



GOAL 5

Gender Equality

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Research Projects

71

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Patents

Female Representation in NUST

Science and technology is a field where women are usually under-represented globally with an evident gender gap. Despite being a university focused on engineering and related technologies, NUST has managed to provide an environment conducive for women to pursue an education in these fields, with current female enrolment at 30%. The university also facilitates female students by providing them with on-campus accommodation, equipped with appropriate sports and health facilities, with priority given to students from remote areas of Pakistan.

Apart from a healthy female students' representation, NUST also has a female membership of around 22 % in its pool of faculty and researchers.

NUST has a stringent policy on harassment against women at the workplace to provide a healthy environment for women at the workplace.

Project Darakhshan

Project Darakhshan, one of the projects of Millennium fellows, aims at building the capacity of underprivileged women residing in a slum area of Afghan migrants in Islamabad, in terms of vocational skills as well as health and hygiene. Project Darakhshan also serves as a platform for highlighting the struggles of these women in slum areas and advocating gender equity in the Pakistani community. The aims of the project are:

- To empower marginalized women in our community.
- To work for Inclusion of the transgender community.
- Promoting Peace, Tolerance and harmony in our community.

The project executed social media advocacy campaigns on women and transgender rights and established collaboration with NUST Model United Nations for organizing "Health and Hygiene Drive" for women at Afghan slum areas.

Darakshan Project provided a springboard for contributing in Youth policymaking at the provincial level and later as National Youth Policy Advocate through a competitive process at UNDP Pakistan. It also engaged with social sector organizations "Shoor Foundation" and "Peace without Borders" for promoting peace and inclusion in the Pakistani society through Darakhshan platform.



FEMPOWER @ NUST

NUST Community Service Club (NCSC) initiated Fempower project which aims to provide financial independence to women from underprivileged backgrounds. The project was selected for funding under the HEC Social Integration Programme. In 2019, 2 women from nearby slum areas were enrolled in six months training at the Islamabad Vocational & Technical Training Centre. These women were trained for skills development like clothes stitching and beautician courses. Once the training completed, the women were able to set-up home-businesses and pledged to give back 10% of their income to the project. In this way, the project is expected to become sustainable for other women enrolling in the programme. The NCSC Fempower team visited the centre and took feedback from the head of the institution, which proved to be exceptional.

NUST Daycare Facility

To ensure female inclusion in the workforce and higher education, NUST has taken significant measures to facilitate working mothers or women pursuing higher education. A dedicated day-care facility for NUST female students and employees, along with an on-campus school for kids has been established at NUST so that the mothers can carry out their duties without stress. Currently, more than 30 Children are enrolled in daycare whereas 200+ students are enrolled in NUST affiliated school. Such adequate childcare access at arms' length has significantly reduced the burden on mothers.



Baat cheet- Fempower event

"Baat-Cheet" is a FemPower initiative by NUST Community Service Club which aims to provide a platform with a candid environment for women to open up and discuss grave issues like abuse, female rights, problems women face in domestic life and their careers. Some female students take the opportunity and express their poetic and artistic sides by sharing heart-wrenching poems and melodious songs.



Stories, lessons and laughs are shared over complimentary cups of tea and delicious snacks. And as the sun sets, the embellished trees spark up with the laughter, shared experiences and exchanged stories, and forges a bond of sisterhood among all the attendees that they will always cherish for days to come.



Women Empowerment Seminar on International Women's Day



Women Empowerment panel discussion was hosted by NUST Community Services Club on International Women's Day on the topic of Women Empowerment.

The panel members included female faculty members and representatives from students. The debate among the panel members skimmed many topics such as the true meaning of empowerment, the need of a support system in the process of empowerment, while also questioning the need of empowerment in this era. At last, ample time was given for an interactive session of questions and answers. The queries were entertained with objectivity, and some of the audience went forward in sharing their views and stories of struggle. The event ended on a positive note, sending out a message of acceptance, tolerance and constructive change.

At the end of the seminar, goodie bags, including badges to promote solidarity for Women Empowerment were distributed among the audience.

Women Entrepreneurs in Pakistan - Antecedents and Outcomes of Digital Entrepreneurship

A project focusing on understanding the role and significance of digital technology in entrepreneurial ventures has been conducted by NUST faculty, Dr Asfia Obaid.

The purpose of this research was to develop an understanding of female entrepreneurial activities in Pakistan. Although studies increasingly agree that female entrepreneurship does matter for economic and social development, a recent study by GEM Monitor concluded that many countries are not realizing their full entrepreneurial potential owing to the lack of participation by females in new business activities. Overall, the purpose of this research was to investigate characteristics, drivers and strategies women digital entrepreneurs in Pakistan and its influence on economic development in terms of the development of entrepreneurial society.

