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AN EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF SUPPORT SERVICES AND CAREER DECISIONS OF FEMALE STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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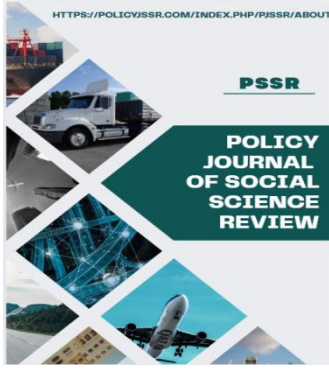
Ali Raza

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate how academic efficacy and support services influence the career decisions of female students in higher education. The career decision-making process is crucial for students in general and for female students in particular at all levels. This study based on a systematic review of the literature and data extracted from reputable databases, including JSTOR, Springer Nature, Sage, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, Emerald Insights, Elsevier, and other reputable databases. Further, the downloaded documents verified from Google Scholar. This study reached the saturation point after reviewing the 85 published documents. Data presented in the results and the discussion sections used to conclude. The study findings reveal that academic efficacy has effects on the career decision-making of female students at higher education levels. Similarly, support services for female students have a similar nature of results to predict career decision-making of female students. The study findings indicate that female role models, parental support, and job security have an effect on the career decision-making process of female students at the higher education level.

Keywords: Academic Efficacy, Support Services, Career Decision Making, Higher Education, Female Student



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INTRODUCTION

Several studies, policy makers, and experts focus to highlight the issue of learning activities at primary, secondary and university level (Archer & Yates, 2017). However, in this regard, academic efficacy and support services has been contributing towards career decision making of female students at all levels generally and higher education level particularly. Academic efficacy influences the overall performance of students in academics. However, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that perceived career barriers predict commitment to career choices of female students in universities. It observed that support services help students in educational process. However, the analysis of the study founded that academic efficacy sources measure the relation to career development. These are non-instructional services that provides access to resources for students (Barbosa-Silva et al., 2025). Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that female student's career choices influenced by culture as well. Career decision making has been linked with all the career options available and explored to enhance the future aspirations according to personal choices, interests and expertise, person decides career path that suit him in his future career (Ben-Naim et al., 2017). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that academic efficacy expectations of female students in mathematics lead to selection

of science-based majors (Campbell & Mogashana, 2025).

Theoretical framework

“Social cognitive career theory,” SCCT.

This review follows the guidelines of social cognitive career theory because it relates to the topic. Lent, Brown, and Hackett introduced it in 1994 (*Lent et al. 1994*). The theory suggests that career decisions rely more on a student's self-confidence and the motivation and guidance they receive from mentors. It focuses on understanding how individuals are motivated in their social environment. This theory discusses self-efficacy, contextual support, and career decision making among students.

In their social context.

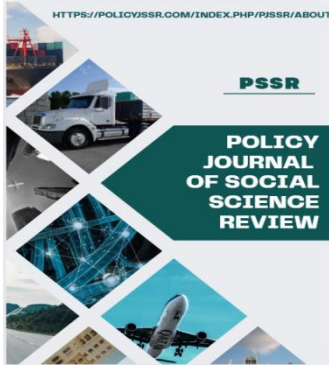
Application to Female Students in Higher Education

- **Academic Self-Efficacy:** This refers to girls' confidence in their academic abilities. It directly affects their personal choices and career decisions.
- **Contextual Supports:** Role models, family support, and institutional guidance considered environmental factors. They facilitate beliefs in self-efficacy and expectations for outcomes.
- **Career Decision-Making:** This seen as an interactive process influenced by both internal and external factors.

Link to Current Study

This theory can explain:

- The role of confidence in academic ability in shaping career exploration and commitment among female students.
- How support systems, such as mentors, institutional guidance, and family



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support, can help overcome barriers like gender stereotypes and lack of resources.

- Why some female students pursue careers in male-dominated fields while others choose careers that align with societal norms.

Using SCCT, we can examine how academic efficacy, support systems, and career choices fit together in a theoretical overview of existing literature.

Methodology:

This particular research uses a systematic literature review design, and it follows the guidelines stipulated under PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses). An extensive search conducted in the following major academic journals: like JSTOR, Springer Link, SAGE Journals, Taylor and Francis Online, Wiley Online Library, Emerald Insight, and Science Direct (Elsevier), and additional searches has conducted in Google Scholar.

"A pre-designed format to record data from 85 studies shortlisted for systematic review. These were used to record findings from each study with the aim of revealing seven themes as demonstrated in the results." Through this process, themes identified and presented.

The methodological quality of included studies analyzed by using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT). The finding showed that most studies demonstrated appropriate research design, data collection, and analysis methods eligible to answer their research questions.

Inclusion and Exclusion:

Inclusion	Exclusion
Peer-reviewed journal articles	Books, book chapters and dissertations
Published 2000-2024	Studies before 2000
Focus on female students in higher education	Studies on male only or mixed sample without gender specific analysis
Examine academic efficacy or self-efficacy and career decisions.	Studies focusing on only one variable
English language	Non English publications
Empirical or theoretical	Non research articles, editorials



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framework	
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The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines adhered to during the study selection process. The flow diagram for the identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of studies shown in figure.

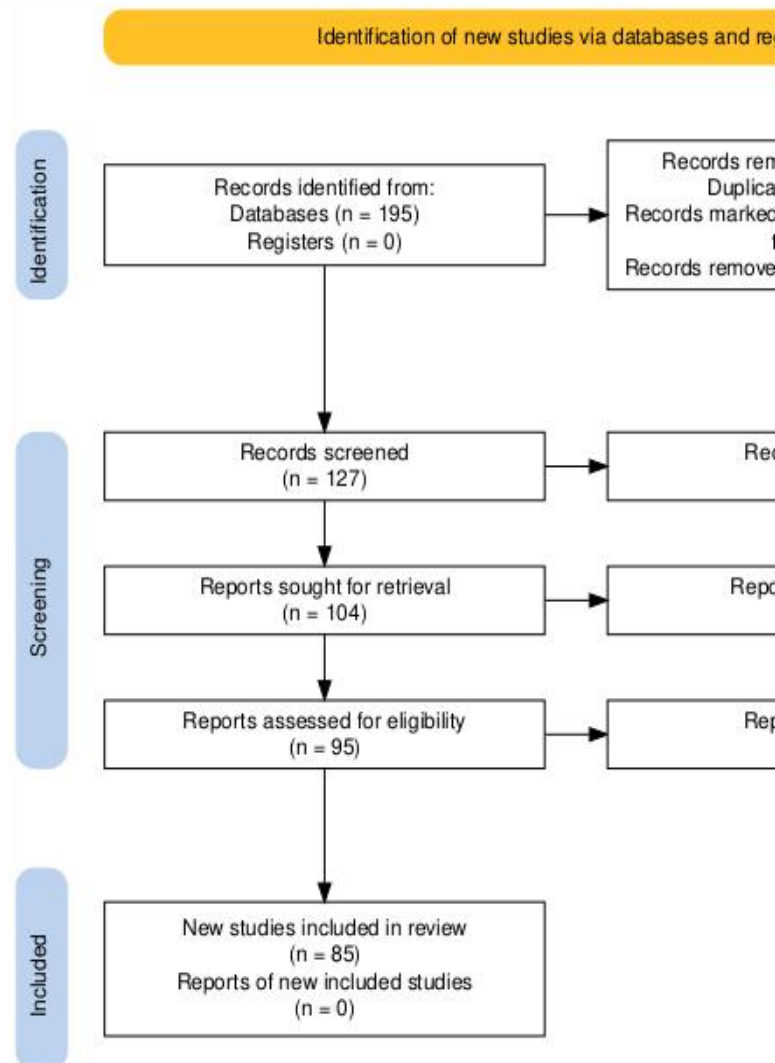


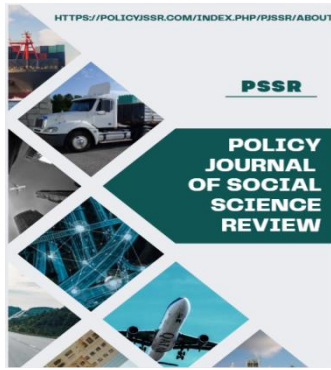
Figure 1. Is shows the studies that are selected for this research.

Thematic analyses

Here is the discussion of all the themes that relate to this research paper:

Believing in academic skills is crucial for career decisions

His theme defines the self-awareness of the female students in their academics.



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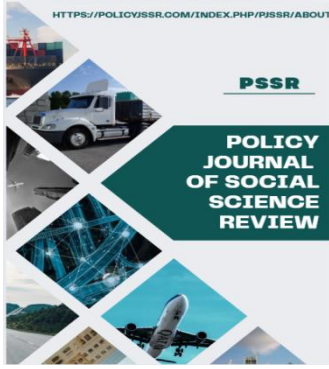
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This shows the confidence of female students about their abilities.

Similarly, the study crux pointed out that academic efficacy has leading role in entrepreneurial intentions and their development in female students (Curnalia & Mermer, 2018).). As mentioned in earlier studies, the study had also exposed that there is strong relationship between academic efficacy, parent child relationship and academic performance in European American and Asian American female students (Dogan, 2015). The study findings asserted that career decision making and career search activities has relative effect on academic efficacy and human agency (Thomas et al., 2024). In the same way, research study from different countries argue that parental involvement in academic efficacy has positive outcomes (Zacks & Hen, 2018).As mentioned in earlier studies, the study had also been exposed that parental support and parental pressure has different effects on Asian American female student's academic efficacy, outcome expectations and interests (Zhao et al., 2023). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that the development of academic efficacy initiates the development of achievement motivation (Aelenei et al., 2020). As well, several studies identified that efficacy beliefs and academic efficacy of adolescence determine career pathway for female students (Al-Bahrani et al., 2021). Comparably, the result of several studies remarked that academic efficacy and

achievement behaviors are interlinked (Amir & Gati, 2006).

The study findings asserted that academic efficacy of female students is different from male students in academic performance (Angelini et al., 2025). As mentioned in earlier studies, the study had also exposed that development of academic efficacy linked with development of achievement motivation and leads toward career decision making in female students (Campbell & Mogashana, 2025). Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that academic efficacy and efficacy beliefs play a role in mathematics (Cantrill, 2024). In parallel, the study findings adverted that in self-regulated learning there is motivational role of academic efficacy. Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that academic efficacy beliefs provide the motivation toward mastery experience (Cartigny et al., 2021). As well, several studies identified that in gifted female student academic efficacy played major role in mathematical problem solving (Castellanos, 2018). The study findings asserted that female students in engineering consider academic efficacy and academic performance, basis for future job (El-Hassan & Ghalayini, 2020). Similarly, the study crux pointed out that ethnic differences create barriers in career decision making and levels of coping academic efficacy (Fetherston et al., 2018). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that there is longitudinal relation of academic efficacy, outcome



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expectations and interests of female students in engineering (Guffey & McCartney, 2008). As well, several studies identified that academic efficacy of female students in mathematics has relation with science-based career choice (Guo & Ayoun, 2022).

Support services and environmental pressures

This shows that how family support matters in academics efficacy of female students. Their social structure also influence them in the context of their career choices.

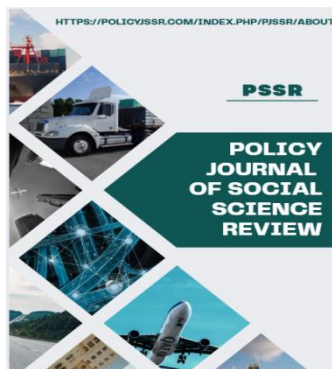
Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that parental support is necessary for careerrelated decisions for female students in China (D'Arrigo et al., 2025). Further, the results of the study revealed that parental involvement in female student's homework has relation with academic efficacy, self-regulated learning, and academic achievements (Harb et al., 2024). In parallel, the study findings adverted that perceived administrative and parental support effects on female students' characteristics and academic efficacy (Shawer, 2013). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that family's financial decision-making has direct link to career decision-making (Sieger & Monsen, 2015). In the same way, research study from different countries argue that parental support, mass media and personal choice play role in career decision making (Baker et al., 2025). Similarly, the study crux pointed out that exposure to female role models influence female student's career choices.

In parallel, the study findings adverted that academic efficacy and parental support can save Italian female students from career indecision (Damodar et al., 2024). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that role model influences female student's academic and vocational decisions (Darbyshire et al., 2019). The study findings asserted that parent-child relationship has a role in building self-esteem, academic efficacy and academic stress (Demulder et al., 2025). As mentioned in earlier studies, the study had also exposed that perceived parental support contributes to career decision making and academic efficacy of special students (Dos Santos & Lo, 2024). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that higher education goals influenced by social circle of female students (Duffy, 1998).

Higher Educational institutions support services

This led to focuses on how institutional support services play crucial role in career seeking female students. It also gave the confidence to the female students and hove to provide them comfortable environment.

As well, several studies identified that academic efficacy has various sources are linked with classroom education (Du et al., 2025). Comparably, the result of several studies remarked that burnout in academic staff had effects on academic efficacy of female students (Dybwad, 2008). The study findings asserted that gifted student's career decision making depends on intervention and guidance of



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teachers. Similarly, the study crux pointed out that technology play's role in female student's academic efficacy, social support and value beliefs. Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that workplace stress and resilience among university staff and female students has various effects on support services for education (Greenbank, 2013). As mentioned in earlier studies, the study had also exposed that female students have various benefits of undergraduate research experience (Bang et al., 2025).

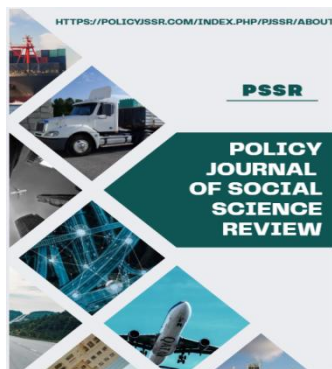
As well, several studies identified that social support services play a role in female student's perceived abilities and attitudes towards subjects like mathematics and science (Bieri Buschor, Kappler, et al., 2014). Comparably, the result of several studies remarked that institutional support effect the higher education choices of female students (Bimrose & Mulvey, 2015).

The study findings asserted that self-beliefs, academic staff support and university comfort leads to academic success in female students (Boo et al., 2022). Further, the results of the study revealed that university training and teamwork skills help in mastery experience (Brindley et al., 2025). However, the analysis of the study founded that institutional integration, career decision making and academic efficacy are interlinked (Cabrita et al., 2014). In the same way, research study from different countries argue that perceived support influences barriers for career development in female students

(Cadaret & Hartung, 2021). The study findings asserted that there is relationship between time management skills of female students and academic efficacy (Cheng & Sin, 2021). Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that counselling programmes and effective guidance solve issues in female student's career decision-making (D'Arrigo et al., 2025). As well, several studies identified that information and knowledge play important role to motivate female students in career decision-making (de Bruin & Hughes, 2012). Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that socialization among female students at university effects career decision-making (Deng et al., 2022). Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that career counsellors influence female students to pursue higher education (Drake & Svenkerud, 2024). In parallel, the study findings adverted that high school career education effects social-cognitive variable (Du et al., 2025). Comparably, the result of several studies remarked that female students face career choice barriers and support services (Haque et al., 2025).

Cultural diversity as a barrier

This give a flash on the cultural barriers in the society. That led to the cause of hurdle in education of female students. This also highlights the structural barriers within the society. Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that perceived body image of female students



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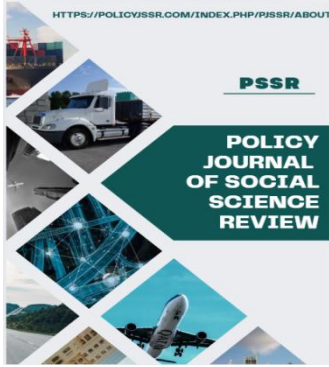
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has significant effects on career decision making and academic efficacy in female athletes and non-athletes (Dore & Richards, 2024). Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that career decision-making difficulties are faced female students in Turkey and the USA (Moore & Gloeckner, 2007). Similarly, the study crux pointed out that socio-demographic factors influence career decision making of South African female students at international universities (Demulier et al., 2013). However, the analysis of the study founded that certain contextual aspects influence career decision making of Malaysian female students (Dogan, 2015). In the same way, research study from different countries argue that academic career goals are dependent on motherhood of doctoral female students (Dore & Richards, 2024). Comparably, the result of several studies remarked that minority and female students have similar educational and vocational aspirations (Eakman et al., 2019). Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that gender differences create perceived barriers in career development (Fouad et al., 1997).). In parallel, the study findings adverted that career decision making affected by job security ratio (Greenbank, 2013).

Specific domain career pathways

This shows the importance of career counseling in a specific domain. Career seeing female students should get the right guidance according to their area of interest.

In parallel, the study findings adverted that female student's entrepreneurial career intentions and implications for entrepreneurship education vary among them according to circumstances (Dos Santos & Lo, 2024). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that the impact of choosing career in science, technology and mathematics by female students on their family (Drake & Svenkerud, 2024). Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that factors like parental support and academic staff support affect entrepreneurial intention of female students (Larose et al., 2006). As well, several studies identified that female students in Thailand have vicarious learning and aim at becoming innovative entrepreneurs (Stebleton & Diamond, 2018). Comparably, the result of several studies remarked that information exposure in female students at different universities of South Africa helps in eco-friendly apparel in the emerging economy of South Africa (Teferra, 2016). In parallel, the study findings adverted that science major female students depend on parental emotional support (Scott & Mallinckrodt, 2005). Similarly, the study crux pointed out that internship experiences contribute to confident decision making for female students in the life sciences (Archer & Yates, 2017). Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that female students in medical fields influenced by several factors for career decision making in US (Ari &



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Eşkisü, 2025). Further, the results of the study revealed that there is relationship between academic efficacy and retention in introductory physics of female students (Assouline et al., 2021). Comparably, the result of several studies remarked that career choices of female students in medical field based on focus group discussions of seniors (Defruyt et al., 2020).

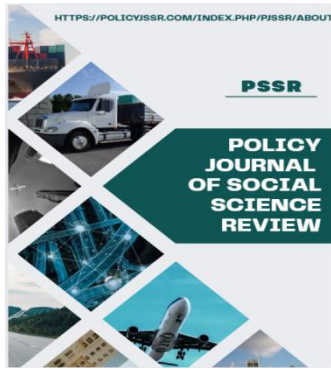
Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that academic efficacy of female students of mathematics leads to career development (Glover-Chambers et al., 2024).

Career decision-making process

This explain the importance of career decisions on the female students. This decision can influence their entire educational career.

Comparably, the result of several studies remarked that certain female student's compromise in career decision making through a process (Loureiro & Lovett, 2024). The study findings asserted that career indecision could hinder competences and interests however; applications of academic efficacy are useful for female students (Manoogian & Cannon, 2019). Similarly, the study crux pointed out that certain factors influence career aspirations of female students (Meza & González, 2020). However, the analysis of the study founded that there is increasing academic efficacy and career decision making among female students (Onu et al., 2021). In the same way, research study from different countries

argue that self-regulation and parental educational attainment influences relative deprivation and career decision making among female students (Reimers, 2022). As mentioned in earlier studies, the study had also been exposed (Page 7 of 101) that parental support effects career identity development and decision making in female students (Scholz et al., 2025). Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that some female students opt to quit careers and head home (Serinci et al., 2024). Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that diverse population of female student aim to achieve higher education (Tsai et al., 2017). Further, the results of the study revealed that the career decision-making assessment linked with aim for achieving higher education in female students (Slaney & Rob, 2014). Contrary to it, it is pertinent to mention here that the results of the study mentioned that development and assessment of decision-making style varies in female students (Zhou et al., 2025). However, the analysis of the study founded that career decision making leads female students to the intent to study abroad (Ayoobzadeh, 2019). In parallel, the study findings adverted that career decision-making skills of high school female students in Bahamas are career oriented (Ben-Naim et al., 2017). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that academic risk behavior has influence on career decision making and occupational choices (Bieri Buschor, Berweger, et al., 2014). Similarly,



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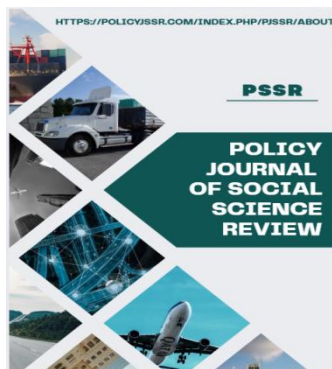
the study crux pointed out that academic efficacy and career decision making have several predictors (Boo & Kim, 2020). Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that career decision-making could be evaluated by psychometric evaluation of career decision making. Further, the results of the study revealed that certain factors determine choice of career among female students (Chishima & Wilson, 2021). In the same way, research study from different countries argue that there are certain predictors of career exploration intentions (Cidlinská & Zilincikova, 2024). As mentioned in earlier studies, the study had also exposed that psychological separation and parental attachment has influence on career development of female students (Curnalia & Mermer, 2018). Further, the results of the study revealed that career decision-making process changes during transition to adulthood (Deng, 2023). Further, the results of the study revealed that there is immense value of career decision making and academic efficacy in predicting career decision-making attitudes and skills (Frolova, 2025). However, the analysis of the study founded those female students who have signs of depression make career decision choices differently than others (Gallavan, 2003). In the same way, research study from different countries argues that there are certain contextual themes in career decision making of female students with slow academic progress (Gati et al., 2010). As mentioned in earlier studies, the study had exposed that career decision making

in female students is dependent on mental health status (Gati et al., 2001).

Cross cultural factors

This shows the comparison between two different cultures in educational system. It take it as a part of learning and socialization.

The study findings asserted that there were several difficulties in terms of career decision making of female students of Chinese and British at international universities (Cheng et al., 2019). In the same way, research study from different countries argued that female students' beliefs of careers in mathematics, science and technology vary across the globe. Female students think against all the odds in America (Demulier et al., 2013). In parallel, the study findings adverted that in Taiwan several career decision-making difficulties perceived by female students (Lee et al., 2019). Furthermore, the argument of the study referred that career choice of undergraduates in Singapore vary according to subject (Lester, 2022). As well, several studies identified that there is strong relationship between academic efficacy and academic achievements in analytical chemistry at African universities (Lindholm, 2004).). Further, the results of the study revealed that international graduate female student's career decision making vary (Muwonge et al., 2017). Similarly, the study crux pointed out that there are several determinants of higher education choices resembling female students' satisfaction in universities of Poland (Trott et al., 2020). However, the analysis



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of the study founded that international female student's career choice influenced by various factors (Vogel & Human-Vogel, 2016). Likewise, the key findings of the research indicated that parental influence has effects on adolescent's career choices in Nigeria (Cheng et al., 2019). However, the analysis of the study founded that academic efficacy is predictor of career decision making among female students in Kenya (Chuang et al., 2007). As well, several studies identified that in international universities African female students are more selfconscious and career decision making is different in African American students (Dybwad, 2008).

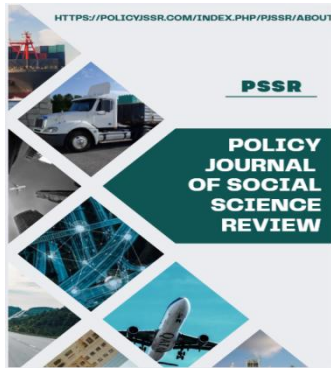
Conclusion

This study concludes that academic efficacy has effect on career decision making of female students at higher education level. The study findings reveal that academic efficacy has effects on career decision making of female students at higher education level. Academic efficacy influences the overall performance of students in academics. It is a measure of how students perceive their own capabilities to fulfil academic tasks and achieve success. Students with high academic efficacy are more likely to fulfil tasks timely immediately. Similarly, support services of female students have similar nature of results to predict career decision making of female students. The study findings indicate that female role model, parental support and job security have effect on career decision-making

process of female students at higher education level.

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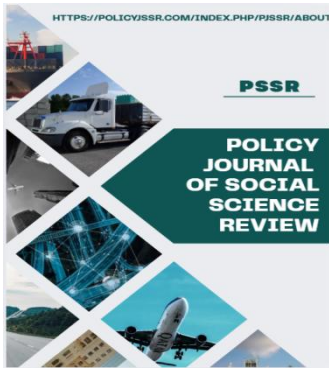


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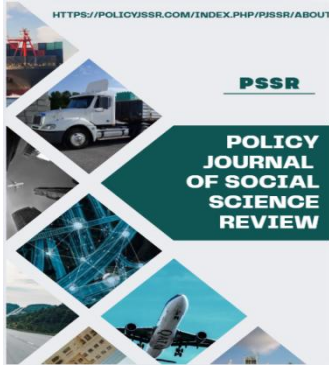


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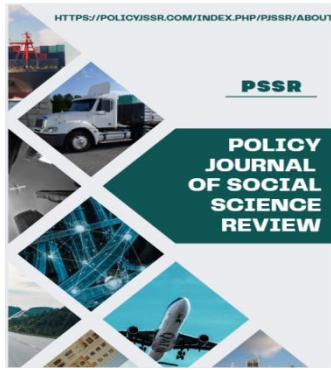


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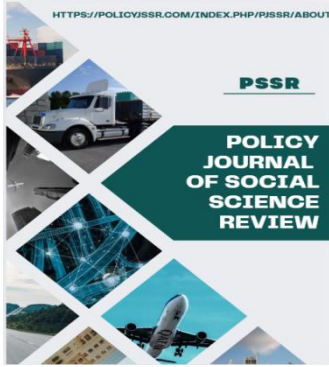


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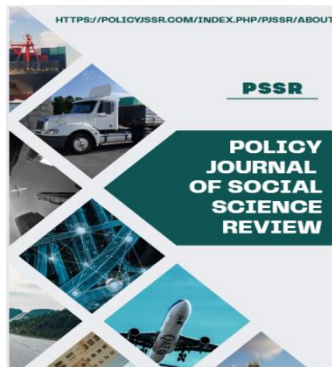


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