Results

**Table 1 – Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Variables (N=341)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age (years)</b>		
<b>18 – 20</b>	129	37.8
<b>21 – 23</b>	181	53.0
<b>≥ 24</b>	31	9.2
<b>Mothers Education (n=331)</b>		
<b>0 – 5 Primary</b>	19	5.7
<b>6 – 8 Middle</b>	12	3.6
<b>9 – 10 Secondary</b>	39	11.8
<b>11 – 12 Higher Secondary</b>	39	11.8
<b>13 – 14 Graduation</b>	125	37.8
<b>15 – 16 Masters</b>	87	26.3
<b>≥ 17 Above Masters</b>	10	3.0
<b>Fathers Education (n=325)</b>		
<b>0 – 5 Primary</b>	11	3.4
<b>6 – 8 Middle</b>	9	2.8
<b>9 – 10 Secondary</b>	31	9.5
<b>11 – 12 Higher Secondary</b>	35	10.8
<b>13 – 14 Graduation</b>	126	38.8
<b>15 – 16 Masters</b>	94	28.9
<b>≥ 17 Above Masters</b>	19	5.8
<b>Income (n=267)</b>		
<b>≤ 30000</b>	19	7.1
<b>31000 – 70000</b>	36	13.5

<b>71000 – 125000</b>	50	18.7
<b>126000 – 300000</b>	79	29.6
<b>≥ 300000</b>	83	31.1
<b>Current Programme (n=339)</b>		
<b>Currently BS</b>	292	86.1
<b>Currently MS/MPhil</b>	40	11.8
<b>Completed BS</b>	7	2.1
<b>Friends in University</b>		
<b>None</b>	12	3.5
<b>1 – 2</b>	66	19.4
<b>3 – 4</b>	97	28.4
<b>5 or more</b>	166	48.7
<b>Attend Social Events</b>		
<b>Never</b>	27	7.9
<b>Rarely</b>	88	25.8
<b>Sometimes</b>	169	49.6
<b>Often</b>	57	16.7
<b>Instructors comfortable with</b>		
<b>None</b>	33	9.7
<b>1 – 2</b>	174	51.0
<b>3 – 4</b>	90	26.4
<b>5 or more</b>	44	12.9
<b>Participation in extracurricular</b>		
<b>No</b>	168	49.3
<b>Yes</b>	173	50.7
<b>Number of women's laws in Pakistan</b>		

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<b>No laws</b>	35	10,3
<b>1 – 2</b>	151	44.3
<b>3 or more</b>	155	45.5
<b>Knowledge of women's laws</b>		
<b>Not at All</b>	137	40.2
<b>Somewhat Confident</b>	181	53.1
<b>Very Confident</b>	23	6.7

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The dataset revealed several significant findings. The most prominent age category was 21 to 23 years, encompassing 53.0% of respondents, while "Graduation" was the most prevalent educational level for both mothers (37.8%) and fathers (38.8%). A substantial proportion of respondents reported an income of " $\geq 300,000$ " (31.1%), and the majority were enrolled in "Currently BS" programs (86.1%). Furthermore, the social environment within the university appeared diverse, with 48.7% having "5 or more" friends. In terms of social event attendance, "Sometimes" was the most common (49.6%). Respondents were generally "1 - 2" comfortable with their instructors (51.0%), and participation in extracurricular activities was evenly split. Notably, awareness of "3 or more" women-related laws in Pakistan was significant (45.5%), and the majority of respondents expressed "Somewhat Confident" knowledge of these laws (53.1%).

**Table 2 – Psychometric Properties of Legal Awareness Scale**

Factor	Cronbach's	Mean	S.D	Range
Loadings	Alpha			
<b>Legal</b>	0.78	2.84	3.17	-7 - 7
<b>Awareness</b>				

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(AVE =

43.2%)

Laws that 0.38

protect

women's

rights

Laws on 0.49

women's

property

rights

Laws 0.38

restricting

forced

dowry and

bridal gifts

Laws to 0.52

penalize

acid attacks

on women

The 0.52

government

can be

contacted in

case of

---

**domestic**

**abuse**

**Non- 0.35**

**Government**

**al**

**Organizatio**

**ns provide**

**legal**

**support to**

**women**

**Legal 0.38**

**support**

**provided by**

**the**

**Government**

**to women**

**against**

**abuse**

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Factor analysis was carried out to assess the construct validity of the legal awareness scale. The results showed that the average variance extract of the scale was 0.432 which shows that the items in the scale collectively explained 43.2% variance in the construct of legal awareness. The factor loadings for all the 7 items in the construct of legal awareness were greater than 0.3 which showed that the tool had construct validity (reference to be added). The results of liability analysis showed that the value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.78 which was greater than 0.7, which shows that the scale had internal consistency. The mean of

the scale was 2.84 with a standard deviation of 3.17 (the range was -7 – 7) which shows that the majority of the respondents (approximately 68%) had a score on the legal awareness scale between -0.33 – 6.01 this represents that the majority of the respondents had no to a higher level of legal awareness.

**Table 3 Differences in Legal Awareness Concerning Independent Variables**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F/T Statistics</b>	<b>P - Value</b>
<b>Age</b>			0.126	.882
18 – 20	2.78	3.23		
21 – 23	2.96	3.09		
≥ 24	2.94	3.51		
<b>Current Program</b>			0.729	.483
Currently BS	2.80	3.15		
Currently MS/MPhil	3.10	3.51		
Completed BS	4.14	1.95		
<b>Household Income</b>			2.031	.090
≤ 30000	1.16	3.66		
31000 – 70000	2.81	3.18		
71000 – 125000	3.40	3.17		
126000 – 300000	2.82	3.01		
More than 300000	3.28	3.21		
<b>Fathers Education</b>			0.787	.581
Primary or less	2.64	3.26		
Middle	1.33	3.50		
Secondary	2.94	3.31		

Higher Secondary	2.29	2.99		
Graduation	3.20	2.99		
Masters	2.89	3.56		
Above Masters	3.11	2.38		
<b>Mothers Education</b>			0.612	.721
Primary or less	2.58	3.78		
Middle	3.17	3.21		
Secondary	2.85	3.27		
Higher Secondary	2.95	2.61		
Graduation	2.74	3.28		
Masters	3.34	2.98		
Above Masters	1.70	4.57		
<b>Extra-curricular Activities</b>			-2.02	.045
No	2.54	3.20		
Yes	3.23	3.12		
<b>Friends in University</b>			1.658	.176
None	2.50	3.06		
1 – 2	2.56	3.11		
3 – 4	2.48	3.07		
5 or more	3.28	3.25		
<b>Attending Social Events with your friends</b>			3.559	.015
Never	2.96	2.81		
Rarely	2.83	2.90		
Sometimes	2.50	3.21		

Often	4.07	3.40		
<b>Professors comfortable with</b>			4.10	.007
None	1.39	2.69		
1 – 2	2.77	3.21		
3 – 4	3.22	3.06		
≥ 5	3.77	3.25		
<b>No. of women laws in Pakistan</b>			57.42	.000
No laws	0.11	2.96		
1 – 2	1.82	3.08		
3 or more	4.55	2.33		
<b>Confidence you feel in your knowledge of Laws</b>			28.21	.000
Not at all	1.43	2.90		
Somewhat Confident	3.81	2.97		
Very Confident	4.30	2.98		

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning age. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning age was statistically insignificant,  $F(2, 338) = 0.126, p > .05$

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning the current program. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal



awareness concerning the current program was statistically insignificant,  $F(2, 336) = 0.729$ ,  $p > .05$

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning household income. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning household income was statistically insignificant,  $F(4, 262) = 2.031$ ,  $p > .05$

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning fathers' education. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning fathers' education was statistically insignificant,  $F(6, 318) = 0.787$ ,  $p > .05$

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning mothers' education. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning mothers' education was statistically insignificant,  $F(6, 324) = 0.612$ ,  $p > .05$

An Independent Samples T Test was conducted to assess the mean difference in legal awareness concerning whether one is involved in extracurricular activities or not. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of the T-Test showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning extracurricular activities was statistically significant,  $t(339) = -2.02$ ,  $p < .05$

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning friends in university. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal

awareness concerning friends in university was statistically insignificant,  $F(3, 337) = 1.658$ ,  $p > .05$

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning attending social events with their friends. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning attending social events with your friends was statistically insignificant,  $F(3, 337) = 3.559$ ,  $p > .05$

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning no. of professors one is comfortable with. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning no. of professors one is comfortable with was statistically significant,  $F(3, 337) = 4.10$ ,  $p < .01$

The post-hoc comparison utilizing Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) test revealed statistically significant mean differences in participants' familiarity with professors. Specifically, individuals who did not know any professors demonstrated a significant difference compared to those familiar with 3-4 professors, with a mean difference of -1.83 ( $p = .023$ ). Moreover, participants comfortable with 5 or more professors also exhibited a notable difference of -2.379 ( $p = .006$ ) compared to those who did not know any professors.

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women concerning no. of women's laws in Pakistan. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning no. of women laws in Pakistan was statistically significant,  $F(2, 338) = 57.42$ ,  $p < .01$

The post hoc comparison using Tukey HSD analysis revealed significant differences. Those who didn't recall any laws differed notably from those who remembered 1-2 laws by -1.707 ( $p = .003$ ). Similarly, a substantial difference of -4.434 ( $p = .000$ ) was found between participants who didn't recall any laws and those who remembered 3 or more laws. Additionally, individuals recalling 1-2 laws showed a significant difference of -2.727 ( $p = .000$ ) compared to those who remembered 3 or more laws.

One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess mean differences in legal awareness of women with respect to the confidence you feel in your knowledge of Laws. The Levene statistic showed that variance was homogeneous ( $p > .05$ ). The results of ANOVA showed that the mean difference in legal awareness concerning Confidence you feel in your knowledge of Laws was statistically significant,  $F(2, 338) = 28.21, p < .01$

The Post-Hoc comparison using Tukey HSD showed that individuals who felt "Not at all" confident exhibited a considerable difference of -2.376 ( $p = .000$ ) when compared to those who felt "Somewhat Confident," as well as a substantial difference of -2.874 ( $p = .000$ ) when compared to those who felt "Very Confident."

## 1.7 Discussion

Legal awareness among women is a multifaceted aspect influenced by several factors. The study examines several factors, including the number of friends one has while attending college, the educational background of one's parents, involvement in extracurricular activities, the impact of professors, and one's awareness of Pakistan women's laws. Social capital theory posits that the quantity of friends has an impact on social integration and knowledge acquisition, even in the absence of statistical significance (Laursen, Masciarelli, & Prencipe, 2012). This study did not discover a substantial effect on legal awareness, which might be due to the quality rather than the quantity of friendships. Coleman's (1988) research

revealed a relationship between social capital—which consists of networks and relationships—and academic success. However, the caliber of connections and the information shared inside these social circles are more important than just the quantity of friends. The depth and type of those relationships may not have been taken into consideration in this study, which means that the number of friends may not have had a direct effect on legal awareness. The consensus may be challenged by the fact that parents' educational background has little bearing on their children's legal knowledge. According to a 2019 World Bank study, kids who grow up with law-abiding parents who value education are more likely to recognize their rights and to possess the abilities and self-assurance necessary to stand up for them. However, because social capital is so complicated and influential, contradictory outcomes could happen. According to research by Lareau (2011), for example, children can benefit from higher parental education, but there can be significant differences in the ways that parents interact with their kids, their social networks, and the way that knowledge is shared.

Notably, the study found that participation in extracurricular activities positively affects one's awareness of the law. Research has indicated that involvement in extracurricular activities improves cognitive growth and knowledge acquisition, leading children to a wider awareness and comprehension of a variety of subjects (Marsh and Kleitman, 2002). Participating in extracurricular activities provides a range of experiences, opportunities for critical thinking, and exposure to varied viewpoints, which may account for the increased legal awareness among participants. Engaging in activity fosters the development of critical thinking skills, self-assurance, and a broader outlook on societal issues, all of which positively impact legal awareness. It was shown that strong ties between instructors and students had a major impact on legal knowledge. This emphasizes the vital role that faculty interactions play in students' intellectual and academic advancement, which is consistent with

the concepts of mentorship and guidance. Research such as Tinto's (1993) shows how crucial teacher-student interactions are to the intellectual and academic development of students. Having positive relationships with teachers can help students grasp problems outside of the classroom by providing opportunities for information sharing, guidance, and mentoring. It's probable that this form of mentorship also involves legal awareness, as discussions and counsel from experts in the field could enhance understanding and curiosity about legal matters. Furthermore, memory recall has a significant role in the relationship between legal awareness and the average number of laws in Pakistan that are specifically related to women's rights. According to research by Benjaminsson (2014), women who are more knowledgeable about the law have better access to justice. Women who are more knowledgeable about the laws governing their rights are better able to navigate legal systems and speak up for their rights when necessary. Furthermore, Cook's (1993) research suggests that a deeper understanding of legal rights enables women to make more informed decisions regarding significant matters including inheritance, marriage, divorce, and property rights. With this information, women are empowered to make decisions that serve their interests and ensure that their rights are respected.

Education institutions have a big influence on how people grow socially and cognitively. The study conducted in 2002 by Marsh and Kleitman emphasizes the significance of extracurricular activities for cognitive growth. In educational settings, it is advisable to support a variety of extracurricular activities. People's critical thinking, cognitive growth, and exposure to a range of perspectives have all been demonstrated to improve with these kinds of activities, which may increase their degree of legal knowledge. Moreover, the advancement of education depends on the development of positive faculty-student relationships, as Tinto (1993) highlights. Universities benefit from having strong student-faculty interactions because they can raise students' understanding of and interest in legal

matters. Women's rights organizations can make a major contribution to legal empowerment. Benjaminsson (2014) emphasizes the value of legal knowledge in enabling women to have better access to the justice system. The main goal of empowerment initiatives should be to inform women of their legal rights. These groups' initiatives, which include workshops and information sharing, have the potential to improve women's knowledge of their legal rights and empower them to make well-informed decisions. Lawmakers have the power to significantly influence laws that advance legal knowledge and education. The World Bank (2019) highlights how parental legal knowledge positively affects children's understanding of their rights. As a result, it is advised that policies prioritize legal education in the curriculum. Coleman (1988) also underlined the significance of social capital—which includes networks and relationships—in academic success. Comprehensive legal empowerment programs that prioritize the development of high-quality relationships should be taken into consideration by policymakers, as they have a substantial impact on academic accomplishment.

A constraint of the present investigation is the absence of longitudinal research. Previous research has tended to concentrate on the immediate impacts of extracurricular activities and mentorship on legal knowledge. Subsequent investigations may examine the enduring effects of those variables over an extended duration to obtain a more profound comprehension of their persistent impact. Furthermore, although the significance of connections on legal awareness has been highlighted in this study, a lack of comprehensive research has been done on the qualitative features of these relationships. To further understand the influence of social networks on legal awareness, future research might examine the kind, content, and flow of information inside these networks. Furthermore, it's critical to comprehend the most effective ways to impart legal knowledge. Future research should examine various approaches to teaching legislation, considering the audience's diverse educational backgrounds and preferred methods of learning, with a particular emphasis on

women. Finding efficient ways to teach legal knowledge will be essential to raising women's understanding of the law and making sure that it is clear and accessible to students from a variety of educational backgrounds. Another possible study subject is how legal information is transmitted within families. Although the impact of parental education on legal awareness has been studied, more research may be necessary to understand how parents impart legal knowledge to their kids and how it affects the kids' legal awareness. Additionally, investigating how society and culture affect legal awareness may provide important new information for programs and policies. Examining how cultural norms, gender roles, and gender perceptions influence women's legal understanding may yield important information for advocating women's legal empowerment. These fields have the potential to contribute to our knowledge of legal awareness and how it affects women's rights.

### **1.8 Conclusion**

Legal education is essential because it preserves women's rights in social systems and fosters their agency. For several reasons, women need to educate themselves more about the law. Primarily, it provides women with a comprehensive understanding of their legal rights and responsibilities, enabling them to effectively traverse intricate legal systems, assert their legal rights, and make informed decisions regarding significant matters such as inheritance, property rights, marriage, and divorce. Legally savvy women are better able to advocate for gender equality in society and stand up for themselves.

A variety of tactics, including mentorship programs, seminars, educational campaigns, and simpler access to legal information, are needed to raise women's legal awareness. A wide range of demographics can be reached by awareness and education campaigns, which can significantly advance this cause. Creating mentorship programs and encouraging involvement in legal discussions may also be crucial to improving women's legal knowledge.

There are numerous advantages to increasing legal awareness. The general socio-economic growth of communities is aided by empowered women. Women who are aware of their legal rights can take an active role in society, question discriminatory conventions and practices, and push for change. Furthermore, by guaranteeing that their rights are upheld and respected, the legal empowerment of women promotes a more just and equal society.

On the other hand, vulnerabilities persist if women's legal understanding is not increased or stays the same. Women may experience discrimination, exploitation, and diminished agency in decision-making processes if they are unable to obtain justice, get unjust treatment, or are ignorant of their rights. Women who lack legal empowerment impede not only their personal development and potential but also the collective advancement of gender equality and justice in society



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## **Appendix 1:**

### **Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study**

#### **Legal Awareness Among Female University Students in Lahore, Pakistan**

Dear Respondent,

You are invited to take part in a research study that aims to investigate the level of awareness and implementation of women's laws in Pakistan. The study will identify factors that contribute to higher levels of awareness and implementation, such as education, socioeconomic status, and exposure to legal rights information. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. You are further ensured that the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents will be maintained.

If you agree to participate in this study, please read and indicate your consent by checking the box below.

I have read the above information, and I agree to participate in the study.

## Appendix 2:



**FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**  
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**  
**APPROVAL CERTIFICATE**

IRB Ref: IRB-493/6-2023

Date: 22-06-2023

Project Title: Legal Awareness among Female University Students in Lahore, Pakistan.

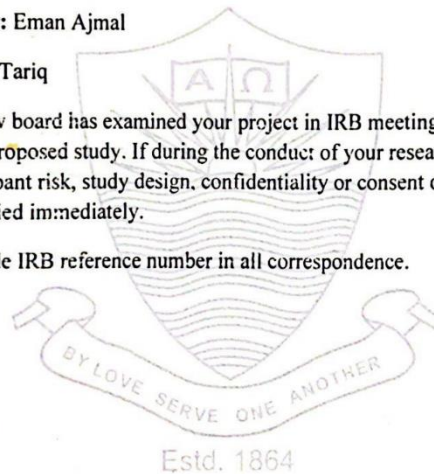
Principal Investigator: Eman Ajmal

Supervisor: Dr Jawad Tariq

The Institutional review board has examined your project in IRB meeting held on 22-06-2023 and has approved the proposed study. If during the conduct of your research any changes occur related to participant risk, study design, confidentiality or consent or any other change then IRB must be notified immediately.

Please be sure to include IRB reference number in all correspondence.

Dr Sharon Hancock  
Convener - IRB  
Chairperson, Department of Statistics  
Forman Christian College  
(A Chartered University)  
Lahore



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### Appendix 3:

#### Questionnaire:

1) Age
Answer: - ____ years

a. Currently enrolled in Bachelor	b. Currently enrolled in Masters	c. Currently enrolled in PhD
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2) Major Subject:
Answer: - _____

3) How many friends do you have in your university?			
a. None	b. 1-2	c. 3-4	d. 5 or more

4) How often do you attend social events with your friends?			
a. Never	b. Rarely	c. Sometimes	d. Often

5) How many professors or instructors do you feel comfortable approaching for academic help or career advice?			
e. None	f. 1-2	g. 3-4	h. 5 or more

6) Have you participated in any extracurricular activities or clubs at your university in the past year?
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a. Yes	b. No
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7) What is your monthly household income (approx.)?
Answer: - _____ PKR

8) What is the highest level of education completed by your father?
Answer: - _____

9) What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?
Answer: - _____

10) There are laws in Pakistan that protect women's rights?		
a. Don't Know	b. No	c. Yes

11) Based on recall, on average, how many laws in Pakistan are directly related to women's rights?		
a. No laws	b. 1-2	c. 3 or More

12) Please list as many laws related to women's rights as you are aware of. (Open-ended response) [Exact wording of laws not required]
Answer: -

13) There are laws related to women's property rights in Pakistan		
a. Don't Know	b. No	c. Yes

14) There are laws restricting forced dowry and bridal gifts in Pakistan		
a. Don't Know	b. No	c. Yes

15) There are laws to penalize acid attacks on women in Pakistan		
a. Don't Know	b. No	c. Yes

16) There are government organizations that can be contacted in case of domestic abuse?		
a. Don't Know	b. No	c. Yes

17) There are Non-Governmental Organizations that provide legal support to women in case of abuse?		
a. Don't know	b. No	c. Yes

18) There are legal support services provided by the Government to women in case of abuse?		
a. Don't Know	b. No	c. Yes

19) How confident do you feel in your knowledge of women's laws?		
a. Not at all	b. Somewhat Confident	c. Very Confident