

EDUCATION AND WOMEN: NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AMONG LOWER
SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS WOMEN IN PAKISTAN IN THEIR VOICE (242 pp.)

The goal of the study was to examine the facilitative and obstructive factors in accessibility of education, for lower socioeconomic status women and the educational needs of these women. This study followed the qualitative interpretive approach, using semi-structured interviews and field notes. To analyze the coded data Seeberg's (2011) *empowerment capabilities approach* was used.

The participants were women, fifteen years of age and above, attending literacy training in a rural community in Punjab, Pakistan. The study was helpful in discovering some of the factors that can support women to complete their basic education. However, little evidence was found that showed that some of the socio-cultural obstructions to women's enrollment were affected or ameliorated. The facilitators that were deduced were: the importance of a 'mobilizer' person, a sense of well-being while in an educational setting, flexibility in class timing, proximity to the literacy center, need for helping children with school work, acquiring confidence and socializing. The obstructive factors were: women's traditional roles, as wives and mothers, son-preference, higher opportunity cost of girls' education, women's internalization of lesser status, segregation, 'purity' before marriage and poverty. What women wanted was education with the potential of leading to a job.

Literacy classes had given the women enough confidence to leave chores unfinished and face criticism from families and community to come to the literacy center. From this it was deduced that continuation of education accompanied by social action can make an impact on women's empowerment.