



ICI PAKISTAN LTD.

# W Celebrating Women

**IWD 2020**  
Commemorating Strengths

## STORIES OF STRENGTH

.....  
The awe-inspiring women in healthcare.

## WOMEN AT ICI

.....  
The incredible women at ICI Pakistan  
breaking stereotypes.

**8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH  
2020**

.....  
**SPECIAL ISSUE ICI PHARMACEUTICALS  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

## ARTICLES ABOUT WOMEN HEALTH

.....  
Read about common health  
problems faced by women.





Dear readers,

ICI Pakistan Limited recognizes the pivotal role of women in healthcare and the men who stand by them – as they collectively play a positive role in impacting & improving lives around them.

This publication is an ode to women of all backgrounds who dare to innovate, lead, and uplift others towards a more equal and inclusive society.

Enjoy your read,  
Pharmaceuticals Team  
ICI Pakistan Limited



Putting together stories of these incredible women has been no less than an honour for us. As part of the editorial team, we have had the privilege of getting to know and work with some of the best female healthcare leaders of the country. It is not at all surprising to see the versatility women bring to any field they step into. These powerful stories of strength have touched innumerable lives and continue to significantly influence many.

On behalf of ICI Pakistan Limited, this is a small tribute to these extraordinary women and all that they do to play a monumental role in society. These are real stories of real women and their lives. We hope you are as inspired by the end of this magazine as we were.

### A NOTE FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM



**ANZA RIAZ**  
PRODUCT MANAGER  
PHARMACEUTICALS



**DR. SALINA MUKHTAR**  
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& TRADE MARKETING,  
PHARMACEUTICALS



**UBAID UR REHMAN**  
HEAD OF SALES  
PRIMARY CARE,  
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# Hello!

## From the Leadership



Women are an integral part of the workplace, marketplace, and community. All businesses stand to benefit from greater equality for women. ICI Pakistan is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion and has undertaken several initiatives in this regard.

In terms of statistics, we have 22% female representation on our Executive Management Team. We also have female representation on the Board of Directors of ICI Pakistan. According to a study on Fortune 500 Companies conducted by Catalyst Inc, companies with women in corporate board positions had 53% greater return on equity than corporations with all male boards.

In 2016, we launched Impact Circles in the Company, which allowed women to develop a support network of their own and work towards removing obstacles that hinder their growth or professional development. In 2019, we made these conversations inclusive and included men in the Impact Circle. This is because parity is not just a female issue, it is a leadership issue. For our employees, ICI Pakistan has launched career builder, sabbatical, maternity, and paternity leave policies as well as e-modules on gender sensitisation and sexual harassment.

We have also created a diversity and inclusion committee. Today, we stand at 6% (manufacturing industry benchmark is 5%) in female representation at ICI Pakistan, and we aim to have this up to 10% by 2022. Additionally, through senior management commitment, we have sensitised our workforce so that women receive more support and opportunities to grow.

Today, almost 50% of the graduates from business schools are women. This is reassuring and as an equal opportunity provider, ICI Pakistan looks forward to further promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

**Asif Joona**  
Chief Executive  
ICI Pakistan Limited

Equality is not a women's issue, it's a business issue. Gender equality is essential for economies and communities to thrive.

According to the World Economic Forum Report 2018, out of 149 countries Pakistan is ranked at 148 for women's empowerment. Though women constitute 49% of Pakistan's population, they constitute only 24% of the labour force. Although, the numbers have improved over the years, a lot more needs to be done.

As a corporate, ICI Pakistan prioritises women friendly policies and programmes. On the CSR front, to promote female literacy and uplift the quality of primary education, the Company has extended long-term support to government schools at Tibbi Hariya, Sheikhpura for over 16 years; and Kakapir Village, Karachi, for over a decade. The Company has also partnered with Pakistan's top-ranked universities to finance the undergraduate degree studies of a select number of female students. In 2019, the Company launched the Impact Women's Development Programme to provide female university students with an opportunity to get hands on experience through a paid internship programme at the Company. Phase II of this programme was initiated in January 2020 with female engineering students interning at the Soda Ash Plant, Khewra. We also provide scholarships to the Karachi-based Murshid School of Nursing for training of nurses and mid wives. With the support of ICI Pakistan Foundation, Murshid Hospital School of Nursing has been able to invest in its training equipment, library, and computer lab, to upgrade its three-year diploma programme to a college-level four-year degree programme.

The Company also recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Child Life Foundation (CLF) through which it will partially sponsor the Fast Track OPD (FTO) Block in the Sindh Government Lyari General & Teaching Hospital Karachi's new Children's Emergency. ICI Pakistan also operates health clinics in Khewra and Sheikhpura. By operating the Hamqadam Community Clinic in Khewra (2017) and Sheikhpura (2018), the Company has benefited over 20,000 women and children through improved access to healthcare facilities. For more than 27 years, ICI Pakistan has been organising free eye camps as part of the eye care programme at its Winnington Hospital, Khewra. These camps have improved the lives of more than 200,000 deserving and needy patients.

These efforts tie in well with ICI Pakistan's overall mission of "improving lives".

**Nausheen Ahmad**  
General Counsel, Company Secretary & Head of Corporate Communications & Public Affairs  
ICI Pakistan Limited





In line with ICI Pakistan's mission to improve lives and brand promise to cultivate growth at all levels, the Company's Pharmaceuticals Business is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion in the workplace and communities where it operates.

As an equal opportunity provider, ICI Pakistan Pharmaceuticals encourages a healthy gender diversity ratio among its workforce. ICI Pakistan Pharmaceuticals has launched several initiatives for diversity, inclusiveness and equality and in the future we wish to build upon these.

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating women and through this publication, we celebrate and honour the countless efforts and achievements of women in the healthcare community of Pakistan. Join us to pledge to empower and enable the women around us so we may move towards a more inclusive society at large.

**Aamer Malik**  
**Vice President, Pharmaceuticals**  
**ICI Pakistan Limited**

At ICI Pakistan, gender equality and women empowerment is at the heart of our Diversity and Inclusion Agenda. We need women in the workplace not only because it positively influences the community but also because it makes business sense. We need for women to stop playing by the rules and not miss the opportunities that come their way. If women want to be viewed as equal in the workplace, they must stand their ground and demand the respect that they deserve.

A few things that we at ICI Pakistan are doing for women at the workplace include Impact Circles – to remove obstacles that hinder growth or professional development of women and to create awareness around unconscious biases while making hiring and promotion decisions. We regularly conduct Diversity and Inclusion sessions to create an inclusive and sensitized workforce. Female employees are provided with subsidized commute, a dedicated prayer and rest area. Our Career Builder Policy allows women to transition back into the workforce after a substantial career break while the Maternity Policy entitles all women to a four months' paid maternity leave. The Women Development Internship Program was specifically introduced for female students pursuing professional degrees, providing them with work experience in various functions at ICI Pakistan.

I believe we need to both – in our individual capacity and collectively as a society – play a role to mobilize women to participate in the economy and contribute to our country's growth.

**Fariha Salahuddin**  
**General Manager, Human Resources & Administration**  
**ICI Pakistan Limited**



On this International Women's Day, ICI Pakistan Limited's Pharmaceuticals Business is celebrating the Women in Healthcare. This publication is dedicated to those inspiring women who are transforming healthcare in Pakistan and are committed to improving lives.

ICI Pakistan has a strong Diversity and Inclusion agenda and is committed to making our workplace more inclusive and gender-sensitized. We are incredibly proud of the women working at ICI Pakistan (Pharmaceuticals) across manufacturing, supply chain, quality operations, HR, finance, marketing and sales functions. They bring with them a strong sense of accountability, professional competence, creativity and empathy in our organization and are playing a pivotal role in bringing our mission of 'Improving Lives' to life.

On this women's day, let us celebrate and share these stories of strength; stories which give us all confidence that dreams do come true.

**Ali Masood**  
**General Manager, Pharmaceuticals**  
**ICI Pakistan Limited**

“It is impossible for women to continue working once they become mothers”

“Women in conservative areas of the country aren't even given the choice to pursue careers”

“Women can't take up senior roles; it requires too much time commitment”

“Women in technical roles? Women in sales? No way”

### TYPICAL COMMENTS MADE ABOUT WORKING WOMEN



#### HIRA FARID

HR Manager,  
Pharmaceuticals

ICI is an organization which has fully supported me to take on two demanding roles with immense passion and dedication – heading HR for the Pharmaceuticals business and a mother of three beautiful girls. Providing the most conducive culture, where respect & integrity are key drivers of engagement, I am able to strike a perfect balance between motherhood and career aspirations.

## MEET THE WOMEN AT ICI

breaking these stereotypes and making it look effortless.



#### ANDLEEB SAJJAD

Regional Sales Manager Karachi,  
Pharmaceuticals

I have spent my entire career of 15 years in the field of sales. Currently I am leading one of the most business critical regions of Karachi as RSM. I am accountable for seven territories in total.

Most of my day is spent on the roads in far flung areas of the city; meeting customers, distributors, visiting pharmacies and coaching my team. An average day for me starts at 9am and ends around 10.30pm. Despite my hectic schedule, ICI gives me the leverage to make time for my son and family; I have never felt that I am neglecting my responsibilities as a mother as I continue to contribute to the healthcare industry of Pakistan.



#### FOUZIA MALIK

Territory Manager Peshawar,  
Pharmaceuticals

Despite living in a social setup where fewer opportunities are provided to women – especially in fields like sales– I have been working since 2015. Joining ICI really turned the tables for me. as an organization that believes in providing equal opportunities to all employees, ICI gave me the support and guidance that I have never experienced before.

Although my field is full of challenges, yet I am able to find my way with the help of my family, my seniors, colleagues and the comfortable work environment ICI provides.



#### NAILA BASHIR

Senior Production Officer,  
Pharmaceuticals

ICI has adopted policies and laid a platform for women to flourish in technical roles. Despite working at the plant, I have always felt safe and happy at work. I feel proud to be associated with an organization that gives me an equal voice at the table, values my ideas, and works to make them happen



# STORIES OF STRENGTH



## DR. HUMA QUDDUSI

Nishtar Medical University, Multan

I was inspired by my father who was a dedicated doctor and a great support which made me go into the medical profession. It has been an uphill journey, but with the support of my family and guidance of my teachers I kept moving ahead in my career. Keeping a balance between my family and profession has been challenging but with God's help I have been consistent in following my targets and have been successful.

By the grace of Almighty Allah, I believe that I am playing my part to improve the Health status of the Woman of Pakistan. I am proud to be a part of:

- Maternal Neonatal Child Health (MNCH) Project.
- Executive Member of the Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology of Pakistan (SOGP)
- Associate Member of Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (RCOG)
- Member of International Menopause Society
- Regional Coordinator of Punjab Thalassemia Prevention Programme.

Today, as chairperson of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, NMU which is the biggest tertiary care center in the South of Punjab, I have a huge responsibility towards my patients, students, trainees and academics. I have been able to develop a very skilled team which works day and night to carry out these activities under my supervision. The only message I would like to give young women is



**HARD WORK ALWAYS PAYS,  
SO THEY SHOULD KEEP WORKING HARD TO ACHIEVE THEIR DREAMS"**

## DR. NISHAT ZOHRA

Isra University, Hyderabad

As a child I've always looked up to my father and wanted to become an engineer like him. At that time engineering wasn't a popular profession amongst girls and my parents wanted me to pursue medicine; so I entered this field rather arbitrarily, however, once I entered medical school, there were no regrets and no looking back.

I am eternally grateful to my alma mater, Fatima Jinnah Medical College Lahore – where I completed my MBBS from – for forming a strong foundation to build my career. After my MBBS, I specialized in Obstetrics and Gynecology as my career. I completed my MCPS and FCPS followed by a subspecialty training in fetal medicine and ultrasound. Now I am working as a professor at Isra University, Hyderabad

My family, friends, and teachers have always been very supportive and encouraging – initially of my education and then my practice which is why till date no challenge has been big enough to discourage me from pursuing my work.

Being a woman and a gynecologist, I have always received immense love and respect from my patients and their families. Most of my patients have a very strong connect with me; apart from their health concerns, they at times also share their personal worries and we try to collectively solve them.



**TO GAIN A PATIENT'S TRUST,  
A DOCTOR MUST CREATE AN  
ENVIRONMENT OF COMFORT,  
CONFIDENTIALITY, AND LISTEN  
TO THEM WITH PATIENCE."**

these are the core values that are the basis of my practice.

Despite my hectic routine, I never mix my work and personal life. My time with family is dedicated to spending quality time with them. Gardening, reading and travelling



have been my hobbies and I always make sure I take out time to pursue them.

I strongly believe that if you are dedicated to something and willing to make sacrifices to achieve your goals, then nothing is difficult!

# STORIES OF STRENGTH

## DR. RUKHSANA MUGHAL

Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi  
South City Hospital, Karachi

I am currently working as a Consultant Gynecologist at the Aga Khan University Hospital, South City Hospital, & am also a Private Practitioner. In addition to being a general Ob-Gyn, I have a subspecialty in sub-infertility and reproductive endocrinology and also deal with high risk pregnancies

My journey towards where I am today started from Saint Joseph's Convent School. I am grateful to God for very loving parents and siblings. I salute my parents for being so strong headed when it came to their children's upbringing and education; especially my mother who despite being uneducated herself made it her life's mission to ensure all five of her daughters receive quality education and are able to pursue their careers.

I completed my MBBS from Dow Medical College, Karachi. At that time, doing medicine was the field for females and engineering for men; we did not have many options back then. My mother was very inspired by her gynecologist -Dr. Sarah Siddiqui- who was the first gynecologist from Sindh who went to the UK for further studies. Back in that time it was very uncommon for a single woman to go abroad for studies. She was practicing in Karachi and had a very successful career- my mother wanted all of us to be as successful as her. With her constant persistence, five out of her eight children are now doctors.

Frankly speaking, I really love medicine. People ask me if I would go into another field given the chance and I always say no - I love this field especially for the impact it creates. While I was studying, I was drawn towards gynecology because it includes both perspectives - surgery and medicine - it is a very active field - especially the obstetrics part. I've always been a go getter, and loved anything that would challenge me and make me push my limits. Of-course there are sad moments in every field of medicine, but most moments in gynecology and especially obstetrics are happy ones - and that's what keeps me driven.

Next came my subspecialty in fertility. I've seen my sister in law deal with and suffer because of subfertility. After seeing her struggle with countless treatments and visits to the doctor, I realized that when it comes to infertility, many people here are not properly cared for and there aren't many doctors who are experts in this field. I went the US to continue my specialization. Back then, it was extremely difficult to get into residency programs in the US - so much so that I didn't even get the residency of my choice in the first year. But I've always been a very resilient, hard working person, I eventually managed to get into an ob-gyn program.

That was the first time my sister and I were living on our own - studying, cooking, looking after our apartment. That experience also really shaped us into strong women.

During my first year of residency, my father passed away. That took a huge toll on me since he has always been my anchor and the one who supported me. After I finished my first year, based on my performance and availability of a slot, I was offered to skip a year and start my third year of residency as an Ob-Gyn. It was a tough road ahead, but if you are really passionate about something, no challenge will be big enough to stop you. After my 4-year residency, I worked in the US as a consultant for 2 years to become a board certified Ob-Gyn. Till date, I am the only Ob-Gyn in Sindh who is Board Certified from the US.

By late 1980's, I decided to move back to Pakistan. I joined the Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) as a part time Consultant. AKUH's progressive ways of working and modern practices are what really motivated me to continue my practice in my home country. Many patients suffering from subfertility started coming to me and I used to look forward to treating and helping them. I

started seeing positive results - women who had been suffering from subfertility for years started conceiving. My own sister in law was able to conceive after 18 years after I treated her.

Many people still ask me why I'm not moving back to the US despite having the option.



**"I BELIEVE WE DON'T LIVE ONLY FOR OURSELVES; WE OWE IT TO OUR COUNTRY TO SERVE THE PEOPLE HERE"**

Everyone should contribute whatever they can that is in their power; that is how the world will become a better place. I studied in a public university - my education was paid for by my government- I am indebted to repay and serve my people. I feel good that patients are able to benefit from my expertise.

As I recall all the struggle I went through, at the end of it I feel content because I was able to contribute to my country and people in one way or the other.



**"I WANT PEOPLE TO REMEMBER ME AS SOMEONE WHO HAS IMPROVED AND TOUCHED SO MANY LIVES"**

In this day and age, I would encourage all girls to pursue their passions - be it any field. There are many new fields developing now even in medicine; one should explore. 35-40% of the girls in my class did not pursue careers after graduating because they got married. In today's world, marriage should not be a hindrance. Of course everyone needs a break every once in a while, but the life you live shouldn't be a selfish one; you should live for others. These are the same values I teach my daughter.

Keep on going, pursue your careers, take breaks but don't give up.

# DR. NASREEN EHSAN

**PROFESSOR AND HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT  
FORENSIC MEDICINE & TOXICOLOGY**

.....  
SHEIKH KHALIFA BIN ZAYED MEDICAL AND DENTAL COLLEGE,  
LAHORE

**DIPLOMA IN MATERNAL  
AND CHILD HEALTH**

.....



**“WOMEN CAN EXCEL IN ANY FIELD AND MAKE A NAME  
FOR THEMSELVES. ALL IT TAKES IS SELF BELIEF”**

LEADING MULTIPLE SOCIETIES AT SKZU

- CO-PRESIDENT OF MUSICAL SOCIETY
- PATRON OF THE FORENSIC SOCIETY
- PRESIDENT OF SPORTS SOCIETY

.....

**MASTERS OF PHILOSOPHY**

.....

**DIPLOMA IN  
MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE**

.....

**PRIVATE CONSULTANT GYNECOLOGIST &  
OBSTETRICIAN SINCE 22 YEARS**

.....

# STORIES OF STRENGTH

# STORIES OF STRENGTH

## DR. AISHA SIDDIQA

Bolan Medical Complex Hospital, Quetta

Even though I was born in Gulistan Kareez which is backward tribal area of Balochistan, I was a dreamer in my heart had the courage to stand up against all odds to achieve my dreams. Becoming a doctor from Bolan Medical College, Quetta was a proof that my determination was much greater than the challenges that came in my way.

The biggest challenge for me was being brought up in an environment where even the education of men was frowned upon and considered trivia; a tribal male dominated patriarchal society where misogyny was considered the best form of chivalry. In such a society and at a very young age, I had to stand up to not one but eight brothers with six of them being my half-brothers.



**THE JOURNEY OF MY LIFE - OF AN OPPRESSED LITTLE GIRL WHO WORKS HER WAY UP THROUGH HARD WORK, PERSEVERANCE AND PERSONAL AMBITION TO BECOME THE FIRST FEMALE COUNCILOR OF COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS FROM BALOCHISTAN IS NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE"**

My journey started when my father moved to the city in pursuit of work. One of our neighbors who was a school teacher recognized the fire within me and encouraged me to apply in the local school. At that time, I felt that taking admission in school was a challenge in itself because my father did not approve of it. Little did I know that taking admission without my family's consent would be the least of my problems. I remember that I used to study all night and help my mother with household chores during the day. This is how I managed my studies till matriculation. And as they say, "things turn out the best for people who make the best out of the circumstances; I got first position in matriculation & intermediate and that's how I got a merit seat to Fatima Jinnah Medical College in Lahore.

Due to my pure determination and constant prayers and the support of one of my brothers, my father finally approved of my admission in medical school in Lahore, however, because of the ill – health of my mother, I had to transfer to Bolan Medical College in Quetta.

I completed my MBBS with distinction in 1990 which earned me the Quaid – e – Azam merit scholarship from HEC (Higher Education Commission) Islamabad for higher studies from the United Kingdom. This scholarship is awarded to only one student from the whole province – to a student who gets first position throughout his/her academic career. With that scholarship, I completed my MSc. from University of Glasgow, UK in 1995.

I returned back to Pakistan and focused on getting my FCPS degree from the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Pakistan in 1996. I also started my practice at Sandeman Provincial Hospital, Quetta, Balochistan.

From the time I completed my own fellowship, more than 100



Post Graduates have successfully cleared their fellowship from CPSP under my training. As of now, 28 postgraduate students are working under my supervision.

I have held the office of Vice President of the society of Obstetricians & Gynecologists of Pakistan (SOGP) twice and have been the Joint Secretary of Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Pakistan. Currently I am the Chairperson of the Balochistan Chapter of Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Pakistan (SOGP).

I am the author of more than 10 research publications in top national medical journals and have had the honor of representing my province (Balochistan) and my country in many national & international conferences & seminars. Not only that, I constructively worked to arrange academic programs in Balochistan as well as to upgrade the knowledge base of medical students and doctors of the province. My biggest success till now is that I was the first doctor from Balochistan who successfully arranged the 1st National Course for FCPS & MCPS Postgraduate Students in 2011 at PGMI, Quetta and the 2nd post graduate course in 2016 at Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, SPH, Quetta.

The organization of my beloved province of Balochistan has recognized my services and I have been the recipient of various awards like:

- 4<sup>th</sup> National Khidmat-e-Khalaq Award 1991.
- National Chaghi Award 2003.
- Mohtarma Shaheed Banzair Bhutto Award 2012
- Award on Women's day for Meritorious Services for Women of Balochistan by southern command Balochistan in 2016

## GETTING TO KNOW Dr. Ishrat Asif

Hajra Maternity and Ultrasound Clinic, Faisalabad



### Q. What inspired you to pursue this field?

A. When I was a child, every time I would see a doctor with a stethoscope around his/her neck, it would inspire me to be qualified enough to wear one myself one day.

### Q. Has your family always supported you?

A. Yes Alhamdulillah, my family has always stood by me. My father especially has been a driving force in my quest to become a doctor.

### Q. Have you ever felt like giving up?

A. No, I am very enthusiastic about my profession. No challenge has been big enough for me to want to quit.

### Q. What does your life entail apart from work?

A. My hobbies include reading and cooking. That's how I relax in my free time.

### Q. How have you ensured a balance between your work and personal life?

A. It takes a lot of effort and understanding but maintaining this balance is doable, also very crucial. My husband really supports me in this regard.

### Q. What message would you like to give to the women and young girls who are too scared to pursue their dreams?

A. Hard work and persistence is the key that gives you strength to achieve your goals.

## STORIES OF STRENGTH

### DR. LUBNA USMANI Umar Clinic, Sarghoda



The stethoscope has always fascinated me. My brother was a doctor and ever since I was a little girl, I have always been looked up to and wanted to be like him. Becoming a doctor was something I had envisioned for myself at a very young age.

I completed my MBBS in 2007 from Nishtar Medical College, Multan and completed my house job from DHQ Hospital

Sarghoda. Since the last five years I am practicing at Umar Clinic, Sarghoda as a Consultant Gynecologist.

Being a gynecologist and doctor in general is a very demanding job but at the same time it has always inspired me to serve the female community. It's my vision to serve my beloved city and to provide the best medical facility and consultancy to my people.

On this International Women's Day, the message I would like to convey is that men and women are and should be treated as equals. They should have equal rights and be given equal opportunities in all fields this world has to offer; that's how we can progress and become better.

## GETTING TO KNOW Dr. Naureen Bilal

Allied Hospital, Faisalabad

### Q. What inspired you to pursue this field?

A. I have always liked medicine. It was also my parents' wish to see me become a doctor.

### Q. What were the challenges you faced when you started your practice?

A. After marriage, managing kids along with my job was my biggest challenge but I am grateful for my mother who really supported me during this time.

### Q. Has your family always supported you?

A. Yes I am lucky that my family always stood by me.

### Q. Have you ever felt discriminate against as a woman?

A. No, never. My family is my support and by the grace of Allah, I was able to accomplish all my goals.

### Q. What does your life entail apart from work?

A. Apart from work, my family has always been my top priority.

### Q. How have you ensured a balance between your work and personal life?

A. I manage my time well and make sure I am available for my husband and kids and we spend quality time together as a family. And in turn, my family supports me in my career.

### Q. What has been your biggest achievement?

A. The fact that I have become a renowned, sought after gynecologist in my city is my biggest achievement.

### Q. What message would you like to give to the women and young girls who are too scared to pursue their dreams?

A. They should have faith in themselves and not let the fear of failing hold them back. You must try and try again. If you remain strong you can achieve your goals regardless of any hurdle that comes your way.



DR. SAFOORA SHAHID, PESHAWAR



DR. SAIMA, RAWALPINDI



DR. RUKHSANA MUGHAL, KARACHI



DR. SHANDANA JADOON, ABBOTTABAD



DR. SAFIA MAQSOOD, SUKKUR



DR. SABOHI ABID, LAHORE



DR. SAEED QURESHI, KARACHI



DR. SHANDANA JADOON, ABBOTTABAD



DR. SAADULLAH, KPK



DR. RUBINA SULEMAN, MUZAFFARABAD



DR. QAUSAR FAIZ, QUETTA



DR. NUSRAT REHMAN, MULTAN



DR. NOREEN BILAL, FAISALABAD



DR. NASRA NAEEM, MULTAN

Let's pledge  
#EachforEqual



DR. NAJMA IRSHAD, KARACHI



DR. KHAIRUNISA, KARACHI



DR. KABEERA MEMON, HYDERABAD



DR. RABIIYA BASHIR RAI, MULTAN



DR. FARKHUNDA BALOCH, NAWABSHAH



DR. FARAH SABA ZAIDI, KARACHI



DR. SHEHLA ANWER, LAHORE



DR. SYED M. KASHIF, MARDAN



DR. RUBINA TAHIR, KARACHI



DR. ALIYA HASHMI, QUETTA



DR. GHAZALA MUSHTAQ, MULTAN



DR. NAFEESA MALIK, ABBOTTABAD



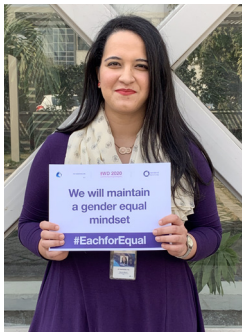
DR. SHEHZAD JADOON, ABBOTTABAD



DR. TASNIM TAHIRA, FAISALABAD



# ge to be orEqual



# STORIES OF STRENGTH

## DR. SAFIA MAQSOOD

Ghulam Muhammad Mahar Medical College, Sukkur

At the age when I was planning my future and deciding my profession, the image of myself in a white coat and a stethoscope and helping the sick made me excited. The vision of myself being a medical professional seemed to be the right path for me. Choosing Gynecology and Obstetrics as my specialty field was a conscious decision that I made because I believed that there is a huge gap in terms of the care of pregnant women in Pakistan. I wanted to contribute to reduce this gap and play my role in improving maternal health in the country.



Being a gynecologist, the biggest challenge is time management. When we are leaving our homes in the morning for work, we do not know when our day will end. The responsibilities of a gynecologist in one of the biggest hospitals of the city results in sacrificing our personal time for the betterment of our patients. Giving the due importance to family in such busy schedules is challenging. Another hurdle we face is to gain the confidence and satisfaction of our patients and their families. The challenge of being a doctor is to satisfy the patients and give them the belief that we are doing our best to help them in their situation.

Despite the challenges that we face, it is the perseverance, passion and resilience to overcome any and everything, that make me move ahead and continue working. While joining this field, I was aware of the hurdles that would come my way, but it was the inner confidence and passion to help people and be successful in my field which made me continue. Another important factor that fueled me to continue my career and move up in my field is the support of my family. I am one of the lucky women, who had full support of their family before and even after marriage. The credit goes to my brother, my husband and most importantly my mother who always boosted me and encouraged me to push forward.

Being a woman and working in the field of gynecology and obstetrics has its advantages as it makes it easier for me to communicate and interact with my patients. Not only that, being a female helps in gaining the trust of my patients as I try to counsel them as a woman rather than as a doctor. However, being a female doctor also has its hurdle; with Pakistan being a male dominated society, we have to interact and communicate with the male relatives of the patient. Talking to men about female problems can become challenging especially in cases where the families belong to conservative backgrounds. But as I climbed the seniority level in my profession, managing the male relatives has become somewhat easier as there is a sense of acceptance and respect in the minds of the society towards the senior faculty members of the medical community. But I am sure that even today, the young and fresh female doctors who are planning to pursue the same career as mine, must face the same challenges when it comes to explaining problems and gaining the trust of male members of a patient's family.

Being a female in a society like ours makes one prone to discrimination both in the society and career. Be it on the administrative or technical level, there are incidences when men are given preference simply because the other option is a

woman. I believe the main sense of difference and discrimination is in the minds of our society which can be removed through resilience and passion to work.

My time majorly revolves around my family and profession. However, I try to enjoy life whenever I get the opportunity and avail any chance that comes my way to the fullest. I believe being a doctor has made me capable of prioritizing my time amongst all my responsibilities. It is my belief that family is the most important part of anybody's life; I make it a point to celebrate all the important moments of my family and also spend quality time with my children and husband. I try to have all my meals with my family as this gives me a chance to bridge any communication gap that can happen because of my professional responsibilities.

The message that I would like to give to all the women and young girls who want to pursue their dreams is to be determine and focus on the goal through practicality and rationale. Never be afraid of your own dreams.

It is only hard work and clarity of the end goal which can make



## “ONCE YOU HAVE A DREAM, YOU PLAN YOUR LIFE AROUND IT AND START WORKING TO ACHIEVE IT”

you successful. Don't choose a career for the sake of showing off to others; choose a career which you believe is right for you. I believe that career counseling is very important; try to find a mentor who can guide you through your career. Also, the most important thing is that you have a Plan B in your life; always have a back-up plan.

## DR. BUSHRA NAZIR DHQ Hospital, Jhung



Since the time I was in school, it was parents' dream to see me become a known and a leading gynecologist of the city of Jhung. In the same pursuit, after my matriculation and intermediate, I did my graduation in 2004 from Quaid e Qzam Medical College, Bahawalpur.

Growing up in Jhung, I've always seen a lot of malpractice and exploitation in the field of medicine; not just by quacks and paramedics, but even doctors. It has always saddened me and I made a pledge to myself that I will do everything in my power to correct this. Apart from my parents' dream of their daughter becoming a gynecologist, I was also personally inclined towards this specialty after seeing the state and quality of health care that was provided especially to women at critical stages of their lives. The vision I have based my entire practice on is to ensure all patients are provided with the best antenatal, intrapartum and postpartum care.

Currently I am working at DHQ Hospital, Jhung. Many doctors in the MCPS program are under my training. I try to impart all my knowledge and values to my students in the quest to improve the state of health care in our city.

Be it medical or any other field, I believe family support is absolutely crucial to be able to succeed and have a balance between your personal and professional life. My family has stood by me despite my busy routine and me juggling between my practice and teaching; so in my free time I like to unwind by relaxing with my family as we enjoy a meal or laze around watching TV or listening to music.



# DR. JAHAN ARA AINUDDIN

**CHAIRPERSON FACULTY,  
PROFESSOR, & HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT**  
OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY

.....  
DOW UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

**FIRST PHD**  
OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY  
.....  
IN PAKISTAN



“**ALL WOMEN SHOULD BE INDEPENDENT,  
EDUCATIONALLY AND FINANCIALLY SO THEY CAN  
CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETY.”**”

**HEC APPROVED SUPERVISOR  
OF PHD TRAINING IN PAKISTAN**

.....  
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# STORIES OF STRENGTH

# STORIES OF STRENGTH

## DR. MEHNAZ KHAKWANI

Nishtar Medical University, Multan

My story of strength started as I opened my eyes in a family where females were given rights equivalent to those of males. The equivalence attitude not only boosted my confidence but also enlightened the journey to chase my dreams.

I had always been a hard working student throughout my school life; securing positions and winning many medals and certificates of honor. I got first position not only in matriculation board exams, but also topped all over Pakistan in intermediate board exams. After that, I opted for medicine as my future career. During MBBS I concentrated my days and nights in untiring efforts to achieving the first position in all professional exams. I was the best graduate of my session. While choosing the subject for specialization, my passion was to do something for the welfare and well-being of our women; thus I selected Gynecology & Obstetrics as my ultimate career. During my specialization training, my hard working nature polished to its maximum. I worked day and night not only to learn myself, but also to be beneficial for the female sufferers of our community. The reward was that I won Rashid Latif Gold Medal from the College of Physicians and surgeons Pakistan, which no one else had won till that time.

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**THERE IS NO TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN"**

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In my professional life, I joined Nishtar Medical College as Assistant professor and continued riding up the steps of success. Nowadays, I am working as a Professor and Head of the Gynea unit in my alma marter - Nishtar Medical University. No doubt my family had a vital role in my success story. My parents had always been role models- always encouraging me to chase my dreams. My husband is also a great blessing; I always find him standing by my side to support me and keep me motivated. I am also mother of three kids. Apart from my professional life, I always keep in touch with all the family matters - be it educational or otherwise. I enjoy cooking delicious dishes to eat together with my family.

As I reflect on the journey of my life; passion, dedication, devotion, determination, and hard work had been the hallmark of my whole struggle. As Margaret Sanger said "Woman must not accept, she must challenge. She must not be awed by that which she has been built up around her; she must reverence that women in her which struggles for expression." My journey was not a bed of roses, it was full of hardships, tough behaviors and opposition by men who couldn't bear to see a woman accomplish more than them. Many ups and downs hurdled my way but I concentrated on continuous hard work to achieve my dreams and succeeded in doing so. I feel so strongly about my profession that despite the challenges and tough times, I have never felt like giving up.



To every female, especially the young girls of our community who are too scared to follow their dreams, it would just like to say:

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**WORK HARD, HAVE FAITH IN ALLAH, FOLLOW YOUR PASSION AND SUCCESS WILL FOLLOW"**

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# BONE HEALTH

## CALCIUM DEFICIENCY IN WOMEN

**DR. TASNIM TAHIRA**  
Faisalabad Medical University

Calcium is the key to lifelong bone health. It is a vital constituent of our bodily functions as almost every cell in our body uses calcium in some way or the other. For example, our body needs calcium to build healthy bone and teeth, send messages through the nervous system, help our blood clot, help muscles expand and contract, regulate rhythm of the heart etc.

If we do not get adequate amounts of calcium through our dietary intake, our body will take calcium from the bones to ensure normal cell function which as a result can lead to osteoporosis – porous bones. Calcium deficiency results in lethargy, mood swings, and even problems like anxiety, depression and difficulty in sleeping.

Natural sources of calcium include dairy products like milk, cheese, yogurt, green leafy vegetables such as broccoli, okra, kale, cabbage, dried fruits and nuts, seeds and pulses. Adequate daily requirement of calcium in females is:

- **0-18 years**            **1300 mg/d**
- **19-50 years**        **1000 mg/d**
- **51-70 years**        **1200 mg/d**

Despite the importance of calcium, it requires other elements to ensure full functionality. For eg. magnesium helps our body absorb and retain calcium in tissues, phosphorus works by pulling calcium out of the bone when calcium levels in the body become too low, Vitamin D and Vitamin K work to ensure calcium finds its way to the bones.

Pregnancy is a state where a woman's need for calcium increases. Most women are calcium deficient even before pregnancy which is why it is recommended that expecting mothers should regularly take calcium supplements to counter the deficiency. The mother will feel lethargic and experience cramps as one of the symptoms of calcium deficiency. Moreover, in pregnancy, calcium prevents pre-eclampsia – a pregnancy disorder that usually arises after the 20th week. Lactation is another stage where a woman's need for calcium increases. Post-menopausal women are at risk of this disease due to a drop in estrogen levels.

Osteoporosis is a silent disease characterized by loss of bone mass. Due to weakened bone, fractures become common and lead to serious health risks. In order to fulfill the body's demand for calcium, supplements containing Calcium, Vitamin D and Vitamin K must be given during pregnancy, lactation, and menopause.

## ABOUT THE WRITER

### DR. TASNIM TAHIRA

Faisalabad Medical University

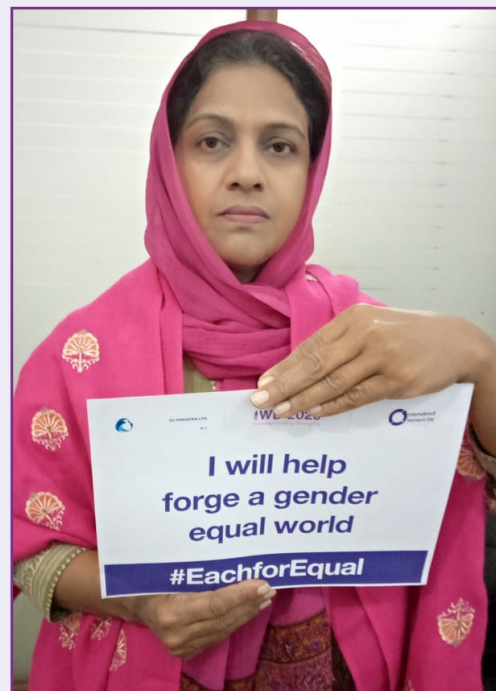
Contrary to popular belief, my parents never forced me to become a doctor; I have always been personally inclined towards the medical profession. By 2003, I had completed my MCPS and FCPS. At that time, I was working at Allied Hospital Faisalabad. After graduation, I continued my job as senior registrar in order to be able to give time to my family. I restarted my practice after a 4 year long break i.e. in 2007 as a Consultant Gynecologist + Obstetrician at Allied Hospital, Faisalabad. After that point there was no looking back; and I've never considered giving up my job.

Stepping into my field after a long break was a big challenge for me. I had to juggle between my government job, my kids and family, and spare time for my practice. Of course none of this would have been possible without the support of my family especially my husband. My strong support system enabled me to focus on my work. I was promoted to Assistant Professor in 2008 and soon after as Associate Professor. Currently I am working as Professor and Head of Gyne Unit # 3.

As a woman, I am grateful for a father who treated his sons and daughters as equals. My father was a professor and it was due to his unwavering efforts that my siblings and I received quality higher education. After my marriage, my family stood by me and encouraged me to get my postgraduate degree and I continued my job as a consultant.

Being an obstetrician means you should be prepared to deal with emergency cases at any time of the day. Despite the busy and unpredictable nature of my work, sparing time for my family has always been a priority for me.

Gynecology and Obstetrics, like most fields in medicine is one that requires a high level of dedication, hard work and persistence. There will be times when you have to sacrifice your family life for the sake of your patients. I would like to advise young girls out there to pursue a career based on their natural inclination and also understand that having a stable personal life greatly adds value to your career; hence it is crucial to maintain this balance.



# BMD LEVELS

## AMONGST RESIDENT DOCTORS OF MULTAN

Published in JSOGP, September 2013

**DR. NASIRA NASEEM**

Fatima Jinnah Women Hospital, Multan



**Objective:** to determine the Bone Mineral Density (BMD) among resident doctors of Multan & their correlation with common risk factors.

**Method:** All the resident doctors working at Nishtar Hospital Multan were included in our study. 150 doctors were enrolled on the basis of convenient sampling. Ultrasound of the right calcaneal bone was performed using the Osteosys machine. Factors leading to reduced bone mineral density were recorded in performa and analyzed with SPSS 10.

**Result:** Only 29 doctors out of 150 selected cases had normal BMD. 107 doctors were osteopaenic and 14 were osteoporotic. Data obtained on Z scores was comparable to data obtained with T Score.

Prevalence of osteopenia and osteoporosis at any site is expressed as Z score;

Characteristics	Normal	Osteopenia	Osteoporosis
Females	29	107	14
(n=150)	19.33%	71.33%	9.33%

Weight, BMI, physical activity, intake of calcium to phosphorus ratio, presence of family history had positive correlation with BMD. Daily calcium intake was adequate but decreased exposure to sunlight and mean serum 25 (OH) was low in 97% of the subjects.

**Conclusion:** Young healthy resident doctors in a tertiary referral center in NHM had significantly lower BMD. Besides genetic factors, lower body weight, lower height, lower BMI, inadequate physical activity also contribute to lower BMD.

So it is necessary to draw attention of our resident doctors towards ill effects of their life style on their BMD and should take 600 IU or 15 ug/ day of Vitamin D. Best food sources include fish, fish liver oil, cheese, egg yolk, fortified food with vitamin D like milk, orange juice, yogurts, margarine, 5-30 mins of sun exposure between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm at least twice a week on face, arms, back without sunscreen.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT OSTEOPOROSIS

### What is Osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis, which literally means porous bone, is a disease in which the density and quality of bones is reduced. As bones become more porous and fragile, the risk of fracture is greatly increased. The loss of bone occurs silently and progressively<sup>1</sup>

### Important Statistics

- In Pakistan, **43.4%** women over age twenty suffer from Osteopenia while **12.9%** are reported with Osteoporosis<sup>2</sup>
- **75 – 84%** of the general population suffer from lower back pain<sup>3</sup>
- In every **22 seconds**, one woman over the age of fifty suffers from a vertebral fracture due to Osteoporosis<sup>4</sup>
- Around the world, **1 in 3 women** and **1 in 5 men** aged fifty years and above suffer from an osteoporotic fracture. In fact, an osteoporotic fracture is estimated to occur every 3 seconds<sup>1</sup>

### What causes Osteoporosis?<sup>5</sup>

MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS	NON – MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol</li> <li>• Smoking</li> <li>• Low body mass index</li> <li>• Poor nutrition</li> <li>• Insufficient exercise</li> <li>• Low dietary calcium intake</li> <li>• Vitamin D deficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Female gender</li> <li>• Family history (parental history of hip fracture)</li> <li>• Previous fracture</li> <li>• Early menopause/hysterectomy</li> </ul>

### How can you prevent Osteoporosis?<sup>5</sup>

- A healthy balanced diet
- Physical activity
- Maintaining a healthy body weight
- Avoiding unhealthy habits e.g. tobacco, alcohol, too much coffee, soft drinks

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# MENTAL WELLBEING

## POST-PARTUM DEPRESSION (PPD)

Post-Partum Depression (PPD) means depression suffered by a mother following child birth. It is typically a combination of hormonal changes, psychological adjustment, fatigue, and postnatal depression.

### Causes:

There are many causes of PPD but the most common cause is post-partum fluctuations of the reproductive hormones.

### Treatment Overview

#### A. Pharmacological Treatment

- **Treatment through anti-depressants**  
Hormonal therapy; estrogen therapy may improve PPD since estrogen levels significantly drop after delivery. Progesterone therapy may however increase PPD.

## MENTAL HEALTH & WOMEN

Mental health disorders are a silent killer globally. In 2016 David Cameron, the then prime minister of Britain, admitted that he could not do much during his time in power to address the scourge of mental illness in the UK. His replacement, Theresa May, acted to enhance funding for mental health services. This was partly due to Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of opposition who kept the issue on a political agenda due to his repeated questioning of the state on mental health services during that time. UK's debate mirrors the debate in developing countries where mental health services are bare, patchy and inadequate.

WHO defines health as not merely the absence of disease but also the presence of sense of over-all well-being. This includes sound mental health according to the definition. Yet unlike the developed countries mental health issues in developing countries are still considered a taboo. When the remedy is a taboo, so is the provision of mental health services.

There are studies to show that women tend to lose more than men in terms of quality of life and number of years lived as a result of mental health problems. One study done in Pakistan at the Aga Khan University Hospital noted a greater number of women accessing mental health services in urban areas. This is often not the case in less urbanized areas due to lack of awareness and facilities.

The report also pointed towards honor killings, forced marriages, domestic violence, and feudal and tribal customs which keep women chained in a patriarchal structure as the reasons for higher mental health issues. In extreme cases, mental health disorders can also lead to suicides which, unfortunately, are also a taboo subject in Pakistan. This double silence throws a permanent veil over mental health problems and their fatal outcomes and is a road block in forging solutions and treatment options.

What this calls for is a fresh, new, well-resourced, and well-thought out response to the scourge of mental health problems among women. There is a greater than ever urgency for public policy intervention to focus on mental health as has happened

**DR. FARAH ZAIDI**  
Hilal-e-Ahmer Hospital, Karachi

### B. Psychological & Psychosocial Treatment

- **Interpersonal Therapy**  
In-hospital psychological debriefing  
Anti-natal and Post-natal counselling
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy:** a psycho-social intervention that aims to improve mental health. CBT focuses on challenging and changing unhelpful distortions and behaviors, improving emotional regulation, and the development of personal coping strategies that target solving current problems.
- **Non – Directive Counselling:** to listen, support, and advice, without directing a client's course of action. It is a patient-centric process. The main function of the counselor is to create an atmosphere in which the patient can openly talk about her problem and what she is feeling
- **Telephonic & at-home counselling:** in cases where the woman is unable to physically go to a doctor
- **Peer & Partner Support: Continuity of Care**
- **Early and regular PPD follow up**

**DR. MARIA AZAD**  
Federal Government Services Hospital, Islamabad

in the developed countries.

A number of steps need to be taken on a priority basis.

- First and foremost, creating awareness of mental health issues and familiarity with their signs and symptoms and when to seek help is so important.
- Second, the provision of mental health services, proper signposting and referral systems need to be put in place.
- Third, women themselves must prioritize when it comes to mental health issues particularly when they present themselves to physicians who should also be extra receptive and watchful to any signs of mental distress.
- Fourth, the need for regular training of psychiatric staff and psychosocial support is key. Extending mental health services to rural and hard to reach areas is of vital importance.
- Fifth, and very importantly, mental health should be made part of the curriculum and medical education.
- Sixth, broader determinants of health should also be considered especially while treating women. This requires extensive training courses on broader determinants of health such as violence against women, patriarchal system and women right issues. Such topics should also be part of the medical education.



Most importantly, there is a need to demonstrate public health and political leadership on this issue at all levels of government. Like the developed nations, Pakistan cannot afford to turn a blind eye to the silent plague of mental health problems in the country. Women, in particular, are the silent victims of this plague. It's high time we act to reverse this. Like in the UK without constant advocacy and awareness of mental health issues, no solution will be achieved.

# WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

## DR. NADIA ABID

St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Hyderabad

Women represent half of the world's population and play a critical role in our society but the dilemma is the lack of their empowerment. Until women are given the same opportunities as men, entire societies are destined to perform below their true potential.

**Empowerment:** Empowerment is the ability to make decisions, to do something about your needs, wants, opinions, beliefs and feelings. It is the process by which women reclaim their power to shape their own lives and to influence the people around them. Empowering women and achieving gender equality is essential for any society to ensure progress and prosperity.

Types and methods of empowerment:

### Educational:

The most powerful tool for women is education. It increases awareness of their rights, boosts their esteem, provides them opportunities to assert themselves, enables them to find better jobs so that they can work shoulder to shoulder with men. Education enables women to engage in public debate and make demands to the government for their basic needs. It empowers women to make choices to improve their family's health and well being along with their quality of life.

Even in this decade, education is not universally available and gender inequalities persist. The major dilemma is not only the low percentage of girls going to school but also the low participation of girls in science and technology. Brigham Young says, "**You educate a man, you educate a man. You educate a woman, you educate a generation.**"

### Economic:

Women's agencies; mobility outside the home, economic independence and purchasing power. Strengthening women's access to property inheritance and land right is another method which can be used to economically empower women. Often, women in developing countries are legally restricted from their land on the sole basis of their gender. Having this right, women will be able to gain more opportunities to become economically independent.



**Political:**

To support gender equality and agency for women in public and private sectors, political empowerment would best support it. The best method is to create affirmative action

Behind every successful woman, is a tribe of other successful women who have her back.



**THE EMPOWERED WOMAN IS POWERFUL BEYOND MEASURE AND BEAUTIFUL BEYOND DESCRIPTION"**

policies and quota from the number of women in policy making and parliamentary positions.

**Psychological:**

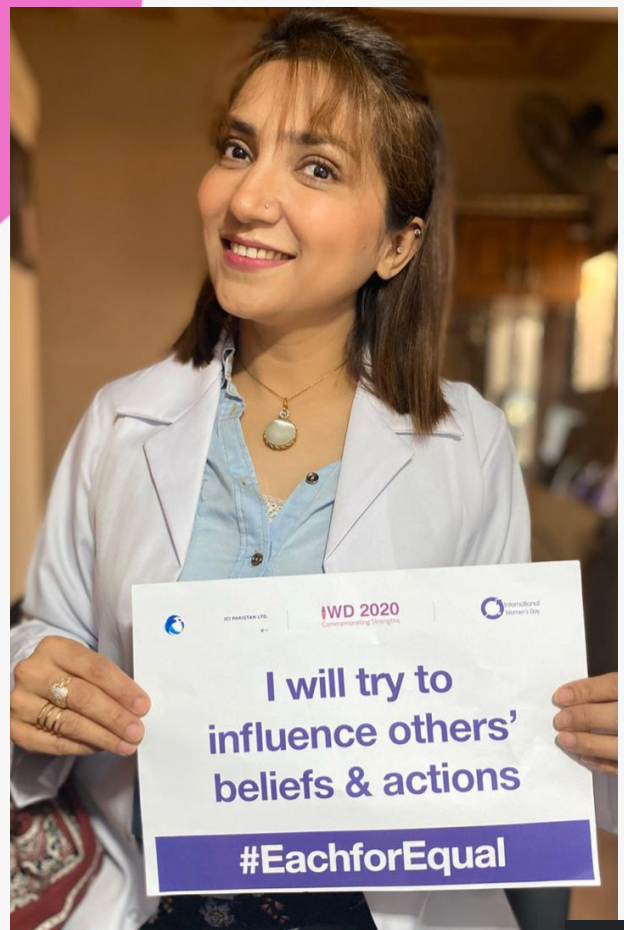
Psychological empowerment means the movement from enforced powerless status to a powerful one. Psychological empowerment includes autonomy, decision making abilities, positive self-evolution and the ability to regulate life as a multi-faceted construct reflecting the different dimensions of being psychologically enabled. It is also crucial to sensitise men at a young age, so they become an integral part in bringing about transformation in women empowerment.

Dr. Steve Maraboli says, *"The empowered woman is powerful beyond measures and beautiful beyond description."*

We have patients in OPD who don't even have their ID cards and aren't aware of their age yet no one bothers for them and the bigger dilemma is that they themselves don't know the need of their identity and this is because of the lack of their education. Today if we educate our daughters it will result in generations of literacy and awareness.



**YOU EDUCATE A MAN,  
YOU EDUCATE A MAN.  
YOU EDUCATE A WOMAN,  
YOU EDUCATE A GENERATION"**



# CELEBRATING

the Multi-Faceted Women

## ARTWORKS

By Dr. Sarah Anjum  
Multan



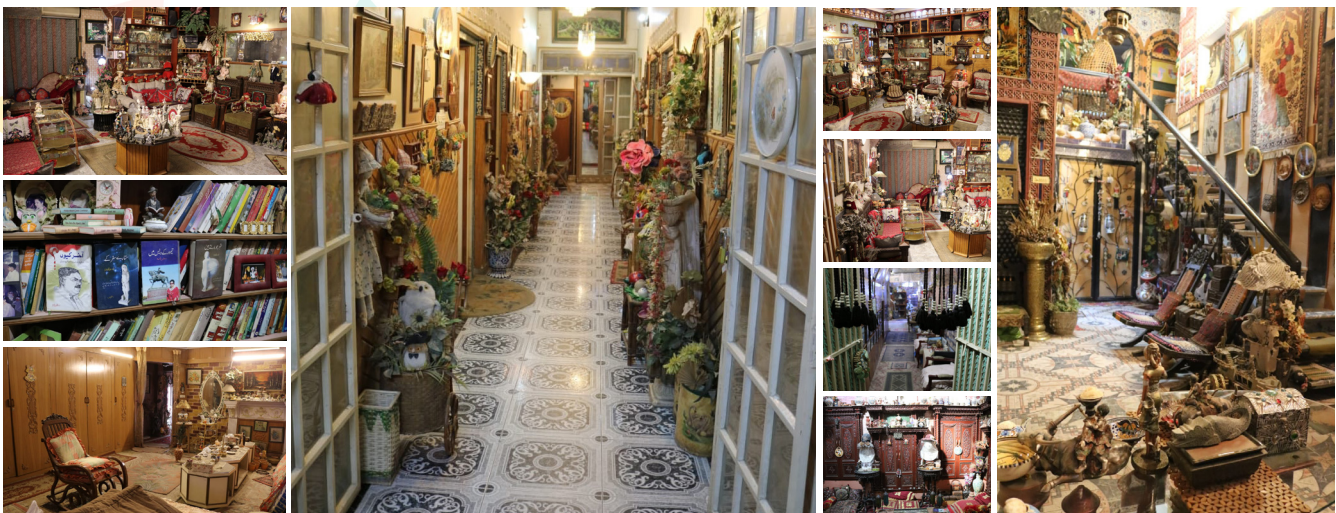
## ARTWORKS

By Dr. Ghazala Mushtaq  
Multan



## INTERIOR DECORATION

By Dr. Shagufta Faraz  
Multan







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**WE NEED WOMEN WHO ARE SO STRONG THEY CAN BE GENTLE,  
SO EDUCATED THEY CAN BE HUMBLE,  
SO FIERCE THEY CAN BE RATIONAL,  
AND SO DISCIPLINED THEY CAN BE FREE"**

**KAVITA RAMDAS**

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