SCERT, KERALA & FAROOK TRAINING COLLEGE, KOZHIKODE
Young Scholars' Enrichment Programme

Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram District

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Study Report submitted Under the Young Scholars Enrichment Programme Jointly conducted by SCERT, Kerala & Farook Training College, Kozhikode

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CERTIFICATE

I, **Dr. Jayaprakash K**, do hereby certify that this study report entitled **CHALLENGES AND SUPPORTIVE FACTORS IN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS IN MALAPPURAM DISTRICT** is a record of bonafide study and research carried out by **Fathima Sana T.P.** of M.Ed. Programme (2022 – 2024) under the supervision and guidance of **Dr. Mumthas N. S.,** Professor, Farook Training College, Kozhikode, as the part of *Young Scholars' Enrichment Programme* jointly conducted by *SCERT, Kerala & Farook Training College, Kozhikode.*

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I, **Prof. (Dr.) Mumthas N. S.,** do hereby certify that this study report **CHALLENGES AND SUPPORTIVE FACTORS IN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS IN MALAPPURAM DISTRICT** is a record of bonafied study and research carried out by **FATHIMA SANA T. P.** under my guidance and supervision. The report has not been submitted by her for the award of a Degree, Diploma, Title or Recognition before.

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Panel of Expert

DECLARATION

I, Fathima Sana T. P, do here by declare that this study report entitled as **CHALLENGES AND SUPPORTIVE FACTORS IN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS IN MALAPPURAM DISTRICT**" have not been submitted by me for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Title or Recognition before.

Farook Training College   **FATHIMA SANA T. P.**

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Higher education significantly enhances individuals' standards of living and contributes to societal development by fostering intellectual, social, and cultural growth. Recognized as a vital tool for self-sufficiency, higher education in India faces substantial challenges. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for the 18–23 age group in higher education is 28.4 percent, according to the All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021–2022, which shows significant improvement over previous years. This GER is still behind China's 54.4 percent as of 2020, indicating further difficulties with outreach and accessibility.

Inequality still plagues India's educational system, with differences between males and girls, scheduled and non-scheduled caste populations, and developed and less developed regions (Sharma, 1995). Because of cultural standards, historically marginalised women frequently have unfavourable self-concepts. One of the most important tools for promoting gender equality and dispelling long-standing stereotypes has been education. Women's critical role in national development is emphasised by initiatives to uplift them and guarantee equal access to education (Nasiya, 2012).

The Right to Education Act (2010), making education a fundamental right, mandated free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14. This law significantly improved literacy rates, with India achieving an average literacy rate of 76.32 percent in 2022, where male and female literacy rates stood at 83.45 percent and 69.1 percent, respectively (Statista, 2024). India launched a number of programs to empower women and lessen gender gaps in education after the year 2000. Sarva

Shiksha Abhiyan, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan, and Udaan Scheme are notable initiatives that seek to improve prospects for women and provide universal access to education. These programs demonstrate India's dedication to education as a tool for attaining social justice and advancing the country.

Need and Significance of the Study

Higher education serves as a gateway to empowerment and self-discovery, yet female students often encounter unique challenges such as cultural biases, economic constraints, societal expectations, and structural barriers. Due to deeply rooted patriarchal conventions, families in India have traditionally prioritised their boys' education over the education of women (Chauhan & Kumar, 2022).

In India, societal attitudes on women and education differ greatly, frequently viewing girls' education as a liability. Girls' access to education is further restricted by elements like cultural norms, financial instability, rural-urban differences, and safety concerns. Due to their anticipated position as future breadwinners, sons are usually given preference in low-income households, whereas girls are constrained, particularly after puberty, in order to preserve their 'virtue' (Sarfunnisa, 2003). Additionally, according to traditional views, education may have a negative impact on a girl's character, which lowers parental support for higher education, especially when options are costly or far away (Sharma, 1998).

Despite Kerala's noteworthy progress in promoting gender equality in education, there are still issues at the local level, especially in districts like

Malappuram. The sociocultural and economic circumstances that affect female students' access to education are particular to this area. Hindus, Muslims, and Christians are among the many communities that peacefully cohabit in Malappuram, adding to the city's rich sociocultural tapestry. But the Muslim community, which makes up a sizable section of the populace, brings unique social and educational dynamics that are influenced by economic, religious, and historical factors. These factors frequently make it more difficult for female students to pursue education, including safety concerns, financial limitations, and cultural norms that value male education. Developing successful solutions to provide fair educational opportunities for everyone requires an understanding of these localised obstacles.

In Malappuram, female students pursuing higher education face numerous challenges, including limited access to institutions due to distance, safety concerns, and cultural norms that prioritize male education. These obstacles are compounded by economic constraints and societal expectations. Studies by Chauhan and Kumar (2022), Garai (2021) and Sinha (2018) highlight these barriers while emphasizing the resilience demonstrated by female students in overcoming them. Support systems ranging from family and community to educational institutions and government policies play a vital role in enabling women to navigate these challenges. Formal and informal mechanisms provide the necessary resources and encouragement to help female students pursue their educational goals. Understanding these supports can offer valuable insights into strategies for removing gender-based barriers and fostering equitable educational opportunities.

The present study focuses on an exploration of the multifaceted challenges and the supports that shape the experiences of female students in their pursuit of higher education. While this matter is universal in its essence, the focus of the study extends beyond borders, cultures, and contexts, and try to understand the diverse array of challenges that female students encounter, the resilience they demonstrate and the resources they access to overcome these challenges.

Statement of the Problem

The study is titled as "Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram District".

This study focuses on the experiences of female students in pursuing higher education, acknowledging that these experiences are shaped by complex interplay of various factors like geographical, cultural, and social–economic context. Also try to understand the support available to them for pursuing higher education.

Definition of Key Terms

Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education Challenges

Challenge is a situation of being faced with something that needs great mental or physical effort in order to be done successfully and therefore tests a person's ability (Cambridge Dictionary).

In the present study, *Challenges* refers to the various difficulties that female students encounter when they are pursuing higher education. These challenges can encompass a wide range of factors, including financial constraints, academic

demands, personal responsibilities, social and cultural barriers and transportation issues.

Supportive Factors

In the present study *Supportive factors* refer to the various resources, conditions, and facilitative elements that female student access for pursuing higher education. These factors include financial aid, mentorship, family and community support, and policies that empower female students to overcome the challenges.

Higher Education

Higher education refers to the stage of learning that occurs at universities, colleges, and other institutions offering degrees and other qualifications beyond secondary education (Oxford Dictionary).

Female Students in Malappuram District

Female students in Malappuram District are residents of this geographical region who are pursuing higher education.

Variables of the Study

The variables of the study are "Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram district."

Research Questions

1.   What are the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education?

2.   Whether the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education varies by Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status?

3.   What are the supportive factors availed by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are the following.

1.   To identify and find out the extent of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

2.   To find out the extent of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram in pursuing higher education based on Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status.

3.   To find out the supportive factors availed by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

Methodology of the Study

Methodology is an important part of any research study, as it guides the way to proceed. The methodology used for the present study is given briefly under the subheadings.

Method Used for the Study

In the present study survey method is used as the method of research.

Sample of the Study

The population of the study comprises female students residing in Malappuram District who are pursuing higher education. A sample of 453female students pursuing higher education were selected as sample and the data were collected using stratified sampling technique.

Tool used for the Study

'Inventory for Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education' developed by the investigator with the help of supervising teacher is used for the collection of data.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected by the researcher using survey method, from female students in Malappuram district who are pursuing higher education. The sample were collected from the female students through stratified sampling method giving due representation to Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status.

Statistical Technique Used for the Study

Percentage analysis is used to analyse the data.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The present study is intended to find out the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education and whether the extent

of challenges faced by female students in pursuing higher education vary by Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status. It is also aimed to find out the supportive factors availed by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education. The tool Inventory for Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education was constructed by the investigator with the help of the supervising teacher for the collection of data and the required data were collected from a sample of 453 female students from Malappuram district. The analysis of these data helps us to find out the challenges and supportive factors faced by female students.

Despite efforts to ensure the study's accuracy, certain limitations were identified. These include the following:

☐ Though the population of the study is female students in Malappuram district who are pursuing higher education, due to time limitation only 453 samples were collected.

☐ The study confined only on female students who are pursuing higher education in government and aided colleges.

Despite these limitations, the investigator has made efforts to enhance the reliability and validity of the data. It is hoped that the findings of this study will yield valuable insights, benefiting teachers, parents, and policymakers in the field of education.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

- *Conceptual Overview*
- *Review of Related Studies*
- *Conclusion*

Review of related literature helps to eliminate duplication of what has been done and provide useful hypothesis and helpful suggestions for significant investigation (Best &Kahn, 2005).

The present study is an attempt to identify the challenges among female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education. In order to get an insight into the theoretical background of the study, related literature was thoroughly reviewed. The review of the literature was classified and presented in the following heads.

- Conceptual Overview

- Survey of Related Studies

- Conclusion

Conceptual Overview on Challenges of Female students

Women Education in the Pre- Independent India

During the early Vedic period, women enjoyed access to Vedic education, participating in rituals and studying subjects like the Vedas and Vedangas. Unmarried women scholars could lead celibate lives, pursue higher education, and partake in the Upanayana ceremony. However, in the later Vedic age, their educational opportunities diminished, with a shift toward training in domestic and fine arts, mainly accessible to women from affluent families.

During the Islamic era, education was primarily imparted through madrassas,

mosques, and maqthabs. While upper-class Muslim women and Rajput zamindar families supported women's education, societal attitudes restricted most women from pursuing traditional or formal education.

In the modern era (1700–1947 AD), Indian society grappled with significant challenges, including caste-based discrimination and oppressive practices like Sati and Purdah, which highlighted the continued marginalization of women and their restricted access to education.

Women Education in Post- Independent India

After India's independence, policymakers recognized the crucial role of women's education in the nation's overall development. The Constitution of India introduced several provisions aimed at improving the status of women and ensuring their rights. These include ensuring equal rights and opportunities for all citizens (Article 14), prohibiting discrimination based on gender (Article 15), and allowing special provisions to support women (Article 15(3)). The Constitution also advocates equal public appointment opportunities (Article 16), protects the rights of minorities to establish educational institutions (Articles 29 and 30), and mandates equal pay for equal work (Article 39(d)).

Additional provisions address the provision of free legal aid (Article 39(a)), ensure humane working conditions and maternity relief (Article 42), and reinforce the duty of citizens to renounce practices that demean women (Article 51A(e)). These articles collectively contribute to advancing gender equality and empowering women through education.

The Government of India established various committees and commissions to promote girls' education, with the University Education Commission being the first to address the issue in detail. The commission emphasized the importance of women's education, stating that an educated mother plays a crucial role in shaping well-rounded individuals. The major recommendations of commission about women education are:

- There should be no curtailment of educational opportunities for women.

- There should be intelligent educational guidance by qualified men and women to help women gain a clearer view of their real educational interests. The goal is not for women to imitate men, but to ensure that they receive a quality education comparable to that of men. While women's and men's education should share many common elements, it should not be identical in all respects, as is often the case today.

- Women students in general should be helped to see their normal places in normal society. Both as citizen and as women and to prepare for it, the college programme should be designed according to the needs of the women.

- Through educational counsel and by example, the prevailing prejudices against study of home economics and home management should be overcome.

The Secondary Education Commission emphasized that women's education should prepare them for both home and community roles. It argued that there was no need to treat women's education separately at this stage of societal progress. The

commission highlighted the importance of linking girls' education to family life and civic engagement, advocating for equal value to be placed on both family and public life.

The National Committee on Women's Education, which Durgabai Deshmukh chaired from 1958 to 1959, was another significant turning point in women's education. The committee's main concern was schooling. This committee's main goal was to investigate the barriers preventing girls' education from progressing as much as boys and offer suggestions for achieving this goal.

The Education Commission (1964-66), chaired by D.S. Kothari, gave special attention to women's education. It recommended prioritizing funds for girls' education and establishing dedicated bodies at both the center and state levels. The commission also advocated for separate schools for girls, rather than co-education, and emphasized the importance of training and employment opportunities for women.

Also, the National Policy on Education (1986), the Plan of action in 1992, and the five-year plans put an emphasis on women's education. There are many policies and recommendations for women's education, but the census of India shows that there is a gap between gender-wise literacy rates. The details are given in Table 1.

Table 1

Details of Literacy Rates

	Rural	Urban	Adult Literacy Rate	Higher Education Enrolled
Male	77.15	88.76	78.8	100
Female	57.93	79.11	59.3	85

Source: Census of India, Office of Registrar General, India & Educational Statistics at a Glance, 2016.

Table 1 highlights a significant gender gap in literacy rates between men and women in rural and urban areas. The 2011 census shows that urban women's literacy rate is 79.11%, while rural women's is 57.93%, indicating barriers to education. Despite Kerala's high literacy rate, a 4% gender disparity remains. The survey also reveals adult literacy rates of 78.8% for males and 59.3% for females. In higher education, for every 100 males enrolled in professional courses, only 85 females are enrolled, reflecting ongoing gender disparities in access to advanced education.

Challenges of Female Students in Pursuing Higher Education

Challenges related to Parental Attitude

One of the primary obstacles to female education is the mindset of parents. Girls pursuing higher education often face several challenges, as some parents believe that boys should receive a better education since, they are seen as the primary protectors of the family. Additionally, in certain communities, parents may discourage their daughters from working or engaging in outdoor activities, limiting their opportunities for personal and academic growth.

Challenges from Teachers

Female students in higher education often face challenges from teachers, such as gender bias and unequal treatment compared to male students. This can include lower expectations, limited participation in class discussions, and less encouragement to excel, especially in male-dominated fields like science and engineering. The absence of female role models among faculty can also be discouraging. Additionally, teachers may impose societal stereotypes that restrict the academic and career ambitions of female students. These challenges contribute to an environment where female students may struggle to reach their full potential.

Course-related Challenges

Many female students are compelled to attend nearby, low-cost institutions, which often lead to dissatisfaction. The constant exams and pressure from universities contribute to anxiety among these students. Additionally, the overloaded curriculum fails to meet the academic needs of female students, even though they persist through these challenges to pursue their dreams. The fixed college hours also pose difficulties, as female students often play multiple responsibilities, balancing academics with their roles at home.

Financial Challenges

Financial concerns are one of the challenges that female students confront when seeking higher education. Even merit quota students must pay fees for welfare services, amenities, tuition, course fees, and other expenses. To preserve their position in college, individuals must pay these welfare and wellbeing fees.

Challenges related to Transportation

Female students in higher education often face challenges due to inadequate and unsafe transportation options, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. Limited access to reliable public transport increases both the financial burden and safety concerns, particularly when traveling alone or late. These transportation issues can hinder attendance, restrict access to education, and contribute to higher dropout rates among female students.

Health related Challenges

Female students pursuing higher education, typically above 18 years old, often face various health-related challenges, including chronic illnesses, menstrual cycle issues, pregnancy, and child-rearing responsibilities. However, these concerns are frequently overlooked by authorities. In some cases, pregnant students may be required to attend college regularly despite their condition, which can exacerbate their physical and emotional well-being. The lack of proper support and understanding of these health-related challenges can impact their academic performance and overall college experience.

Familial Challenges

Female students often face familial pressures, especially once they reach the age of 18. Society, family members, and relatives may pressure them to marry, which can disrupt their educational journey. After marriage, they often play dual roles—managing household responsibilities and caring for children—making it difficult to balance these duties with attending college.

Supportive Factors for Pursuing Higher Education

Despite facing various challenges from different sources, female students have access to numerous supportive measures to continue their education. Supportive factors play a crucial role in helping female students cross the challenges they face in pursuing higher education. The initiatives like Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Day care centers in universities, Women hostel for colleges, Development of women studies in universities and colleges, Post-doctoral Fellowship for women, CH. Muhammed Koya scholarship, Central sector scholarship, Higher education scholarship, Post matric scholarship, Fisher man scholarship and the Indira Gandhi Scholarship for single girls play a crucial role in promoting female education. Additionally, they receive support from their families, friends, teachers, institutions, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. However, many are unaware of these available provisions. These support systems are essential in helping female students remain focused on their educational goals, leading to greater success in their academic and professional pursuits.

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Review of Related Studies

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The reviewed studies are abstracted below.

Mir and Lone (2023) identified parental opinions toward female child education. The data obtained from a secondary source indicates that the information for this study was obtained from publications and journals. The analysis revealed that, while women have the right to education, the lower socioeconomic status

frequently prohibits parents from sending their daughters to school. Some parents believe that highly educated women behave appropriately with their family members. The well-educated women are more likely to embrace social concepts because they comprehend what they are, as opposed to less educated women.

Sharma et al. (2023) explored gender variations in the opinions of parents about their children's jobs and academics. The sample was taken from the rural region of Kharian village in Jammu. It included 60 respondents (30 fathers and 30 mothers) aged 30 to 70 from Jammu district. The sample selection criteria related to age and children's education were as follows: only parents with at least one child between the ages of 15 and 25 were chosen, and only parents with children in grades higher than 8th were chosen. The data was collected using a comprehensive interview schedule and a random sampling procedure. The outcomes indicated that the majority of parents, regardless of gender, were enthusiastic about their children's education and careers. There are disparities in opinions and ideas related to girls' careers and marriage. Most parents wanted their daughters to become teachers, whereas boys wanted to become engineers and civil servants.

Ahmed et al. (2022) investigated the problem of women being prevented from pursuing higher education. A standardized questionnaire was used and employed quantitative research methods. The data was collected from 400 female students at four women's colleges in DG Khan. The findings revealed that patriarchal society prevents most women from pursuing higher education because parents favor their daughters getting an Islamic education. About 27.5 percent of respondents prefer their son's education to their daughter's education.

Bendre (2022) investigated the issues encountered by female college students. The study was conducted qualitatively, using data gathered from secondary sources. The study's findings found that there were numerous impediments to girl education in India, including poverty, violence, lack of safety, unhealthy environment, child marriage, and child labour. Female college students encounter a variety of obstacles, including domestic discrimination, economic problems, educational problems, and social problems.

Chauhan and Kumar (2022) found that gender biases are prevalent in educational institutions, society, and within households. Poor family status and care of siblings and household chores at home were also considered as the factors affecting education of girls. The result of the study showed that girl students were highly motivated to avoid higher education. At college level, financial problem is affecting girl's education followed by transportation, co-educational problem, gender discrimination and physical harassment.

Garai (2021) made an effort to learn what the parents thought about their daughter's schooling based on parent demographics such as male and female, rural male and female, urban male and female, rural female and urban male, and rural male and urban female. The sample consists of 200 parents from West Bengal. A self-made questionnaire was used as an instrument. The statistical procedures utilized were mean, standard deviation, and t-test. The result revealed that girls' education is a crucial component of a healthy society. Rural parents were more supportive of girls' higher education than urban parents. Female parents had a more positive attitude toward girls' higher education than male parents. Urban male

parents had a more positive attitude toward girls pursuing higher education than rural male parents. Rural male parents had a more positive attitude toward girls pursuing higher education than urban male parents. Rural female parents exhibited a better attitude toward girls' higher education than urban female parents.

Hassan and Babu (2021) investigated the challenges that working women face in the education sector. An interview was carried out with 200 people to acquire the data. SPSS was used to examine the data. The study discovered that 87 percent of parents had a positive attitude toward their daughters' education, while only 13 percent have a negative perspective. Also, all respondents believe that married women suffer greater obstacles than single women.

Kumar (2021) conducted a comprehensive investigation into the obstacles faced by women in their pursuit of higher education, with a specific focus on Pudukkottai district in Tamil Nadu. The study exclusively targeted women who had successfully completed either undergraduate or post graduate degree in various discipline at government colleges within the study area. This study encompassed a combination of primary and secondary data collection techniques. A sample of 330 respondents were selected for the study. The challenges women encountered in higher education could be categorized into familial, societal, economic and institutional challenges.

Maity (2021) examined the current position of women in Purba and Paschim Medinipur, as well as the government's policy on women's empowerment. This is a descriptive and exploratory study. The data was selected from secondary sources, including Vidyasagar University papers. The analysis is based on various variables,

such as the gross enrollment ratio, the number of colleges, and the number of universities. A bar graph was utilized to help explain the data. According to the survey, women's colleges comprise only a small proportion of total institutions. Compared to boys, there are more women enrolled in UG courses, and the proportion of women enrolled in postgraduate programs is about equal to that of men. Significant initiatives for women's education are also indicated by the results, including Mahila Mahala Samakhya, Sarvashiksha Abhiyan, Operation Blackboard, and Shikshakarmi.

Noori and Orfan (2021) explored the problems that undergraduate married female students encounter when pursuing higher education in Afghanistan. Quantitative research design was employed. The data was collected using a questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale. The population consisted of undergraduate married female students enrolled at Takhar University in Afghanistan. Mean, frequency, and percentage were assessed descriptively. Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to determine the mean differences. The findings obtained from the data showed that the majority of students faced a variety of academic and social obstacles. They had to balance home and academic responsibilities, which caused tension and worry among the pupils.

Radiowala and Molwane (2021) examined the various dimensions that contributed to the challenges faced by rural women in accessing basic education in rural areas. It employed an exploratory and descriptive research design. The data was collected using a structural questionnaire. Secondary data has been collected with the help of journals, magazines, newspapers, books, etc. One hundred and

eighty samples were collected from Vikramgadh, Jawhar, and Talsari villages in Palghar district. Kaiser, Mayer-Olkin, and Barrett's tests have been used for data interpretation. The major findings showed that women in rural areas face 71.98 percent of the challenges associated with the non-acceptance of education. The most important and allied factors that contribute to challenges are family issues, which contribute 27.14 percent.

Das (2020) analyzed women's awareness of higher education and examined the challenges they face. It employed a descriptive survey method focusing on women students pursuing higher education (General, professional) in Assam. Random sampling technique was utilized to select a sample for 100 women students from various PG level departments within higher educational institutions. A self-structured questionnaire was employed for data collection, and percentage analysis technique was used. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the women respondents had a positive attitude towards higher education. However, it also identified several obstacles that hinder women participation in higher education, including lack of support from their families, traditional beliefs regarding marriage, household responsibilities, financial constraints and language barriers.

Alabi et al. (2019) found that gender and educational equality have been debated by scholars in South Africa. This study presented the lived experiences of 10 female post graduate honors students from university kwazulu and highlighted the constraints like socio cultural beliefs, financial impediments and balancing their educational pursuit with traditional role expectations within their familial domain.

Engida (2019) investigated the barriers that female students face to academic

accomplishment. It employed both the nonprobability sampling technique and the case study method. Semi structured interviews and focus group discussions were used as data collection instruments, and thematic data analysis was used to examine the data. The major findings revealed that girls at Debre Markos University suffer institutional and personal barriers to achieve academic excellence. Female students confront obstacles such as lack of orientation, lack of special support, lack of digital libraries, cafeteria-related issues, and lack of funds.

Mohammad et al. (2019) investigated the factors influencing parental attitudes toward girls' education in Sokato, Nigeria and found out how religious beliefs, cultural notions, and socioeconomic status influence parents' views on girls' education. A cross-sectional survey design was used. The respondents comprised parents and out-of-school girls from three different areas of the Sokoto South local government. The parents were chosen by a snowball method. The data for this study was gathered utilizing a self-created, closed-ended questionnaire. The data was examined using descriptive statistics and a variety of regression models. The major findings demonstrated that poverty was the most significant socioeconomic factor prohibiting parents from enrolling their daughters in school, whereas educational level and number of children were the least important socioeconomic factors inhibiting parents from schooling their daughters.

Sinha (2018) highlighted the societal impact of girls' higher education and explored the hurdles that parents face when their daughters pursue higher education. The sample was selected using purposive sampling procedures. A total of 60 homes have been selected from Kaliganj Bazaar in Karimganj. To gather information, 30 of

the 60 residences with females were visited. Data was collected using a pre-tested schedule. The most significant conclusions were that all 30 parents anticipate females will want a better education. Out of the 30 parents who believe that if girls were better educated, the number of child marriages in society would drop, in that18 are financially strained since they reside in rural areas. As a result, they are unable to offer the financial support needed for the girl's higher education.

Chingtham and Guite (2017) studied parents' views about girls' education based on their education level, income level, employment, and location, as well as whether parents' lack of information and cultural gap affected their daughters' schooling. The descriptive survey method was used in this investigation. The study's population   was limited to parents of girls in Manipur's Senapathi district. The sample consists of 100 parents, 50 from urban and 50 from rural areas. Data was collected through   a questionnaire and analyzed using percentages. The study found that parents' educational backgrounds have a substantial impact on their attitudes on girls' education. People who live in cities have a better education and a greater understanding of the value of girls' education. Both rural and urban parents exhibit some kind of discrimination, preferring their sons over their daughters from all angles.

Naeem and Dahar (2016) aimed to identify the challenges faced by female students at the Higher education level. The first objective of the study was to pinpoint the problems that female students encounter during their higher education. Another objective was to investigate gender discrimination in female education and provide guidelines to address these issues. The study was carried out in the

Rawalpindi district, involving 120 female students in higher education. The result revealed that female students confront numerous challenges related to physical environment, such as inadequate classroom facilities, limited access to computer labs and insufficient printing resources.

Shailaja and Reddy (2016) focused on Indian higher education on the basis of secondary sources and also analyzed the schemes introduced for the upliftment of women in higher education and the enrollment ratio at various levels. The results showed that less than two percent of universities neglected the research done by women. In the integrated course enrollment, 61.80 percent are men and 38.20 percent are women. Women were studying traditional courses and pursuing their education for the sake of studying something; most of the women are not job-oriented even after pursuing higher education.

Shaukat and Pell (2015) investigated the issue confronting female students in higher education in Pakistan. Respondents were selected from four Punjab districts: Lahore, Okara, Multan, and Rawalpindi. Data was collected using a questionnaire, with statistical procedures including the independent sample t test and mean score difference. The survey found that girls in Pakistan society spend the majority of their time at home. Because they are less socialized than boys and are more likely to participate in household tasks.

Govindarajan (2014) identified the different kinds of women's education in rural areas. A survey method was selected. The sample consisted of 225 plus one female students studying in various higher secondary schools in Namakkal district. The tool questionnaires were utilized, and mean, standard deviation, percentage

analysis, t test, and ANOVA were used as statistical techniques. The findings showed that, even in rural areas, the problem persists for women to continue their education with respect to their demographic variables. Almost all the samples in the study have highlighted the different problems that prevail in rural areas.

Nasiya (2012) identified the attitude towards early marriage among female students in Malappuram district. The sample consisted of 409 female students in the 9th and 11th grades in Malappuram district. A stratified random sampling technique was used. The Scale   of Attitude towards Early Marriage of Female Students was used as a tool. Percentage analysis was used to analyze the data. The major findings revealed that the relationship between attitude towards early marriage and aspirations for higher education of female students for the total sample shows a negligible negative correlation.

Purewal and Hashmi (2012) investigated the perception of girls' education in the family context, where decisions about children's education and opportunities are made, and provided a framework for demonstrating how parental attitudes toward girls' education are influenced by the potential benefits of their education. The information was gathered from the rural areas of Faisalabad and Chinot, both in Punjab province. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were utilized. The data was collected using a scale. The study's findings indicated that attitudes about girls' education must be addressed and tackled along with the wider promotion of girls' education by non-governmental organizations.

Sarfunnisa (2003) identified the extent of attitude of parents towards higher education of girls for the total sample and relevant subsamples based on sex, locality

of residence, religion, socioeconomic status, number of children and community. A sample of 700 parents of secondary school girls in Malappuram district was selected using stratified random sampling technique. The tools were a general data sheet and a scale of parents' attitudes towards higher education of girls. A preliminary analysis and percentile analysis were used as statistical techniques. The major findings revealed that parents of Malappuram district have only a moderate attitude towards girls' higher education.

Conclusion

The review of above studies gives a wide perspective on the area under investigation. It can be concluded that there are many reasons behind the challenges in pursuing higher education among female students. The studies revealed that the female students in pursuing higher education face many problems like poverty, violence, lack of safe and healthy environment, child marriage, gender discrimination at home, economic problems, educational problems, social problems, and financial issues. Most of the studies are conducted abroad. Hence, the researcher attempts to find out the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education. Also attempts to find out the supportive factors that are availed by them for pursuing higher education.

METHODOLOGY

- *Variables of the Study*

- *Research Questions*

- *Objectives of the Study*

- *Method Used for Study*

- *Tool used for the Study*

- *Sample Selected for the Study*

- *Data collection Procedure, Scoring and Consolidation of Data*

- *Statistical Technique Used for Analysis of Data*

The methodology deals with the precise description of a sample in the study, tools and statistical techniques used. The primary goal of this study is to find out the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

The methodology in detail is explained below under the headings. viz.,

- Variables of the Study

- Research Questions

- Objectives of the Study

- Method used for the Study

- Tool Used for the Study

- Sample Selected for the Study

- Data collection Procedure, Scoring and Consolidation of data

- Statistical Technique used for Analysis of Data

Variables of the Study

Variables are the conditions or characteristics that the experimenter manipulates, controls or observes (Best & Kahn, 2016). The present study is intended to explore the Challenges and Supportive Factors faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

The variables of the study are 'Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram district'.

Research Questions

1.   What are the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education?

2.   Whether the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education varies by Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status?

3.   What are the supportive factors availed by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are,

1.   To identify and find out the extent of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

2.   To find out the extent of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram in pursuing higher education based on Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status.

3.   To find out the supportive factors availed by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

Method used for the Study

In the present study survey method is used as the method of research.

Tool Used for the Study

For each and every type of research the investigator needs certain instrument to

collect the facts. The success of research depends upon the selection of suitable tools. In this study, the investigator used an inventory to identify both the challenges faced by female students and the supportive factors that aid them in pursuing higher education.

The tool viz, 'Inventory for Challenges and Supportive Factors in pursuing Higher Education' is constructed by the investigator with the help of supervising teacher. The steps involved in the development of the inventory on challenges and supportive factors in pursuing higher education are given under three different headings.

Planning of the Inventory

Prior to constructing the inventory, a focus group discussion was planned among female students doing higher education in Malappuram district. The focus group discussions were conducted at two nearby colleges. The investigator obtained permission from the principal to collect data from students who are residents of Malappuram District. With the approval of the principal and class advisors, the investigator selected students from various streams. A focus group discussion was conducted with 34 students from three different streams: science (11), arts (10), and commerce (13). During the discussion, the female students openly shared the difficulties they face while pursuing higher education. After the focus group discussion, it is planned to prepare the tool with three sections viz., Section I (Personal data), Section II (Challenges in pursuing higher education) and Section III (Supportive factors in pursuing higher education).

Preparation of the Tool

From the focus group discussions, the investigator identified various challenges that female students encounter in their pursuit of higher education. These challenges can originate from a variety of sources, including parents, teachers, coursework, financial conditions, health, lodging and transportation, domestic matters, marriage, and other factors. The identified challenges are divided into several categories, which are described below.

Parental attitudes

It describes issues stemming from parents' attitudes, beliefs, or circumstances that negatively impact their children's educational journey. Parents often hold conservative beliefs that a daughter's primary responsibility is to marry and care for the family rather than pursue further education. Additionally, they tend to prioritize their sons' education over that of their daughters, expecting their sons to financially support the family in the future. Parents may also be anxious about their daughters' safety, especially if they have to travel far from home to attend college. Concerns about interactions between boys and girls make them hesitant to send their daughters to coeducational institutions. Five challenges viz., Conservative mentality, Negligence to girl education, not allowing to attend mixed college, Restriction to participate in outdoor activities and Negative attitude towards girls getting employed are given under this section.

Challenges from Teachers

Teachers consistently support pupils who perform well on exams, often

giving extra attention and consideration to those who excel academically and actively participate in class. However, there is a communication gap between teachers and students, as the environment may not be conducive for students to share their problems comfortably. As a result, students are unable to freely communicate their issues with teachers and find solutions. Four challenges, viz., Gender of teachers, Communication gap, Inadequate care and support of teachers and Partiality of teachers are given under this section.

Course related Challenges

Colleges receive a curriculum from universities, outlining the entire schedule for the year. The primary goal of teachers is to complete the required activities in the curriculum, often neglecting students' individual aptitudes. The overburdened curriculum fails to meet students' academic needs and demands. Additionally, students lose interest due to fixed college hours, frequent internal tests, and semester exams within short intervals of less than six months. Five challenges viz., Failure to fulfill academic needs and demands, Overburdened curriculum, Loss of interest due to fixed college hours, Wrong selection of course and Fear of examination and result are given under this heading.

Financial Challenges

Colleges allocate seats to students based on merit. Upon joining a course, students are required to pay tuition fees, welfare fees, and a caution deposit. If students need hostel facilities, they must also pay hostel fees, which can be unaffordable for parents with daily wage jobs. Additionally, various college

celebrations often require different types of attire, further straining the financial resources of parents who struggle to maintain their children's wellbeing due to a lack of funds. Three challenges viz., Course fee, Hostel fee and Well-being and welfare fees are given under the heading financial challenges.

Health related Challenges

Female students' health issues, such as menstruation and pregnancy, can impact their energy levels and productivity, thereby affecting their education. The health-related challenges can be categorized into three main areas: Chronic diseases, Menstrual cycle-related issues and Pregnancy and child-rearing.

Challenges related to Hostel

Female students face numerous problems related to hostels, including inadequate safety measures and insufficient infrastructure. Hostels do not provide the same level of safety as their homes, and this can cause significant difficulties. The challenges related to hostels include Lack of proper safety in hostels, Feeling home sickness, Compliance to rules and regulation, and Inadequate infrastructure.

Challenges related to Transportation

When colleges are located far from home, students often find it challenging to travel, and they may face disparaging remarks from bus cleaners. In rural areas, colleges often lack adequate transportation facilities, further complicating students' journeys. Three challenges viz., Long distance from home to institution, Lack of sufficient transportation facilities, Attitude of bus employees towards students using concession are given under this section.

Familial Challenges

Familial challenges refer to difficulties, issues, or obstacles that arise within the family context. Female students face numerous challenges in balancing multiple responsibilities. Together with academic obligations, they often operate family duties, household chores, and other commitments, leaving limited time for studies. Many also lack access to support systems such as childcare facilities and mentorship programs, which could help them manage their time more effectively. The pressure to marry from family can hinder their pursuit of higher education. Additionally, lack of support from certain in-laws and husbands creates an unfavorable environment for studying. Nine challenges viz., Pressure from home to get married, Early marriage, Lack of support from in-laws, Lack of support from husband, Managing children, Managing family , Study constraints due to domestic activities, Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family and Maintain family relation are given under the heading familial challenges.

Miscellaneous Challenges

Female students face other challenges, such as psychological conflicts, language problems, problem of ragging, religious beliefs, etc. Six challenges are given under the heading miscellaneous challenges- Semester break due to denial of maternity leave, Impact of post-partum depression in academic activities, Adjustment problems, Language problems, Problem of ragging and religious beliefs.

As one of the objectives of the study is to explore the supportive factors received by the female students in pursuing higher education, it is planned to include

a section "Supportive factors received by female students", which is an open-ended section. Female students may receive support from their family, friends, teachers, institutions, government, and voluntary organizations. Financial assistance for their studies may come from various sources: families often cover tuition fees and transportation costs, while the government provides scholarships specifically for female students. Teachers also contribute by offering funds to students in need.

Scoring

For Section II, the students have to read each item carefully, and if it is a problem for them, put a tick mark in the column. Convert the number of tick marks under each challenge into corresponding percentages, both item- wise and dimension -wise. For Section III, apply the process of coding to determine the percent of female students who benefit from various types of supportive measures provided by the social agencies specified in the tool.

Finalization of the Tool

The items of the tool were finalized after discussing with supervising guide and other experts. The tool has three sections viz., Section I - Personal data, Section II- Challenges in pursuing higher education and Section III -Supportive factors for pursuing higher education. Table 2 shows the details of the items regarding the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

Table 2

Dimension wise Distribution of Challenges

Sl No.	Dimension of challenges	Total Number of items
1	Parental attitudes	5
2	Challenges from teachers	4
3	Course related challenges	5
4	Financial challenges	3
5	Health related challenges	3
6	Challenges related to hostel	4
7	Challenges related to transportation	3
8	Familial challenges	6
9	Miscellaneous challenges	9

A copy of the tool is attached as Appendix I.

Reliability

Reliability is the degree of consistency that the instrument or procedure demonstrates, whatever it is measuring, it does so consistently (Best &Kahn, 2009). The investigator established the reliability of the present tool by using test-retest method. The time it will take for the first and second administrations is three weeks. Both administrations were made for the same set of 14 students. A cross-examination of the responses of 14 students in the two administrations of the tool showed that there is no wide variation in the responses, which suggests that there is a high degree of consistency in the responses.

Validity

Validity is the quality of a data-gathering instrument or procedure that

enables it to measure what it is supposed to measure (Best &Kahn, 2009). The validity of the present tool was ensured using face validity. The challenges listed in the inventory were carefully phrased to minimize ambiguity and presented clearly. The inventory was administered to 14 samples, revealing no misunderstanding of the identified challenges, thereby establishing its face validity.

Sample Selected for the Study

A sample is a subset of a population, reflecting its characteristics. Studying a sample helps draw conclusions about the entire population. The study's population consists of female students in Malappuram district who are pursuing higher education. The sample for the study is 453 female students in Malappuram district pursuing higher education. Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status were given due weightage while taking the sample.

Data Collection Procedure, Scoring, and Consolidation of Data

Administration of the Tool

After selecting the sample, the investigator sought permission from the institution heads for data collection. Upon approval, the investigator met with the students, explained the study's purpose, and sought their cooperation to ensure its success. Clear instructions were provided, the study's objective was outlined, and the tool was distributed. Students were instructed to carefully evaluate each challenge and mark those applicable to their situation.

Scoring and Consolidation of Data

The responses from the students were scored according to the scoring procedure. After the elimination of incomplete data, the sample is reduced from 460 to 453.

Details of breakup of the final sample are given in Table 3.

Table 3

Break up of Final Sample Selected for the Study

Locality of Residence		Nature of Family		Emigrant Status of Guardian		Marital Status		
Rural	Urban	Joint	Nuclear	Emigrant	Non-emigrant	Un married	Married	Divorced
323	130	76	377	115	338	308	141	4
Total =453		Total =453		Total =453		Total =453		

List of Colleges selected for data collection is attached as Appendix II

Statistical Technique used for Analysis of Data

The objectives of the study required the following statistical technique.

Percentage Analysis

Percentage analysis is used to determine the occurrence rate of each problem among female students and the percent of supportive measures that have benefited them.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

- *Identification and Extent of the Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram District.*

- *Extent of Challenges based on Subgroups*

- *Identification of Supportive Factors*

The analysis of the collected data was done on the basis of the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study are

1. To identify and find out the extent of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

2. To find out the extent of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram in pursuing higher education based on Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status.

3. To find out the supportive factors availed by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

    The analysis of data and result are described under the following heads.

•   Identification and extent of the challenges in pursuing higher education among female students in Malappuram district.

•   Extent of challenges based on subgroups

•   Identification of the supportive factors.

Identification and Extent of the Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram District

This section of the analysis was done to find out the challenges among female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education. As the first step of analysis the investigator calculated the percent of occurrence of each challenge. The analysis is presented under separate headings.

Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram District

The various challenges faced by female students in pursuing higher education are analyzed dimension-wise viz., 'Parental Attitudes', 'Challenges from Teachers', 'Course related Challenges', 'Financial Challenges', and 'Health related Challenges', 'Challenges related to Hostel', 'Challenges related to Transportation', 'Familial Challenges' and 'Miscellaneous Challenges'.

The percent of female students facing challenges related to 'Parental Attitudes' is given in Table 4.

Table 4

Challenges under 'Parental Attitudes' among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing Higher Education

Parental Attitudes	Percent of Female Students
Negligence to girl education	27.8
Restriction to participate in outdoor activates	19.6
Conservative mentality	16.1
Negative attitude towards girls getting employed	10.2
Not allowing to attend mixed college	4.0
Overall mean	15.5

From Table 4, it is clear that nearly one-third of the female students face difficulty in pursuing higher education because of 'Parent's negligence to girl education'. The other challenges in the order of occurrence are, 'Restriction to

participate in outdoor activities', 'Conservative mentality', 'Negative attitude towards girl getting employed' and 'Not allowing to attend mixed college'. On an average, nearly one-fifth of female students face 'Parental Attitudes' as an obstacle in pursuing higher education.

The percent of female students who are having 'Challenges from Teachers' is given in Table 5.

Table 5

'Challenges from Teachers' among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing Higher Education

Challenges from Teachers	Percent of Female Students
Gender of teachers	5.1
Communication gap	21.6
Inadequate care and support of teachers	14.6
Partiality	25.4
Overall mean	16.6

From Table 5, it is clear that one-fourth of the female students face 'Partiality' from the teachers and one-fifth of the female students have 'Communication gap' with their teachers. The other challenges in the order of occurrence are 'Inadequate care and support', and 'Gender of teachers. One in five female students encounters 'Challenges from Teachers' in their pursuit of higher education.

The percent of female students who are having 'Course related Challenges' is given in Table 6.

Table 6

'Course related Challenges' among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing Higher Education

Course related Challenges	Percent of Female Students
Failure to fulfill academic need and demands	19.4
Overburdened curriculum	35.4
Loss of interest due to fixed college hour	16.6
Wrong selection of course	19.0
Fear of examination and result	46.4
Overall mean	27.4

From Table 6, it is clear that almost half of the students have 'Fear of examination and result'. One-fifth of the students believe their 'Course selection is incorrect', which prevents them from meeting their 'academic needs and demands'. On an average, nearly one-third of the female students face 'Course related challenges' as an obstacle in pursuing higher education.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Financial Challenges' is given in Table 7.

Table 7

'Financial Challenges' among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing Higher Education

Financial Challenges	Percent of Female Students
Course fees	34.9
Hostel fees	15.9
Wellbeing and welfare fees	15.0
Overall mean	21.9

From Table 7, it is clear that almost one-third of the female students face difficulty to pay the 'Course fees' and one-fifth of the female students face difficulty to pay 'Hostel fees' and to 'Maintain well-being and welfare'. On an average, nearly one-fifth of the female students face 'Financial challenges' as an obstacle in pursuing higher education.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Health related Challenges' is given in Table 8.

Table 8

'Health related Challenges' among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing Higher education

Health related Challenges	Percent of Female Students
Chronic diseases	6.2
Menstrual cycle related issues	30.0
Pregnancy and child rearing	9.5
Overall mean	15.2

From Table 8, it is clear that one-third of the female students face difficulty related to 'Menstrual cycle issues'. The other challenges in the order of occurrence are 'Pregnancy and child rearing' and 'Chronic disease'. On an average, nearly one-fifth of the female students face 'Health related challenges' as an obstacle in pursuing higher education.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Hostel' is given in Table 9.

Table 9

'Challenges related to Hostel' among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing Higher education

Challenges related to Hostel	Percent of Female Students
Lack of proper safety in hostel	7.3
Feeling of home sickness	7.9
Compliance to rules and regulations	5.5
Inadequate infrastructure	7.3
Overall mean	7.0

From Table 9, it is clear that the order of challenges related to hostel are 'Feeling of home sickness', 'Lack of proper safety in hostel', 'Inadequate infrastructure' and 'Compliance to rules and regulation'. The overall mean of the 'Challenges related to Hostel' is 7.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Transportation' is given in Table 10.

Table 10

'Challenges related to Transportation' among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing Higher education

Challenges related to Transportation	Percent of Female Students
Long distance from home to institution	28.9
Lack of sufficient transportation facilities	21.6
Attitude of bus employees towards students using concession	47.9
Overall mean	32.8

From Table 10, it is clear that on an average almost one-third of the female students face 'Challenges related to transportation' in pursuing higher education. Half of the female students face 'Difficulty from the bus employees while traveling with concession'. The other challenges in the order of occurrence which are related to transportation are 'Long distance from home to the institution' and the 'Lack of sufficient transportation facilities'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Familial Challenges' is given in Table 11.

Table 11

'Familial Challenges' among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing

Higher Education

Familial Challenges	Percent of Female Students
Pressure from home to get married	15.7
Early marriage	10.2
Lack of support from in-laws	6.2
Lack of support from husband	2.0
Managing children	7.5
Managing family	11.5
Study constraints due to domestic activitie**s**	16.6
Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family	19.4
Maintain family relation	13.7
Overall mean	11.4

From Table 11, it is clear that order of 'Familial challenges' faced by female students in pursuing higher education is 'Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family', 'Study constraints due to domestic activities', 'Pressure from home to get married', 'Maintaining family relation', 'Managing family', 'Early marriage', 'Managing children', 'Lack of support from in laws' and 'Lack of support from husband'. The overall mean of the 'Familial Challenges' is 11.4.

The percent of female students having 'Miscellaneous Challenges' is given in Table 12.

Table 12

'Miscellaneous Challenges' among Female Students in Malappuram District

Pursuing Higher Education

Miscellaneous Challenges	Percent of Female Students
Semester break due to denial of maternity leave	4.0
Impact of post-partum depression in academic activitie**s**	6.2
Adjustment problems	15.2
Language problems	23.4
Problem of Ragging	3.3
Religious belief	7.9
Overall mean	10.0

From Table 12, it is clear that almost one-fourth of the female students face 'Language problems' and one-fifth of the female students face 'Adjustment problems'. The other challenges in the order of occurrence are 'Religious belief', 'Impact of postpartum depression in academic activities', 'Semester break due to denial of maternity leave' and 'Problem of ragging'. The overall mean of the miscellaneous challenges is 10.

Summary

The challenges in the order of their occurrence are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (32.8%), 'Course related Challenges' (27.4 %), 'Financial Challenges' (21.9%) , 'Challenges from Teachers' (16.6%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.5%), ' Health related Challenges' (15.2%), 'Familial Challenges'(11.4%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges'(10%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (7%) .

 For easy visualization, graphical representation of various challenges along with its extent is given as Figure 1.

Figure 1

Challenges among Female Students in Malappuram District Pursuing Higher Education
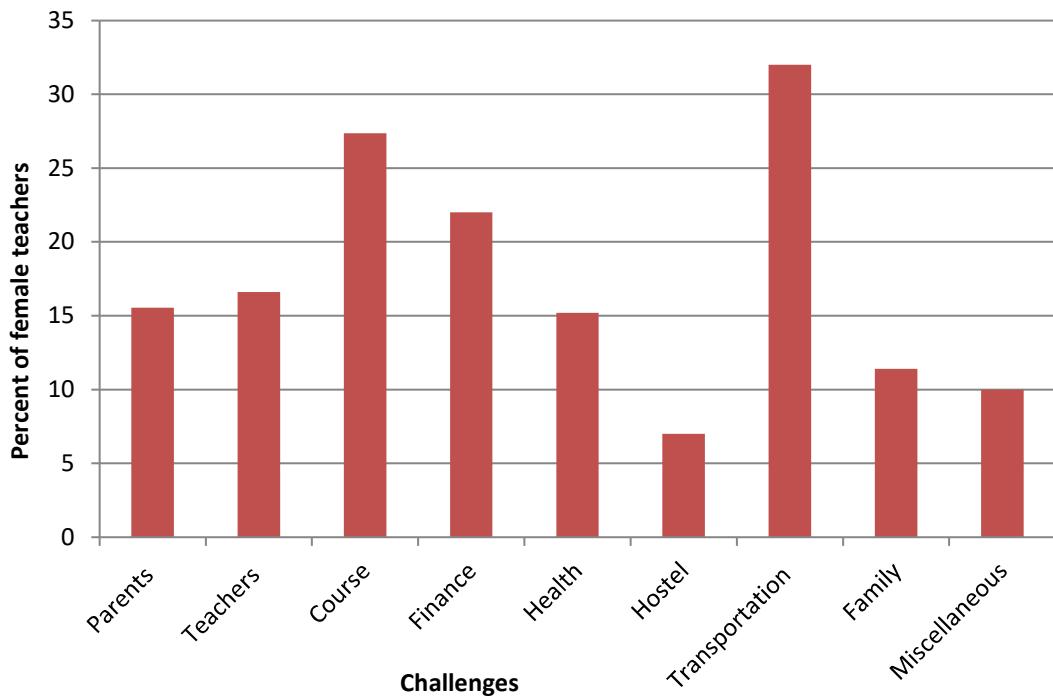
Extent of Challenges based on Subgroups

This section of the analysis was done to find out the challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education based on Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status.

Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education among the sub groups based on Locality of Residence

The percent of female students who are having challenges related to 'Parental Attitudes' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 13.

Table 13

Challenges under 'Parental Attitudes' based on Locality of Residence

Parental Attitudes	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Negligence to girl education	26.9	30.2
Restriction to participate in outdoor activities	19.8	19.4
Conservative mentality	14.5	20.2
Negative attitude towards girl getting employed	10.8	8.5
Not allowing to attend mixed college	3.7	4.7
Overall mean	15.1	16.6

From Table 13, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Parental attitudes' based on the subgroup Locality of residence. Nearly one-fifth of both rural and urban samples face challenges due to 'Parental attitudes'. Additionally, Table 13 shows that approximately one-third of both rural and urban female students experience 'Negligence to girl education'. The data indicates that one-third of both rural and urban parents prioritize their sons' education over their daughters.

The percent of female students who are having 'Challenges from Teachers' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 14.

Table 14

'Challenges from Teachers' based on Locality of Residence

Challenges from Teachers	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Gender of teachers	4.8	6.2
Communication gap	21.6	21.7
Inadequate care and support of teachers	14.8	14.0
Partiality	24.1	28.7
Overall mean	16.3	17.7

From Table 14, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Challenges from teachers' based on Locality of residence. Nearly one-fifth of both rural and urban samples face 'Challenges from teachers'. Additionally, Table 14 shows that approximately one-fourth of both rural and urban female students experience 'Communication gap' and 'Partiality'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Course related Challenges' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 15.

Table 15

'Course related Challenges' based on Locality of Residence

Course related Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Failure to fulfill academic needs and demands	17.9	23.3
Overburdened curriculum	35.2	35.7
Loss of interest due to fixed college hour	17.6	14.0
Wrong selection of course	17.3	23.3
Fear of examination and result	44.0	51.9
Overall mean	26.4	29.6

From Table 15, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Course related challenges' based on Locality of residence. Nearly one-third of both rural and urban samples face 'Course related challenges'. Additionally, Table 15 shows that almost half of both rural and urban female students experience 'Fear of examination and result'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Financial Challenges' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 16.

Table 16

'Financial Challenges' based on Locality of Residence

Financial Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Course fees	35.2	34.1
Hostel fees	16	15.5
Wellbeing and welfare fees	14.5	16.3
Overall mean	21.9	21.9

From Table 16, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Financial Challenges' based on Locality of residence. Nearly one-fifth of both rural and urban samples face 'Financial challenges'. Additionally, Table 16 shows that almost one-third of both rural and urban female students experience challenges related to 'Course fees'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Health related Challenges' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 17.

Table 17

'Health related Challenges' based on Locality of Residence

Health related Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Chronic disease	6.2	6.2
Menstrual cycle issues	30.2	29.5
Pregnancy and child rearing	7.7	14.0
Overall mean	14.7	16.8

From Table 17, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Health related challenges' based on Locality of residence. Nearly one-fifth of both rural and urban samples face 'Health related Challenges'. Additionally, Table 17 shows that approximately one-third of both rural and urban female students experience 'Menstrual cycle issues'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Hostel' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 18.

Table 18

'Challenges related to Hostel' based on Locality of Residence

Challenges related to Hostel	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Lack of proper safety in hostel	6.2	10.1
Feeling home sickness	7.4	9.3
Compliance to rules and regulations	5.6	5.4
In adequate infra-structure	8.3	4.7
Overall mean	6.8	7.4

From Table 18, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Challenges related to hostel' based on Locality of residence. The overall mean of both rural and urban is 6.8 and 7.4 respectively.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Transportation' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 19.

Table 19

'Challenges related to Transportation' based on Locality of Residence

Challenges related to Transportation	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Long distance from home to institution	29.3	27.9
Lack of sufficient transportation facilities	21.0	23.3
Attitude of bus employees towards student using concession	45.7	53.5
Overall mean	32	34.9

From Table 19, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Challenges related to transportation' based on Locality of residence. Nearly one-third of both rural and urban samples face 'Challenges related to transportation'. Additionally, Table 19 shows that almost half of both rural and urban female students are affected by the 'Attitude of bus employees towards student using concession'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Familial Challenges' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 20.

Table 20

'Familial Challenges' based on Locality of Residence

Familial Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Pressure from home to get married	15.4	16.3
Early marriage	10.8	8.5
Lack of support from in laws	5.2	8.5
Lack of support from husband	1.5	3.1
Managing children	7.0	9.4
Managing family	11.1	12.4
Study constraints due to domestic activitie**s**	17.9	13.2
Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family	19.4	19.4
Maintain family relation	14.2	12.4
Overall mean	11.4	11.5

From Table 20, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Familial challenges' based on Locality of residence. Nearly one-fifth of both rural and urban samples face 'Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family 'and 'Pressure from home to get married'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Miscellaneous Challenges' based on Locality of residence is given in Table 21.

Table 21

'Miscellaneous Challenges' based on Locality of Residence

Miscellaneous Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Rural	Urban
Semester break due to denial of maternity leave	4.0	3.9
Impact of post-partum depression in academic activities	6.2	6.2
Adjustment problems	17.9	8.5
Language problems	19.1	34.1
Problem of ragging	3.7	2.3
Religious belief	7.7	8.5
Overall mean	9.7	10.6

From Table 21, it is evident that there is slight difference in 'Miscellaneous challenges' based on Locality of residence. Around one-fifth of the female students from rural area and one-third of the female students in urban area face 'Adjustment problems'. The data indicates that adjustment problems are more prevalent among female students in rural areas compared to their urban counterparts. 'Language problems' are more prevalent in urban female students.

Summary

The challenges in the order of their occurrence based on the rural sub group are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (32%), 'Course related Challenges' (26.4%), 'Financial Challenges' (21.9%) , 'Challenges from Teachers' (16.3%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.1%),'Health related Challenges', (14.7%), 'Familial Challenges'(11.4%), Miscellaneous Challenges (9.7%) and ' Challenges related to

Hostel'(6.8%) .The order of challenges in their occurrence based on the urban sub group are 'Challenges related Transportation' (34.9 %), 'Course related Challenges '(29.6%), 'Financial Challenges' (21.9%) , 'Challenges from Teachers'(17.7%), 'Health related Challenges' (16.8%), 'Parental Attitudes' (16.6%), 'Familial Challenges'(11.5%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges'(10.6%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (7.4%).

The analysis reveals that both rural and urban female students face similar types of challenges, with slight variations in their occurrence rates. In both groups, 'Challenges related to Transportation' emerge as the most significant issue, followed by 'Course-related Challenges' and 'Financial Challenges', indicating the overarching importance of accessibility, academic pressures, and economic constraints in higher education.

For easy visualization, graphical representation of various challenges along with its extent is given as Figure 2.

Figure 2

Challenges of Female Students based on Locality of Residence
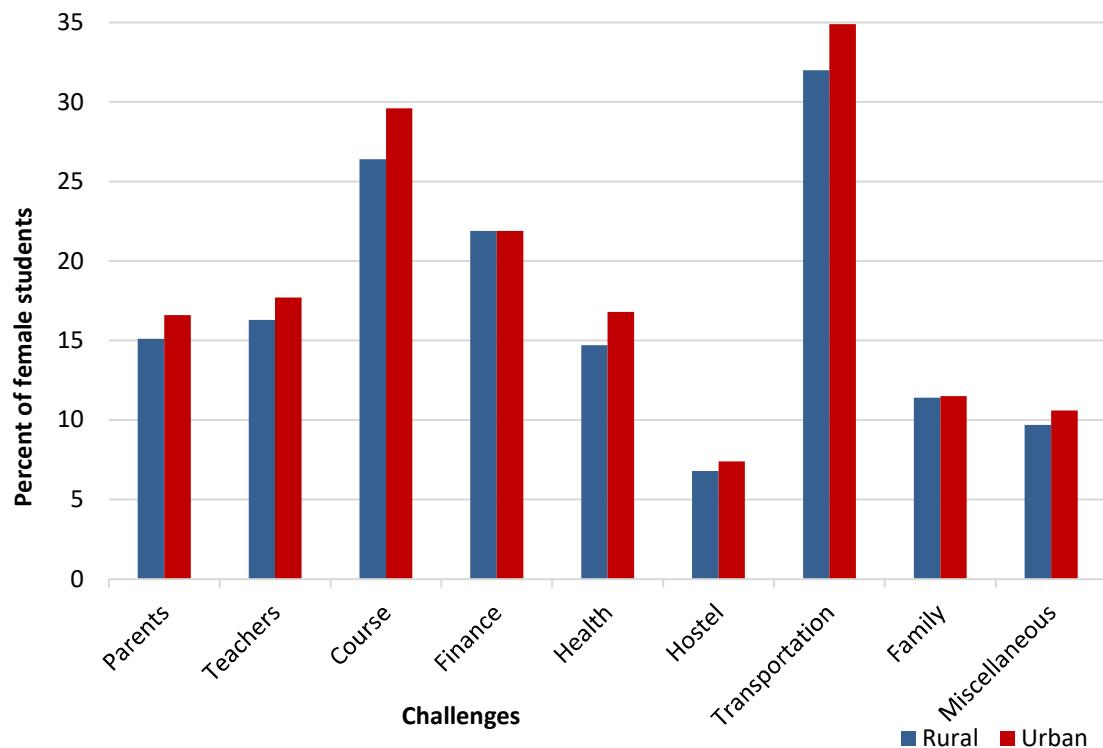
Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education among the subgroup based on Nature of Family

The percent of female students who are having challenges under 'Parental Attitudes' based on Nature of family is given in Table 22.

Table 22

Challenges under 'Parental Attitudes' based on Nature of Family

Parental Attitudes	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Negligence to girl education	28.2	28.0
Restriction to participate in outdoor activities	19.7	19.5
Conservative mentality	16.0	16.9
Negative attitude towards girl getting employed	9.3	14.3
Not allowing to attend mixed college	3.2	7.8
Overall mean	15.3	17.2

From Table 22, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Parental attitudes' based on Nature of family. Nearly one-fifth of female students from both nuclear and joint family face challenges under 'Parental attitudes'. Additionally, Table 22 shows that almost one -third of both nuclear and joint family female students experience 'Negligence to girl education'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Challenges from Teachers' based on Nature of family is given in Table 23.

Table 23

'Challenges from Teachers' based on Nature of Family

Challenges from Teachers	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Gender of teachers	3.7	11.7
Communication gap	19.9	29.9
Inadequate care and support	13.6	19.5
Partiality	25.3	26.0
Overall mean	15.6	21.8

From Table 23, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Challenges from teachers' based on Nature of family. Nearly one-fifth of female students from both nuclear and joint family face 'Challenges from Teachers'. Additionally, Table 23 shows that almost one -fourth of both nuclear and joint family female students experience 'partiality'. Approximately one-fifth of female students from nuclear families encounter challenges related to 'Communication gap', whereas around one-third of female students from joint families face similar challenges.

The percent of female students who are having 'Course related Challenges' based on Nature of family is given in Table 24.

Table 24

'Course related Challenges' based on Nature of Family

Course related Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Failure to fulfill academic needs and demands	18.9	22.1
Overburdened curriculum	35.6	33.8
Loss of interest due to fixed college hour	16.2	18.2
Wrong selection of course	18.9	19.5
Fear of examination and result	46.8	44.2
Overall mean	27.3	68.9

From Table 24, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Course related challenges' based on Nature of family. On an average almost one- fourth of the female students from the nuclear family and above half of the female students from the joint family face 'Course related challenges' in their pursuit of higher education. Nearly one-fifth of both nuclear and joint family samples face the challenges 'Loss of interest due to fixed college hour' and 'Wrong selection of course'. Additionally, Table 24 shows that almost one -third of both nuclear and joint family female students experience 'Overburdened curriculum'. Approximately half of female students from both nuclear and joint family encounter 'Fear of exanimation and result'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Financial Challenges' based on the Nature of family is given in Table 25.

Table 25

'Financial Challenges' based on Nature of Family

Financial Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Course fees	33.8	40.3
Hostel fees	16.0	15.6
Wellbeing and welfare fees	14.4	18.2
Overall mean	21.4	24.7

From Table 25, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Financial challenges' based on Nature of family. Nearly one-fourth of female students from both nuclear and joint family face 'Financial challenges'. Approximately one-third of female students from nuclear families encounter challenges related to 'Course fees', whereas almost half of female students from joint families face similar challenges.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Health related Challenges' based on Nature of family is given in Table 26.

Table 26

'Health related Challenges' based on Nature of Family

Health related Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Chronic disease	4.5	14.3
Menstrual cycle issues	30.3	28.6
Pregnancy and child rearing	9.3	10.4
Overall mean	14.7	17.7

From Table 26, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Health related challenges' based on Nature of family. Nearly one-fifth of female students from both nuclear and joint family face 'Health related challenges'. Approximately one-third of female students from both nuclear and joint family encounter 'Menstrual cycle issues'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Hostel' based on Nature of family is given in Table 27.

Table 27

'Challenges related to Hostel' based on Nature of Family

Challenges related to Hostel	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Lack of proper safety in hostel	6.6	10.4
Feeling Home sickness	7.7	9.1
Compliance to rules and regulations	5.1	7.8
Inadequate infrastructure	7.2	7.8
Overall mean	6.7	8.8

From Table 27, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Challenges related to hostel' based on Nature of family. It indicates that the challenges like 'Feeling home sickness', 'Lack of proper safety in hostel', 'Compliance to rules and regulations' and 'Inadequate infrastructure' are faced by female students from joint family than nuclear family.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Transportation' based on Nature of family is given in Table 28.

Table 28

'Challenges related to Transportation' based on Nature of Family

Challenges related to Transportation	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Long distance from home to institution	27.9	33.8
Lack of sufficient transportation facilities	22.9	15.6
Attitude of bus employees towards student using concession	50.3	36.4
Overall mean	33.7	28.6

From Table 28, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Challenges related to transportation' based on Nature of family. Nearly one-third of female students from both nuclear and joint family face 'Challenges related to transportation'. Approximately one-third of female students from both nuclear and joint family encounter the challenge 'Long distance from home to institution'. Almost half of the female students from nuclear family face the challenge 'Attitude of bus employees towards using concession' whereas around one –third of the female students from joint family encounter the same challenge.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Familial Challenges' based on Nature of family is given in Table 29.

Table 29

'Familial Challenges' based on Nature of Family

Familial Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Pressure from home to get married	15.4	16.9
Early marriage	9.8	11.7
Lack of support from in laws	5.9	7.8
Lack of support from husband	1.9	2.6
Managing children	8.0	11.7
Managing family	9.8	19.5
Study constraints due to domestic activities	14.4	27.3
Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family	20.5	14.3
Maintain family relation	12.5	19.5
Overall mean	10.9	14.6

From Table 29, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Familial challenges' based on Nature of family. One-tenth of female students from both nuclear and joint family face 'Familial challenges'. Approximately one-fifth of female students from both nuclear and joint family encounter the challenges 'Pressure from home to get married', and 'Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family'. Almost one –fifth of the female students from nuclear family face the challenge 'Study constraints due to domestic activities', but around one –third of the female students from joint family encounter the same challenge.

The percent of female students who are having 'Miscellaneous Challenges' based on Nature of family is given in Table 30.

Table 30

'Miscellaneous Challenges' based on Nature of Family

Miscellaneous Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Nuclear Family	Joint Family
Semester break due to denial of maternity leave	3.7	5.2
Impact of post-partum depression in academic activities	5.1	11.7
Adjustment problems	12.5	28.6
Language problems	22.3	28.6
Problem of Ragging	3.7	1.3
Religious belief	7.7	9.1
Overall mean	9.1	14.0

From Table 30, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Miscellaneous challenges' based on Nature of family. Nearly one-fifth of female students from joint family face 'Miscellaneous challenges'. Approximately one-fourth of female students from nuclear family encounter 'Language problems' where as one-third of the students from joint family face the same problem. Around one – third of the female students from joint family encounter the 'Adjustment problems', whereas only one-ten of the students from nuclear family faces the same problem.

Summary

The challenges in the order of their occurrence based on the sub group Nuclear family are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (33.7%), 'Course related Challenges' (27.3%), 'Financial Challenges' (21.4%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (15.6%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.3%),   'Health related Challenges' (14.7%),

'Familial challenges'(10.9), 'Miscellaneous Challenges'(9.1%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (6.7%) .The order of the occurrence of challenges based on Joint family are 'Course related Challenges' (68.9%)   'Challenges related to Transportation' (28.6 %), 'Financial Challenges' (24.7%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (21.8%), 'Parental Attitudes' (17.2%), 'Health related Challenges' (17.7%), 'Familial Challenges'(14.6%), 'Miscellaneous challenges' (14%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (8.8%).

While transportation and course related challenges are significant across both family types, nuclear family students face slightly higher transportation issues, whereas joint family students experience heightened course related pressure. 'Challenges related to Hostel' are the least reported challenge in both groups, indicating that hostel-related issues are relatively minor compared to other challenges.

For easy visualization, graphical representation of various challenges along with its extent is given as Figure 3.

Figure 3

Challenges of Female Students based on Nature of Family
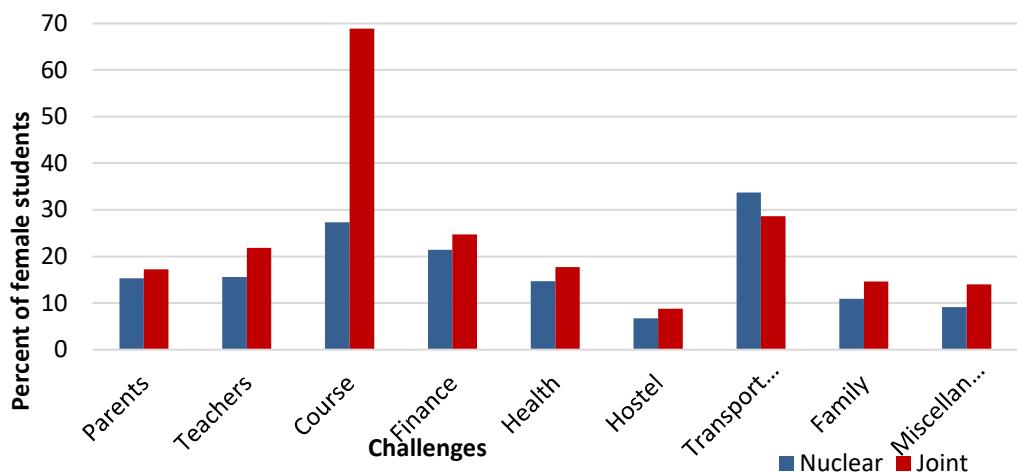
Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education among the sub group based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

The percent of female students who are having challenges under 'Parental Attitudes' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 31.

Table 31

Challenges under 'Parental Attitudes' based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Parental Attitudes	Percent of Female Students	
	Emigrant	Non- Emigrant
Negligence to girl education	30.2	27.0
Restriction to participate in outdoor activities	17.2	20.5
Conservative mentality	18.1	15.4
Negative attitude towards girl getting employed	13.8	8.9
Not allowing to attend mixed college	5.2	3.6
Overall mean	16.9	15.0

From Table 31, it is apparent that there is only a slight variation in challenges related to 'Parental attitudes' based on Emigrant status of guardian. One-fifth of female students, regardless of their guardians' emigrant or non-emigrant status, face challenges under parental attitudes. Additionally, Table 31 indicates that approximately one-third of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians experience 'Negligence to girls' education'. The data highlights that parents of one-third of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians prioritize their son's education over their daughters.

The percent of female students who are having 'Challenges from Teachers' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 32.

Table 32

'Challenges from Teachers' based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Challenges from Teacher	Percent of Female Students	
	Emigrant	Non-Emigrant
Gender of teachers	5.2	5.0
Communication gap	14.7	24.0
Inadequate care and support	16.4	13.9
Partiality	22.4	26.4
Overall mean	14.6	17.3

From Table 32, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Challenges from teachers' based on Emigrant status of guardian. Approximately one-fifth of female students having emigrant and non-emigrant guardians face challenges from teachers. Additionally, Table 32 shows that approximately one-

fourth of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians experience 'Partiality'. One-fourth of female students with non-emigrant guardians face the challenge of 'Communication gap'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Course related Challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 33.

Table 33

'Course related Challenges' based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Course related Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Emigrant	Non-Emigrant
Failure to fulfill academic needs and demands	19.0	19.6
Overburdened curriculum	33.6	35.9
Loss of interest due to fixed college hour	19.0	15.7
Wrong selection of course	18.1	19.3
Fear of examination and result	41.4	48.1
Overall mean	26.2	27.7

From Table 33, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Course related challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian. Approximately one-third of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians face 'Course related challenges'. Additionally, Table 33 shows that approximately half of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians experience 'Fear of examination and result'. Around one-third of female students with emigrant and non–emigrant guardians experience 'Overburdened curriculum'.

The percent of the female students who are having 'Financial Challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 34.

Table 34

'Financial Challenges' based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Financial Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Emigrant	Non-Emigrant
Course fees	29.3	36.8
Hostel fees	11.3	17.5
Wellbeing and welfare fees	12.9	15.7
Overall mean	17.8	23.3

From Table 34, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Financial challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian. Approximately one-fifth of female students with emigrant guardians and one- fourth of female students with non-emigrant guardians face 'Financial challenges'. Additionally, Table 34 shows that approximately one –third of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians experience challenges related to 'Course fees'.

The percent of female students having various 'Health related Challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 35.

Table 35

'Health related Challenges' based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Health related Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Emigrant	Non-Emigrant
Chronic disease	6.9	5.9
Menstrual cycle issues	25	31.8
Pregnancy and child rearing	9.5	9.5
Overall mean	13.8	15.7

From Table 35, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Health related challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian. Approximately one –third of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians experience 'Menstrual cycle issues '.

The percent of female students who are having 'Challenges related to Hostel' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 36.

Table 36

'Challenges related to Hostel' based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Challenges related to Hostel	Percent of Female Students	
	Emigrant	Non-Emigrant
Lack of proper safety in hostel	5.2	8.0
Feeling home sickness	2.6	9.8
Compliance to rules and regulations	4.3	5.9
In adequate infra-structure	6.0	7.7
Overall mean	4.5	7.8

From Table 36, female students with emigrant or non-emigrant guardians encounter 'Challenges related to hostel'. The average scores for these challenges are 4.5 and 7.8 respectively. Among students with emigrant guardians, the challenges in descending order of their occurrence are 'Inadequate infrastructure facilities', 'Lack of proper safety in the hostel', 'Compliance to rules and regulations', and 'Feeling home sickness'. For female students with non-emigrant guardians, the challenges in the descending order of their occurrence are 'Feeling home sickness', 'Lack of proper safety in the hostel', 'Inadequate infrastructure facilities' and 'Compliance to rules and regulations'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Transportation' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 37.

Table 37

'Challenges related to Transportation' based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Challenges related to Transportation	Percent of Female Students	
	Emigrant	Non-Emigrant
Long distance from home to institution	27.6	29.4
Lack of sufficient transportation facilities	18.1	22.8
Attitude of bus employees towards student using concession	43.1	49.6
Overall mean	29.6	33.9

From Table 37, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Challenges related to transportation' based on Emigrant status of guardian. Nearly one-third of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians face 'Challenges related to transportation'. Approximately one-third of female students

with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians encounter the challenge 'Long distance from home to institution'. Almost half of the female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians face the challenge 'Attitude of bus employees towards using concession'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Familial Challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 38.

Table 38

Familial Challenges based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Familial Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Emigrant	Non-Emigrant
Pressure from home to get married	17.2	15.1
Early marriage	9.5	10.4
Lack of support from in laws	6.0	6.2
Lack of support from husband	1.7	2.1
Managing children	7.0	8.0
Managing family	8.6	12.5
Study constraints due to domestic activities	12.9	17.8
Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family	13.8	21.4
Maintain family relation	11.2	14.5
Overall mean	9.7	12.0

From Table 38, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Familial challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian. Nearly one-fifth of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians face 'Study constraints due to domestic activities' and 'Pressure from home to get married'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Miscellaneous Challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian is given in Table 39.

Table 39

'Miscellaneous Challenges' based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

Miscellaneous Challenges	Percent of female students	
	Emigrant	Non-Emigrant
Semester break due to denial of maternity leave	2.6	4.5
Impact of post-partum depression in academic activities	5.2	6.5
Adjustment problems	11.2	16.6
Language problems	19.8	24.6
Problem of ragging	3.4	3.3
Religious belief	6.0	8.6
Overall mean	8.0	10.7

From Table 39, it is evident that there is only a slight difference in 'Miscellaneous challenges' based on Emigrant status of guardian. Nearly one-fifth of female students with non-emigrant guardians are facing 'Adjustment problems'. Approximately one-fourth of female students with emigrant and non-emigrant guardians encounter 'Language problems'.

Summary

The challenges in the order of their occurrence among students with Emigrant guardian are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (29.6%), 'Course related Challenges' (26.2%), 'Financial Challenges' (17.8%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (14.6%), 'Parental Attitudes' (16.9%), 'Health related Challenges' (13.8%), 'Familial Challenges'(9.7%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges' (8%) and

'Challenges related to Hostel' (4.5%) .The order of the challenges among students with non-emigrant guardian are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (33.9%), 'Course related Challenges' (27.7%), 'Financial Challenges' (23.3%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (17.3%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15%), 'Health related Challenges' (15.7%), 'Familial Challenges' (12%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges' (10.7%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (7.8%).

Transportation and course related challenges are the main issues for female students across both groups. However, financial challenges and hostel-related issues are less prominent among students with emigrant guardians, likely due to better financial security provided by remittances.

For easy visualization, graphical representation of various challenges along with its extent are given as Figure 4.

Figure 4

Challenges of Female Students based on Emigrant Status of Guardian
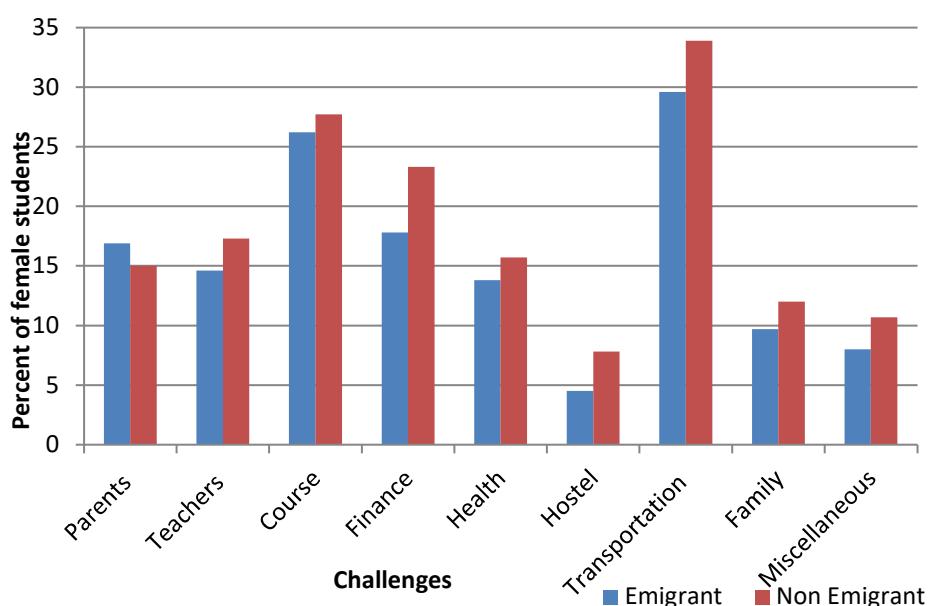
Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education among the Subgroup based on Marital Status

The percent of female students who are having various challenges under 'Parental Attitudes' based on Marital status is given in Table 40.

Table 40

Challenges under 'Parental Attitude' based on Marital Status

Parental Attitudes	Percent of Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Negligence to girl education	29.8	26.9
Restriction to participate in outdoor activities	20.6	19.2
Conservative mentality	14.2	17.2
Negative attitude towards girl getting employed	12.1	9.1
Not allowing to attend mixed college	2.8	4.5
Overall mean	15.9	15.4

From Table 40, it is evident that there is only a slight variation in challenges related to 'Parental Attitudes' based on Marital status. Nearly one-fifth of both married and unmarried female students face challenges under 'Parental Attitudes'. Additionally, Table 40 indicates that approximately one-third of married and unmarried female students experience 'Negligence to girl education'. The data highlights that parents of one-third of both married and unmarried female students prioritize their sons' education over their daughters.

The percent of female students who are having 'Challenges from Teachers' based on Marital status is given in Table 41.

Table 41

'Challenges from Teachers' based on Marital Status

Challenges from Teachers	Percent Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Gender of teachers	6.4	4.5
Communication gap	19.1	23.1
Inadequate care and support	13.5	15.3
Partiality	24.8	26.0
Overall mean	16.0	17.2

From Table 41, it is evident that there is only a slight variation in 'Challenges from teachers' based on Marital status. Nearly one-fifth of both married and unmarried female students face 'Challenges from teachers'. Additionally, Table 41 indicates that approximately one-fourth of married and unmarried female students experience 'Partiality' and one-fifth of married and unmarried female students experience 'Communication gap'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Course related Challenges' based on Marital status is given in Table 42.

Table 42

'Course related Challenges' based on Marital Status

Course related Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Failure to fulfill academic needs and demands	21.3	18.8
Overburdened curriculum	41.8	32.1
Loss of interest due to fixed college hour	15.6	16.9
Wrong selection of course	12.8	22.1
Fear of examination and result	43.3	48.1
Overall mean	27.0	27.6

From Table 42, it is evident that there is only a slight variation in 'Course related challenges' based on the subgroup Marital status. Nearly one-third of both married and unmarried female students face 'Course related challenges'. Additionally, Table 42 indicates that approximately half of married and unmarried female students experience 'Fear of examination and result'. Almost half of the married female students and one –third of unmarried female students experience 'Overburdened curriculum' while pursuing higher education.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Financial Challenges' based on Marital status is given in Table 43.

Table 43

'Financial Challenges' based on Marital Status

Financial Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Course fees	39.7	32.8
Hostel fees	14.9	16.2
Wellbeing and welfare fees	15.6	14.6
Overall mean	23.4	21.2

From Table 43, it is evident that there is only a slight variation in 'Financial challenges' based on Marital status. Nearly one-fourth of both married and unmarried female students face 'Financial challenges'. Additionally, Table 43 indicates that one-third of married and unmarried female student's experience 'Course fees' as a challenge.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Health related Challenges' based on Marital status is given in Table 44.

Table 44

'Health related Challenges' based on Marital Status

Health related Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Chronic disease	7.8	5.5
Menstrual cycle issues	31.2	29.2
Pregnancy and child rearing	19.9	4.2
Overall mean	19.6	12.9

From Table 44, it is evident that there is only a slight variation in 'Health related Challenges' in the subgroup based on Marital status. Nearly one-fifth of both married and unmarried female students face 'Health related Challenges'. Additionally, Table 44 indicates that approximately one-third of married and unmarried female students experience 'Menstrual cycle issues' as a challenge.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Hostel' based on marital status   is given in Table 45.

Table 45

'Challenges related to Hostel' based on Marital Status

Challenges related to Hostel	Percent of Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Lack of proper safety in hostel	9.9	5.8
Feeling home sickness	7.8	7.8
Compliance to rules and regulations	7.1	4.9
Inadequate infrastructure	7.8	7.1
Overall mean	8.2	6.4

From Table 45, the order of occurrence of 'Challenges related to hostel' for married female students is 'Lack of proper safety in hostel', 'Feeling home sickness', 'Inadequate infra-structure' and 'Compliance to rules and regulation'. The order of occurrence of challenges related to hostel for unmarried female students are 'Feeling home sickness', 'Inadequate infra-structure', 'Lack of proper safety in hostel', and 'Compliance to rules and regulations'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Challenges related to Transportation' based on Marital status is given in Table 46.

Table 46

'Challenges related to Transportation' based on Marital Status

Challenges related to Transportation	Percent of Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Long distance from home to institution	30.5	27.6
Lack of sufficient transportation facilities	23.4	20.5
Attitude of bus employees towards student using concession	39.7	51.6
Overall mean	31.2	33.2

From Table 46, it is evident that there is only a slight variation in 'Challenges related to transportation' in the subgroup based on Marital status. Nearly one-third of both married and unmarried female students face 'Challenges related to transportation '. Additionally, Table 46 indicates that approximately one-third of married and half of unmarried female students experience 'Attitude of bus employees towards using concession 'as a challenge. Almost one-third of married and unmarried female students face the challenge of 'Long distance from home to institution'.

The percent of female students who are having various 'Familial Challenges' based on Marital status   is given in Table 47.

Table 47

'Familial Challenges' based on Marital Status

Familial Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Pressure from home to get married	18.4	14.3
Early marriage	16.3	7.1
Lack of support from in laws	13.5	2.9
Lack of support from husband	5.0	0.6
Managing children	19.0	1.0
Managing family	27.0	3.9
Study constraints due to domestic activities	29.8	9.7
Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family	20.6	6.8
Maintain family relation	27.0	6.8
Overall mean	19.6	5.9

From Table 47, it is evident that there is a wide variation in the extent of 'Familial challenges' based on Marital status. Nearly one-fifth of married female students face 'Familial challenges'. Additionally, Table 47 indicates that approximately one-third of married female students experience 'Study constraints due to domestic activities'. Nearly one- third of the married female students face 'Managing family' as a challenge'.

The percent of female students who are having 'Miscellaneous Challenges' based on Marital status   is given in Table 48.

Table 48

'Miscellaneous Challenges' based on Marital Status

Miscellaneous Challenges	Percent of Female Students	
	Married	Unmarried
Semester break due to denial of maternity leave	8.5	1.6
Impact of post-partum depression in academic activities	12.1	3.2
Adjustment problems	19.1	13.0
Language problems	16.3	26.6
Problem of ragging	3.5	2.9
Religious belief	7.1	8.1
Overall mean	9.9	9.2

From Table 48, it is evident that there is only a slight variation in 'Miscellaneous challenges' in the subgroups based on Marital status. Nearly one-fifth of married and one- fourth of unmarried female students face 'Language problems'. Additionally, Table 48 indicates that approximately one-fifth of married and unmarried female students experience 'Adjustment problem' as a challenge.

Challenges faced by Divorced Female Students

Since the final sample consists only 4 divorced female students, the percent of challenges faced by them is not carried out separately. Even then, they reported the following challenges.

'Negligence to girl education', 'Restriction to participate in outdoor activities' and 'Attitude towards girl getting employed' (under 'Parental Attitude'); 'Loss of interest due to fixed college hour' and 'Fear of examination and result'

(under 'Course Related Challenges'); 'Course fees', 'Hostel fees' and 'Wellbeing and welfare fees'(under 'Financial Challenges'); 'Menstrual cycle issues' , 'Pregnancy and child rearing'(under 'Health related Challenges'); 'Lack of proper safety in hostel' and 'Feeling of home sickness' (under 'Challenges related to hostel'); 'Long distance from home to institution', 'Lack of sufficient transportation facilities' and 'Attitude of bus employees towards students using concession' (under 'Challenges related to Transportation'); 'Pressure from home to get married', 'Early marriage', 'Managing children', 'Managing family', 'Study constraints due to domestic activities', 'Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family' and 'Maintain family relation' (under 'Familial Challenges'); 'Semester break due to denial of maternity leave', 'Impact of post-partum depression in academic activities', 'Adjustment problems', 'Language problems', 'Problem of ragging' and 'Religious belief' (under 'Miscellaneous Challenges')

Summary

The challenges faced by married female students in the order of their occurrence are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (31.2%), 'Course related Challenges' (26.96%), 'Financial Challenges' (23.4%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (15.98%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.9%), 'Health related Challenges' (19.6%), 'Familial challenges' (19.6%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges' (9.9%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (8.15%). For the unmarried female students order of challenges are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (33.23%), 'Course related Challenges' (27.6%), 'Financial Challenges' (21.2%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (17.22%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.38%), 'Health related Challenges' (12.9%), 'Familial

Challenges' (5.4%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges (9.23%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (6.4%).

While transportation and course-related challenges are common across both groups, married female students face additional pressures related to health, family responsibilities, and finances, making their educational journey more complex.

For easy visualization, graphical representation of various challenges and along with its extent is given as Figure 5.

Figure 5

Challenges of Female Students based on the Marital Status
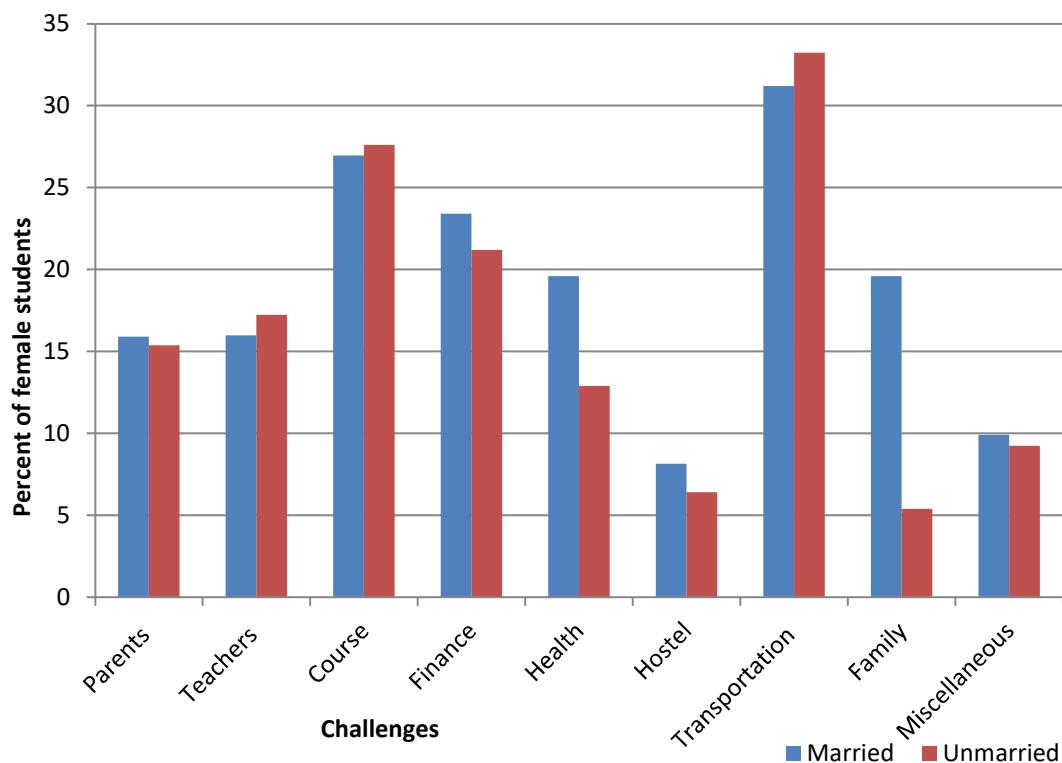
Identification of Supportive Factors

The percent of female students receiving various type of assistance along with agencies are given in Table 49.

Table 49

Percent of Female Students receiving various type of Assistance along with Agencies

Agencies	Financial Support	Safety and Care	Academic Support	Conducive Environment	Motivation
Family	96.0	92.9	84.1	75.9	83.7
Friends	25.0	63.4	70.0	46.6	76.5
Institution	10.0	39.7	69.8	42.2	55.0
Teacher	9.0	50.2	74.0	39.3	67.5
Government	43.3	16.8	26.9	18.0	15.0
Voluntary organization	3.5	4.6	6.0	4.6	6.4

From Table 49, it is clear that nearly all female students receive financial support from their families. The order of financial support available to female students is from family, government, friends, institution, teachers and voluntary organizations. Additionally, Table 49 shows the percent of female students receiving support from various sources. It indicates that the family is the primary source of financial support, with 96 percent of students receiving assistance from their families. Government support is the second most common, with 43.3 percent of students benefiting from it. Friends provide support to 25 percent of the students, making it the third most common source. Institutions support 10 percent of students,

while teachers support nine percent. Voluntary organizations provide the least support, with only 3.5 percent of students receiving financial assistance from them. This data highlights the crucial role of family and government in supporting female students, while other sources play a smaller, yet still significant role.

While considering the assistance 'Safety and care', nearly all female students receive it from their families. The order of the agencies which provide safety and care to female students are family, friends, teachers, institution, government and voluntary organization. Additionally, Table 49 shows the percent of female students receiving support from various sources. It indicates that the family is the primary source for safety and care, with 92.9 percent of students receiving assistance from their families. Friends support is the second most common, with 63.4 percent of students benefiting from it. Teacher provides support to 50.2 percent of the students, making it the third most common source. Institutions support 39.7 percent of students, while the government supports 16.8percent. Voluntary organizations provide the least support, with only 4.6 percent of students receiving assistance from them. This data highlights the crucial role of family and friends in supporting female students by providing safety and care, while other sources play a smaller, yet still significant role.

The order of the agencies which provide academic support to female students are family, teachers, friends, institution, government and voluntary organization. Additionally, Table 49 shows the percent of female students receiving support from various sources. It indicates that the family is the primary source of support, with 84.1 percent of students receiving academic assistance from their families. Teacher

support is the second most common, with 74 percent of students benefiting from it.
Friends provide support to 70 percent of the students, making it the third most
common source. Institutions support 69.8 percent of students, while the government
supports 26.9 percent. Voluntary organizations provide the least support, with only
six percent of students receiving assistance from them. This data highlights the
crucial role of family and teachers in giving academic support, while other sources
play a smaller, yet still significant role.

The order of the agencies which provide conducive environment to female
students from various agencies are family, friends, institution, teacher, government
and voluntary organization. Additionally, Table 49 shows the percent of female
students receiving support from various sources. It indicates that the family is the
primary source for providing conducive environment with 75.9 percent of students
receiving assistance from their families. Friends support is the second most
common, with 46.6 percent of students benefiting from it. Institution provides
support to 42.2 percent of the students, making it the third most common source.
Teachers support 39.3 percent of students, while government supports 18 percent.
Voluntary organizations provide the least support, with only 4.6 percent of students
receiving assistance from them. This data highlights the crucial role of family and
friends in supporting female students by making the environment very conducive,
while other sources play a smaller, yet still significant role.

The order of the agencies which provide motivation to female students are
family, friends, teachers, institution, government and voluntary organization.
Additionally, Table 49 shows the percent of female students receiving motivation

from various sources. It indicates that the family is the primary source of motivation, with 83.7 percent of students receiving motivation from their families. Friends motivation is the second most common, with 76.5 percent of students benefiting from it. Teachers provide motivation to 67.5 percent of the students, making it the third most common source. Institution motivates 55 percent of students, while government motivates15percent. Voluntary organizations provide the least motivation, with only 6.4 percent of students receiving assistance from them. This data highlights the crucial role of family and friends in motivating female students, while other sources play a smaller, yet still significant role.

Conclusion

The primary challenge faced by female students in the Malappuram district in pursuing higher education is 'Challenges related to Transportation.' This is consistent across the total group as well as various subgroups, including Locale of Residence, Nature of Family, Emigrant Status of Guardian, and Marital Status. This suggests that access to reliable and affordable transportation is a common issue affecting students. 'Course-related Challenges' rank as the second most significant challenge for the total group as well as across the subgroups. This could indicate difficulties in adjusting with academic demands. 'Financial Challenges' are prevalent across most subgroups, particularly among female students in joint family and married students. This highlights the financial challenge experienced by students and their families in pursuing higher education. 'Challenges from Teachers' is a major concern among female students in joint family and urban students. It suggests potential issues related to, communication gap and partiality. 'Parental Attitudes' are

another concern, especially among female students in joint family and those with emigrant guardians. This could include the conservative mentality and preference of boys' education than their daughters. 'Health related Challenges' are significant among married female students and also in joint family. Health conditions of female students affect the education. 'Familial Challenges' consistently reported across different subgroups, indicating interpersonal or familial dynamics that affect students' academic pursuits. 'Challenges related to Hostel' is the least concern among all the groups.

Overall, the data highlights a range of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education. 'Challenges related to Transportation', 'Course-related Challenges', 'Financial Challenges', 'Challenges from Teachers', 'Parental Attitudes' and 'Familial Challenges' emerge as critical areas needing attention to support student well-being and academic success. Addressing these challenges requires personalized strategies that consider the specific needs and circumstances of each subgroup to foster a conducive learning environment.

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

- *Study in Retrospect*

- *Major Findings of the Study*

- *Conclusion*

- *Educational Implications*

- *Suggestions for Further Research*

This chapter provides an overall view of the study under the headings study in retrospect, major findings of the study, conclusion, educational implications and suggestions for further research.

Study in Retrospect

It gives an outline of the different aspects of the present investigation which include the Title, Variable, Objectives, Methodology used, Findings and Implications.

Restatement of the Problem

The study was carried to find out the challenges and supportive factors in pursuing higher education among female students in Malappuram district. The title of the study was "Challenges and supportive factors in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram District".

Variables Selected for the Study

The variables of the study are "Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram District".

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are the following.

1.   To identify and find out the extent of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

2.   To find out the extent of challenges faced by female students in Malappuram

district in pursuing higher education based on Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status.

3.   To find out the supportive factors availed by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education.

Methodology of the Study

Methodology is an important part of any research study, as it guides the way to proceed. The methodology used for the present study is given briefly under the subheadings.

Method Used for the Study

In the present study survey method is used as the method of research.

Sample of the Study

The population of the study comprises female students residing in Malappuram district who are pursuing higher education. A sample of 453 female students pursuing higher education was selected as sample and the data were collected using stratified sampling technique.

Tools used for the Study

Inventory for Challenges and Supportive Factors in Pursuing Higher Education developed by the investigator with the help of supervising teacher was used for the collection of data.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected by the researcher using survey method, from female students in Malappuram district who are pursuing higher education. The sample were collected from the female students through stratified sampling method giving due representation to Locality of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardian and Marital status.

Statistical Technique used for the Study

Percentage analysis was used to analyse the data.

Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study with regard to extent and comparison of challenges of female students and the identification of supportive factors are given below.

Identification and Extent of the Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education among Female Students in Malappuram district

The challenges in the order of their occurrence are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (32.8%), 'Course related Challenges' (27.4%), 'Financial Challenges' (21.9%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (16.6%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.5%), 'Health related Challenges' (15.2%), 'Familial Challenges' (11.4%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges' (10%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (7%).

Extent of Challenges based on Locality of Residence

The challenges in the order of their occurrence based on the rural sub group are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (32%), 'Course related Challenges' (26.4%), 'Financial Challenges' (21.9%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (16.3%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.1%), 'Health related Challenges', (14.7%), 'Familial Challenges' (11.4%), Miscellaneous Challenges (9.7%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (6.8%). `The challenges in the order of their occurrence based on the urban sub group are 'Challenges related Transportation' (34.9%), 'Course related Challenges' (29.6%), 'Financial Challenges' (21.9%), 'Challenges from Teachers'(17.7%), 'Health related Challenges' (16.8%), 'Parental Attitudes' (16.6%), 'Familial Challenges' (11.5%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges' (10.6%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (7.4%) .

Extent of Challenges based on Nature of Family

The challenges in the order of their occurrence based on the sub group viz., female students from Nuclear family are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (33.7%), 'Course related Challenges' (27.3%), 'Financial Challenges' (21.4%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (15.6%), 'Parental attitude' (15.3%), 'Health related Challenges' (14.7%), 'Familial challenges' (10.9), 'Miscellaneous Challenges'(9.1%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (6.7%). The order of the occurrence of challenges faced by female students from Joint family are 'Course related Challenges' (68.9%) 'Challenges related to Transportation' (28.6%), 'Financial Challenges' (24.7%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (21.8%), 'Parental Attitudes' (17.2%), health related challenges (17.7%), 'Familial Challenges'

(14.6%), 'Miscellaneous challenges' (14%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (8.8%).

Extent of Challenges based on Emigrant Status of Guardian

The challenges faced by female students with emigrant guardian in the order of their occurrence are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (29.6%), 'Course related Challenges' (26.2%), 'Financial Challenges'(17.8%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (14.6%), 'Parental attitudes' (16.9%), 'Health related Challenges' (13.8%), 'Familial Challenges' (9.7%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges'(8%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (4.5%). The challenges faced by female students with non-emigrant guardian in the order of their occurrence are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (33.9%), 'Course related Challenges' (27.7%), 'Financial Challenges' (23.3%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (17.3%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15%), 'Health related Challenges' (15.7%), 'Familial Challenges' (12%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges' (10.7%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (7.8%).

Extent of Challenges based on subgroup Marital Status

The challenges in the order of their occurrence on the basis of married female students are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (31.2%), 'Course related Challenges' (27%), 'Financial Challenges'(23.4%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (16%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.9%), 'Health related Challenges' (19.6%), 'Familial challenges'(19.6%), 'Miscellaneous Challenges' (9.9%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (8.2%). The order of challenges based on the unmarried female students are 'Challenges related to Transportation' (33.2%), 'Course related Challenges' (27.6%),

'Financial Challenges' (21.2%), 'Challenges from Teachers' (17.2%), 'Parental Attitudes' (15.4%), 'Health related Challenges' (12.9%), 'Familial Challenges' (5.4%), 'Miscellaneous challenges', (9.2%) and 'Challenges related to Hostel' (6.4%) .

Identification of Supportive Factors

Female students receive the most financial support from their families, followed by the government, friends, institutions, teachers, and voluntary organizations. For safety and care, families are again the primary source, followed by friends, teachers, institutions, the government, and voluntary organizations. In academic support, families lead, followed by teachers, friends, institutions, the government, and voluntary organizations. When it comes to providing a conducive environment, families are the main source, followed by friends, institutions, teachers, the government, and voluntary organizations. For motivation, families are the primary providers, followed by friends, teachers, institutions, the government, and voluntary organizations. This data highlights the crucial role of family support in various aspects of female students' lives, with significant contributions from the government and friends as well.

Conclusion

The primary challenge faced by female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education is 'Challenges related to Transportation.' This trend is consistent across the total group and various subgroups, including Locale of residence, Nature of family, Emigrant status of guardians, and Marital status.

'Course-related Challenges' rank as the second most significant challenge for both the total group and all subgroups, particularly prominent among female students in joint families, indicating difficulties in adjusting to academic demands.

'Financial Challenges' are especially prevalent among female students from joint families and married students, highlighting the financial problems in families. 'Challenges from Teachers', such as communication gap and partiality, are major concerns for students from joint families and rural students. 'Parental Attitudes', especially conservative mentalities and a preference for boys' education are notable concerns for female students from joint families and those with emigrant guardians.

'Health-related Challenges' significantly affect married female students and those in joint families, impacting their ability to attend and engage in classes. 'Familial challenges' are consistently reported across all subgroups, indicating that interpersonal and familial dynamics often hinder academic pursuits. 'Miscellaneous' and 'Hostel-related Challenges', though varying widely, are the least concerned challenges.

Overall, the data highlight that 'Challenges related to Transportation', 'Course-related Challenges', 'Financial Challenges', 'Challenges from Teachers', 'Parental Attitudes' and 'Familial Challenges' are critical areas that need attention to support the well-being and academic success of female students in Malappuram district. Addressing these challenges requires personalized strategies that consider the specific needs and circumstances of each subgroup to foster a supportive and conducive learning environment.

Female students receive the majority of their support across various domains—financial, safety, academic, environmental, and motivational—from their families, followed by contributions from the friends, teachers, institutions, government, and voluntary organizations. This emphasizes the pivotal role families play in supporting female students, with notable assistance from other sources.

Educational Implications

The findings of the study highlighted the fact that the female students in pursuing higher education faces lot of challenges, and the female students get various supportive factors from different agencies. Most of the female students get support from family followed by friends, teachers, institution, government and voluntary organization.

- Female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education are facing challenges related to transportation. The challenges they face include not being able to reach college on time, and even when the female students use concession, they are subjected to misbehavior by bus conductors. Therefore, the government should provide seats in nearby colleges for students and ensure timely transportation facilities for institutional students. Collaborate with local authorities to ensure reliable and safe transportation options for female students. Increase the number of buses and routes, especially in rural areas. Additionally, awareness programs should be conducted for bus drivers and conductors, and the same concessions offered by private buses should be implemented in Kerala state Road transport corporation (KSRTC) buses.

- The overburdened curriculum is felt to be a major obstacle for children in pursuing higher education. Similarly, just passing a degree or post-graduation course is not enough for children to achieve their desired goals in today's competitive world. Therefore, the government should reform the curriculum in a way that enhances the skills and abilities of children, rather than just burdening them with academics. Provide additional tutoring, study groups, and counseling to help students cope with exam-related stress and maintain interest in their courses.

- Conduct regular training for teachers to sensitize them to the specific needs of the students. Encourage a supportive and inclusive classroom environment and establish a feedback system where students can report issues with teachers and receive timely resolutions to avoid challenges from teachers.

- Another challenge faced by female students in pursuing higher education is familial challenges. Many of those who get married and then pursue higher education face more difficulties. Therefore, it is essential to provide guidance and support to such students, serving as a role model, to help them to overcome these challenges. Offer family counseling services to help students manage family responsibilities and academic commitments effectively. Establish support networks for married students or those with children, including daycare facilities and flexible study options.

- Although the government provides many scholarships, only a limited number of students are aware of them. Therefore, it is essential to inform students about the available scholarships at the right time and guide them to apply on time. The government should also provide more grants and scholarships.

- Female students face many challenges while pursuing higher education, especially from their Parents. Many parents prefer to educate their sons over their daughters, so it's essential to introduce female-friendly courses that create awareness among future parents about the importance of female education, leading to a brighter future for them. Organize workshops and campaigns to educate parents on the importance of female education and the benefits of supporting their daughters' academic and career aspirations. Engage with community leaders to advocate for gender equality and change traditional attitudes towards female education and employment.

- The fixed college hour is another challenge under course related challenges. Female students are unable to take up part-time jobs due to the rigid schedule. Introduce flexible class schedules or online learning options to accommodate students who may have domestic responsibilities or other commitments.

- Many parents are hesitant to send their daughters for higher education due to safety concerns. Therefore, the government should implement bus facilities like female-only buses to ensure their safety**. So,** enhance safety measures in hostels, such as better security, adequate lighting, and emergency response systems **and** create a homely environment in hostels to reduce feeling of homesickness, including recreational activities and peer support groups.

- Parents' low income leads to their reluctance to provide education to their daughters. If the government provides some grants or assistance to parents with their daughters, it will change their mindset and encourage them to support their daughters' education.

- There are many health-related challenges, **so** provide on-campus health services, including gynecological care, counseling, and support for menstrual health and pregnancy-related issues and implement wellness programs focusing on mental and physical health, addressing issues such as postpartum depression and general health maintenance.

- Students pursuing higher education face challenges but also benefit support primarily from their families, followed by friends, teachers, educational institutions, government, and voluntary organizations. Recognizing these support sources can help institutions and policymakers create strategies to enhance student success. Strengthening family engagement through workshops and resources, fostering a supportive community environment, and forming partnerships with government and voluntary organizations can provide comprehensive support systems. This holistic approach can mitigate challenges and improve the educational experience for students.

Suggestions for Further Research

- Attitude of parents towards female education can be studied to examine whether parents have changed their orthodox thinking and prioritize their daughter's education, or if they still prioritize their son's education.

- Female students in Malappuram district in pursuing higher education are largely facing transportation challenges. A comprehensive and in-depth study can be conducted to understand why female students in particular, are facing transportation difficulties.

- Although the government has introduced various policies for women, many are not aware of these policies. A study on 'Awareness and Accessibility of Government Policies for Women along with Barriers and Solutions in Increasing Policy Utilization' is recommended.

- A comparative study can be done in district wise to identify whether the students in Malappuram district and other districts are facing the same challenges or different challenges.

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APPENDICES

FAROOK TRAINING COLLEGE

INVENTORY FOR CHALLENGES AND SUPPORTIVE FACTORS IN PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

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നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ :

മലപ്പുറം ജില്ലയിലെ ഉന്നത വിദ്യാഭ്യാസത്തിനു പോകുന്ന പെൺകുട്ടികൾ നേരിടുന്ന വെല്ലുവിളികളും അവർക്ക് പിന്തുണയേകുന്ന ഘടകങ്ങളും ഏതെല്ലാം എന്ന് കണ്ടെത്തുന്നതിനുള്ള മൂന്ന് ഭാഗങ്ങൾ ഉള്ള ഒരു ഇൻവെന്ററി ആണിത്. നിങ്ങൾ നൽകുന്ന എല്ലാ വിവരങ്ങളും ഗവേഷണ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾക്ക് മാത്രമേ ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്തുകയുള്ളൂ എന്നും പരിപൂർണ്ണ രഹസ്യമായിരിക്കുമെന്നും ഉറപ്പ് നൽകുന്നു. അതുകൊണ്ട് തന്നെ സത്യസന്ധമായ വിവരങ്ങൾ അതത് ഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ കൃത്യമായി രേഖപ്പെടുത്തണമെന്ന് അഭ്യർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു.

SECTION I: Personal Data

Name of the student   : …………………………………………

Age   : ………………   Birth order   : …………………

Religion   : …………………   Caste   : ……………………

Number of Siblings   : ……………………

 Locality of the residence: Rural ☐   Urban : ☐

Nature of the family   : Joint ☐   Nuclear: ☐

Guardian / parent status: Emigrant ☐   Non emigrant ☐

Marital status: Unmarried ☐ Married ☐   Divorced ☐

Number of children (If Applicable): One ☐ Two ☐ More than two ☐

Name of the College: ………………   Course with semester: …………………

Stream of the course: ………………

SECTION II: Challenges in Pursuing Higher Education

ഉന്നത വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം നേടുന്നതിനായി പോകേണ്ടിവരുമ്പോൾ നിങ്ങൾ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കാൻ സാധ്യതയുള്ള ചില പ്രശ്നങ്ങളാണ് താഴെ കൊടുത്തിരിക്കുന്നത്. പല പ്രശ്നങ്ങളെയും തരണം ചെയ്തു കൊണ്ടാണ് നിങ്ങൾ ഓരോരുത്തരും ഉന്നത വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം നേടുന്നത്. താഴെ കൊടുത്തിരിക്കുന്നവയിൽ ഏതൊക്കെയാണ് നിങ്ങളെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് പ്രശ്നങ്ങളായി തോന്നുന്നത് എന്ന് ശരി അടയാളം ഉപയോഗിച്ച് രേഖപ്പെടുത്തുക.

ഉന്നത വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം നേടുന്നതിനായി അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കുന്ന വെല്ലുവിളികൾ	പ്രതികരണം
Parental Attitudes	
Conservative mentality	
Negligence to girl education	
Not allowing to attend mixed college	
Restriction to participate in outdoor activities	
Negative attitude towards girls getting employed	
Challenges From Teachers	
Gender of teachers	
Communication gap	
Inadequate care and support of teachers	
Partiality	
Course related Challenges	
Failure to fulfill academic need and demands	
Overburdened curriculum	
Loss of interest due to fixed college hour	
Wrong selection of course	
Fear of examination and result	
Financial Challenges	
Course fees	
Hostel fees	

Wellbeing and welfare fees	
Health related Challenges	
Chronic diseases	
Menstrual cycle related issues	
Pregnancy and child rearing	
Challenges related to Hostel	
Lack of proper safety in hostel	
Feeling home sickness	
Compliance to rules and regulation	
Inadequate infrastructure	
Challenges related to Transportation	
Long distance from home to institution	
Lack of sufficient transportation facilities	
Attitude of bus employees towards students using concession	
Familial Challenges	
Pressure from home to get married	
Early marriage	
Lack of support from in-laws	
Lack of support from husband	
Managing children	
Managing family	
Study constraints due to domestic activities	
Difficulty to reach college in time after managing family	
Maintain family relation	
Miscellaneous Challenges	
Semester break due to denial of maternity leave	
Impact of post-partum depression in academic activities	
Adjustment problems	

Language problems	
Problem of ragging	
Religious belief	

If any other problems

Being a girl:

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Being married:

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....

SECTION III: Supportive Factors

ധാരാളം വെല്ലുവിളികൾ നേരിടുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അതൊക്കെ തരണം ചെയ്ത് ഉന്നത വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം പൂർത്തിയാക്കുന്നതിന് കുടുംബം, സുഹൃത്തുക്കൾ, വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ സ്ഥാപനം, സർക്കാർ, സന്നദ്ധ സംഘടന എന്നീ ഏജൻസികളിൽ നിന്ന് പലതരത്തിലുള്ള പിന്തുണകൾ ലഭ്യമാകുന്നുണ്ട്. നിങ്ങൾക്ക് കിട്ടുന്ന പിന്തുണകൾ എന്തൊക്കെയാണെന്ന് അറിയുന്നതിനുള്ള ഇൻവെന്ററി ആണ് താഴെ കൊടുത്തിട്ടുള്ളത്. നിങ്ങൾക്ക് ലഭിക്കുന്ന പിന്തുണകൾക്ക് നേരെ ശരി അടയാളപ്പെടുത്തുക.

താഴെ പറഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്ന ഏജൻസികളിൽ നിന്നും ലഭിക്കുന്ന പിന്തുണകൾ ഏത് രീതിയിൽ ഉള്ളവ എന്ന് വിശദമാക്കുക.

Family

Friends

Institution

Teachers

Government

Voluntary Organization

APPENDIX II

FAROOK TRAINING COLLEGE

LIST OF COLLEGES SELECTED FOR DATA COLLECTION

- Farook College, Calicut

- EMEA College of Arts and Science, Kondotty

- Sullamussalam College of Teacher Education, Area code

- Sullamussalam Science College, Area code

- Farook Training College, Calicut

- Mar Thoma College, Chungathara

- Thunchan Memorial Government college, Tirur

- Government Women's College, Malappuram

- Sree Vivekananda College of Teacher Education, Palemad