Experience Of Atychiphobia And Its Impact On University Students

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Keywords:	ABSTRACT
Atychiphobia, Mental Health, Qualitative Research, Thematic Analysis, Purposive Sampling Technique.	**Purpose –** Although Atychiphobia (AFP) has been linked to academic procrastination but the multiple factors (MFs) leading to Atychiphobia (AFP) are underexplored. Hence, this study aims to explore those MFs that contribute to the development of AFP by assessing the lived experiences of students facing AFP and how AFP affecting students academically, emotionally and physically. **Design/Methodology/Approach –** This study is based on qualitative research design (QRD) that is rooted in phenomenological approach as it explores the lived experiences of the students facing AFP. The study utilizes thematic analysis (TA) as its primary approach. Data is collected from different universities of Faisalabad, Pakistan. The purposive sample comprised of 20 students, either in their final year of a BS program or pursuing an MS/M.Phil. are selected for the study and interviewed using a semi-structured interview method. **Findings –** The results reveal that the literature has rarely focused on AFP in relation to psychological factors. The study identifies 08 key themes and 27 subthemes. Underexplored MFs emerged as key themes and are identified as the primary cause of AFP leading to deteriorating mental and physical health. **Originality –** Not only does this study explore the rarely examined link between AFP and its underlying factors, but highlighting that AFP extends beyond academic procrastination to impact mental and physical health, while offering a broader perspective for future research and coping strategies.

1. Introduction

Atychiphobia (AFP) means fear of failure which is derived from the Greek word phóbos, meaning "fear" or "morbid fear" and atyches meaning "unfortunate" (Colman et al., 2009) is a kind of fear in which a person feels the type of fear that is unusual, unjustifiable and constant (Bauer et al., 2010). It deteriorates a person's social, occupational or other areas of functioning just like other types of phobias do. Ones' lifestyle is completely affected by it (Bergman, 2011). As AFP is a psychological construct which reflects one's apprehension or perception of others' evaluation states that the expectations that the world or others put on them and negative evaluation by people around them also known as ''fear of negative evaluation'' lead towards fear of failure (Milosevic & McCabe, 2015).

Fear of failure has been described as a negative emotion in existing literature (Patzelt & Shepherd, 2011), that results in the form of disgrace, humiliation and embarrassment (Wood et al, 2013), an

individual's evaluation or appraisal towards his ability to accomplish goals and succeed (Noguera et al., 2013), or his risk-taking decision (Koellinger et al., 2013; Shinnar et al., 2012). Hessels and colleagues (2011) stated that individuals with low fear of failure show the likelihood of high entrepreneurial engagement as per the data taken from Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM). It is a misfortune that because of fear of business failure, many brilliant minds do not come up and share their ideas. Their fear leads them to hold back their ideas that might not only benefit them but play a vital role in country's economic development (Taye & Olowu, 2016).

Students' learning, educational achievement and mental health have an inverse relationship with the fear of failure (Caraway et al., 2003). The more one is preoccupied with fear of being failed, the more his/her mental health starts falling apart which in return causes the student to take less interest in learning and eventually lead to disengagement. Disengagement always results in poor educational outcomes (Caraway et al., 2003; Rachman, 1998). The result of experiencing AFP happens to in terms of avoidance and withdrawal; the wish to hide oneself from others and vanish the presence of others (Lindsay et al., 1995). Perfectionism can also lead to form of fear of failure (Conroy et al., 2007). One's high expectations towards him, high standards that one has set for himself, all-or-nothing principle and to do everything at its extreme best are the symptoms of perfectionism which also lead to fear of failure (Sirin, 2011).

Individuals with high fear of failure when facing failure start thinking about themselves to be incompetent and feel degrade, guilty, abandoned and unworthy. People tend to orient towards failure-relevant information when experience acute painful experiences of failure and shame. They start experiencing anxiety before even confronting a situation that they anticipate threatening and in result to that, individuals try escape from those situations either physically (giving up on a task or quit), mentally (think to withdraw by not putting much effort) or working hard to succeed (in order to avoid failure) while being in the state of anxiety unless they don't succeed (Elliot & Church, 1997). The stress an individual feels underlies panic attack with shallow breathing, respiratory issue e.g., exhaling and inhaling, rapid heartbeat, throat and chest tightness (Bulut et al., 2015).

It is stated that results of such dreadfulness lead to have negative impacts on both physical and psychological health of the person causing stress, tension, nervousness, misery, shame, and a sense of guilt alongside nutritional problems like bulimia and anorexia. Often put people with high-accomplishments in situation where they feel helpless for not reaching out to the optimal efficacy (Conroy, 2001). Alongside both physical and psychological problems, AFP has other negative ramifications which usually go unnoticed. Students tend to sabotage their chances of success by actively engage in activities like leaving particular tasks that they think to be difficult, procrastinate and putting little effort where they don't have to work hard and face failures which they predicted. In return, they might have an excuse or justification for their failure. These excuses serve as a shield that protect them from confessing their possible lack of ability rather it manifests for example, procrastination that lead to poor performance (Covington, 1992).

People are often afraid due to having bad past experiences related to failure and might think of having painful consequences that failure accompany. Hence they doubt their abilities and become unsure of succeeding in particular tasks (Krista et al., 2013). In the long terms, factors like humiliating or insulting parents and family members, any traumatic event in which one faced failure and was felt embarrassed or shameful over being fail lead AFP. In return, he might have been unable to cope up with the resulting feelings eventually lead him to develop fear of failure (Ratcliffe et al., 2013).

The remainder of this study is organized as follows. Section 2 comprises the theoretical background of the study. Section 3 describes the methodology used. Section 4 presents the results. Section 5 presents the discussion, followed by the conclusion in Section 6.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Perfectionism a leading cause of AFP

One's expectations toward themselves and their goals are being shaped by the fear of failure. It happens to be an impediment in the way of success (Cox, 2009). In relation to perfectionism, success and failure, emotions were further investigated. Studies stated that people who show or have concerns to perfectionism (perfectionists concern) judge their self-worth in terms of accomplishment and are highly critical self-evaluative. They are easily prone to experience negative emotions like guilt, shame, anger, disappointment etc. and are not able to feel pride (Alden, Bieling, & Wallace, 1994; Dunkley, Zuroff, & Blankstein, 2003). Self-evaluation involves emotions like shame, guilt and pride which are self-centered or self-conscious emotions that lead to scrutinizing of one's worth (Tangney, 2002). Positive affect like pride, joy is generally experienced by perfectionistic strivings (e.g., self-oriented perfectionism) whereas negative affect like psychological distress (negative mood and anxiety) after failure (Hewitt et al., 2003) is associated with perfectionistic concerns (e.g., socially prescribed perfectionism (Molnar et al, 2006; Stoeber & Otto, 2006).

Unpleasant consequences are associated with fear of failure accompanied by the negative concerns about an endeavor. The individual is more concerned to avoid expected failure that he has anticipated and in attempt to avoid the negative emotions like shame, guilt etc (Conroy et al, 2007). Studies done by Lazarus showed that anticipated threatening consequences lead an individual to experience anxiety and fear. Confrontation with a provocation that is predicted to compromise personal values and aspirations create the threatening situation (Lazarus, 2000).

Many researchers have done researches on how fear activates. The first study was done by Charles Darwin who gave his theory of evolution in which he evaluates emotions and how they function in regard to fear. In his theory, he explained that his son once visited zoo with him where he noticed his son first getting afraid of the animal in cage but later, he desired to return and see that animal in the cage. This experience made him observe that fear of children is operated genetically (Milosevic & Randi, 2015, p. 134).

2.2. Childhood experiences and traumatic failures leading to AFP

In the long terms, factors like humiliating or insulting parents and family members, any traumatic event in which one faced failure and was felt embarrassed or shameful over being fail lead AFP. In return, he might be unable to cope up with the resulting feelings eventually lead him to develop fear of failure (Williams & Glen, 2013). It becomes difficult for the child to separate or differentiate these two aspects. They tend to start believing that they will only be loved and appreciated when they will succeed. So, they are not prone to face failure and hence they start having feelings of fear of failure. Additionally, few individuals might have heredity predisposition towards anxiety. Hence, making it more difficult and problematic to handle. These factors lead people to settle for less and stop striving for excellence or use their actual potential (Bauers & Deborah, 2010).

Women possessing negative maternal characteristics like irritability, giving punishments were found to be positively correlated with the fear of failure among children (Singh, 1993) as well as demise of a parent especially of a father's death influences Atychiphobia (Greenfield & Teevan, 1986). As per the pioneering work done by Murray and Atkinson, it is demonstrated that to the domain of achievement, fear of failure plays a role of avoidance-based motive. It is not the fear itself that influences achievement motivation but the shame accompanies fear of failure. One feels shame for not succeeding in learning or achieving something consequently leads him to avoid failure. It thus necessitates to research about the factors or dynamics of shame in order to understand the clear understanding of fear of failure (Atkinson, 1957; Birney et al., 1969). Lewis (1992) demonstrated that shame is an extremely awful experience where one considers himself to be stupid and bad (Lewis, 1992). Baker postulated that AFP is usually aroused by

the negative evaluations done by the families and their attitudes toward the child's poor performance (Baker HS, 1979).

Research by Cole (2014) postulated that from students to the professionals, anyone can be a target of fear of failure which can inhibit their creativity. People with low fear of failure can find new innovative ways to complete their tasks while people with high fear of failure will prefer doing it in a more conventional way out of fear (Farashah, 2015; Ostapenko, 2015). Societies are, surprisingly and interestingly, more hit by the fear of failure and it is widespread quite commonly there. It was estimated in the United States that 30% of the population is affected by the fear of failure and is terrified of being failed. It was ranked among one of the worst fears in the country. Numerous no. of people ranging from 31% in Germany, 41% in the United States, 48% in the Untied-Kingdom, 54% in Spain and 57% in India show fear of failure that prevents them from setting up a business or get started from scratch (Bosma, et al., 2020).

2.3. Social environment serving as a base to AFP

They value themselves as per the rate of their success relative to the standards of the society. This phenomenon can be seen in schools where students are prone to make efforts to get good grades in a competitive class environment and barely strive to pay attention to their inner satisfaction which is not considered by the societal standards. Everyone seems to be in a race where he wants to achieve something for the sake of social approval (Bauers & Deborah, 2010). To students who aspire to get grades due to restricted pattern of awards and appreciation, many students do not realize their actual potential and they keep on running after titles that somehow go beyond their capabilities. In this sense, the youth of today is forced unwittingly, without knowing the consequences of certain actions, to protect the sense of dignity they have had made by avoiding failures so that they could not be embarrassed or feel shameful (Segal, Chipman & Glaser, 1985).

To reach optimal successfulness, many studies have taken into account the negative consequences of fear of failure onto it which creates hurdles for the person and prevents him from utilizing his maximum potential in achieving a goal but in accordance to few psychologists, fear of failure can be both foe and a friend as it can also play a positive role in an individual's life by motivating him to work harder than before and face the endeavors coming his way. So, in that sense, fear of failure also has positive impact and can be helpful in making people work hard to reach out to the goal (Conroy, et al., 2002; Martin and Marsh, 2003).

3. Methodology

This study uses QRD grounded in phenomenology to investigate the lived experiences of university students facing AFP and its impact on them in which both under and post-graduate university students enrolled in various degree programs at different universities of Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan are included. To explore the lived experiences of students with AFP, TA is employed as a primary approach.

At first, a sample of 400 university students, either in their final year of a BS program or pursuing an MS/M.Phil. are selected for the study. Beomkyu Choi (2020) 26 items fear of failure in learning scale is used to assess the level of fear of failure in higher education university students (Choi, 2020). This scale is used to assess and categorize the level of fear of failure in students, not to make any diagnosis. Initially, convenient sampling technique is used to get as many respondents to fill out the questionnaire as possible.

The scoring of the scale is yet to be done but it can be used to categorize the students into high-mid-low fear of failure based on their scores. It consists of 4 subscales i.e., 1) feeling of shame, 2) performance avoidance, 3) learned helplessness and 4) self-handicapping. The five point likert scale (1-5) having the responses options of ''strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree and strongly

agree''. Agreement with each statement yields higher scores i.e., closer to 5 and disagreement with a statement yields lower scores i.e., closer to 1.

The maximum score on this five-point likert scale is 125. Students who scored above 100 are categorized into ''high level of fear of failure'' and are included as the part of the study for the semi-structured interview by using purposive sampling technique. A sample of n=20 students is taken for the interview including both males and females. It has been recommended previously that in order to saturate data, minimum sample size of at least ''12' is required for qualitative researches (Guest et al., 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2013; Fugard & Potts, 2015). The scale in the present study is solely used to categorize students based on their scores in order to recruit students with high fear of failure to conduct semi-structured interviews with.

The main objective of the interviews is to explore the factors leading towards AFP and how experiencing it affecting students in what ways. Some of the questions are as under:

RQ1: What type of lived experiences or factors lead students to develop AFP?
RQ2: How do society, social life and economic background of the students play a role to the development of AFP?
RQ3: How does AFP affect students both psychologically and physically?
RQ4: In what ways, AFP happens to be a barrier in achieving success?

The interviews are conducted and transcribed in Urdu language but the data analysis (coding onwards) is done in English. All the steps involved in data analysis are as under.

Date Analysis

TA is used for this study to analyze qualitative data of the participants. It offers an accessible, easy and flexible approach for analyzing the data that searches for themes or patterns to answer questions with intensive explanations (Braun & Clark, 2012). There are five processes in qualitative data analysis method including compiling, deconstructing, reassembling, analyzing and concluding (LeValley et al., 2019). Interviews were transcribed on MS word and then they were coded using a software called ''QDA miner lite''. The subthemes are generated by using that coded information and then those subthemes are merged together to form possible themes so that the results could be finalized.

The five stages which are involved in thematic analysis are described by Castleberry & Nolen (2018) are discussed below.

1. Compiling
To manage data into a useable form and finding suitable answers to research questions, compiling is the first process that ensures this. To compile the data is to transcribe all the recorded information in a form which is easy for the researcher to understand and generate meanings out of it. Data is compiled thoroughly that we could become familiar of it in order to gain greater understanding to make meanings out of the data.

2. Deconstructing
It is the second process in which data is separated and groups are formed. Coding is done to turn a raw data into a more organized form, from which groups are supposed to be made. To check similarity and differences in the data, codes are used which themselves are the segments of the relevant data. By using codes, we generated subthemes.

3. Reassembling
Then, we formed themes from the coded information (or codes). In order to make themes, codes that share the same lateral meanings are compiled to make themes which convey rich information in relation to the

research question. Themes are generated to convey comprehensive information within the data set. Themes are further divided into sub-themes.

4. Analyzing

One of the most critical stages in data analysis is interpreting the data in which a researcher has to make critical conclusion from the data which was presented in the form of codes, sub-themes and themes. Interpretative data should be accurate and complete enough that it remains the representative of the raw data.
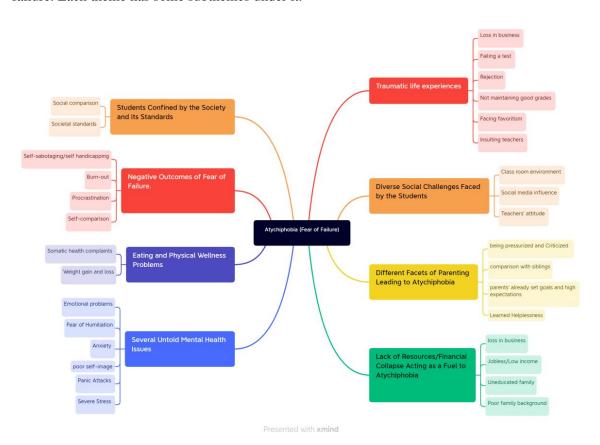
5. Concluding

When using TA, codes are made from the raw data. And then these codes are merged together to form subthemes further, these subthemes are merged to form themes. Interpretation involves the identification and definition of those themes. Lastly, the conclusion is drawn from the interpretation.

4. Results

Results are based on TA report and the report is based on themes and subthemes. Participants' quotations are coded with reference to transcript of interviews. In reference, ''PT'' stands for participant and ''DU'' stands for discourse unit.

After an in-depth study of the construct AFP, 08 themes are emerged i.e., traumatic life experiences, several untold mental health issues, eating and physical wellness problems, students confined by the society and its standards, different facets of parenting leading to AFP, diverse social challenges faced by the students, lack of resources/financial collapse acting as a fuel to AFP and negative outcomes of fear of failure. Each theme has some subthemes under it.

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The primary goal of the study is to assess the lived experiences of the students and to find out how fear of failure is affecting them and in what dimensions i.e., the impact of AFP on university students and alongside its effects, the causes of AFP are also discovered in this study. Causes are those factors that play a crucial role in the development of AFP. These include traumatic life experiences, students confined by the society and its standards, diverse social challenges faced by the students, different facets of parenting leading to the development of AFP and lack of resources/financial collapse acting as a fuel to AFP.

4.1. Traumatic life experiences

After an in-depth analysis of the results, traumatic life experience is the 1st theme of this qualitative study which has further 6 subthemes including failing a test, rejection, not maintaining good grades, insulting teachers, facing favoritism and loss in business.

TABLE I: Subthemes under the theme ''Traumatic Life Experiences''
1.1. Rejection

Few participants reported to have faced rejection even in situation where they were doing their best, investing their time and putting in effort. One of them stated that
   ''I was one of the best sportswomen in my college. My coach has had some personal grudge with me I don't know why. He wanted some other girl to play at my place because favoritism or you know something like that. I was rejected because of that girl. It was a failure for me. I have always been a passionate player. Now I don't play anymore. Since then, I have severe fear of getting rejected again. I didn't apply for that again because of the fear of rejection.'' (Participant 04, DU60).
One of the participants also reported to have rejected in many international scholarships' interviews. According to that participant, he always applied with full preparation, worked on CV but bad luck.
   ''I always tried to avail any foreign scholarship because my family cannot afford me sending abroad. But I never got succeeded. Always considered fail in the final announcement. Now I have given up on my dream of studying abroad on scholarship because now I have a fear that I will be rejected again. I have been suffering this since so long.'' (Participant 10, DU24).

1.2. Failing a Test

Participants reported failing a specific test as one of the most traumatic experiences ever that lead them to have developed Atychiphobia. Before giving any next test, most of them reported to have experiencing severe anxiety and negative thoughts. Some of them even lost many opportunities in order to not to face failure again. One of them stated that
   ''I got failed in my MCAT that was the worst day of my life. It was my parents' dream to make me see as a doctor that became mine as well but I could not fulfill their dream. I tried my best but I could not pass the test. I as a boy used to cry whole night knowing nobody knows. I have had an extremely bad time that ended up making me realize that I am nothing. I can never succeed in life.'' (Participant 10, DU24).
   ''My maternal mother wanted me to give GCUL and PU's entry test for my M.Phil. She wanted to see me in any prestigious institute. Despite of being a bright student, I failed that test may be, because of not preparing well. I was scolded and embarrassed badly for not passing out those tests. I agree, she must have expectations from me but I couldn't come up to her expectations. Last year, she again asked and encouraged me to apply for GCUL and PU but I didn't because I felt like I will fail them again and I will have to face humiliation so it is better not to apply. Now I am doing this diploma'' (Participant 03, DU18).

1.3. Poor/ Low Grades
Participants reported to have experienced severe anxiety when getting low grades especially of the participants who have had set a particular grade for them. Few participants said that if they have made

up their minds to get a certain grade and do hard work accordingly but, in the end, if they are not able to get that grade, they experience severe stress and anxiety. One of the participants reported that

''I don't know how sir gave me C grade though; my paper was perfect. I still cannot believe that it is my grade. I could not sleep and eat properly for many days because of the extreme tension. It's been many days since I attended that class. Even being at home, I don't talk to anyone and remain in my room. If I could not have done my paper well, I would have said it is the result of my fault that I did not do my paper well but when I did my paper very well then how can I get such lower grade?'' (Participant 08, DU65).

1.4. Insulting Teachers

Participants reported to have developed fear of failure because of getting insulted, mocked and taunted by the teachers. One of the participants reported that

''I was already frustrated and pressurized by the overburden of internship, research and course work. We had to take the three of them simultaneously. What students go through, teachers don't understand that in Pakistan because somehow teachers are frustrated themselves. They release their frustration by insulting their students. We used to get insulted on daily basis that I started having fear of getting fail. I got preoccupied that I cannot do better no matter what I do or how much hard work I am going to do. Once, I was insulted extremely badly by one of our teachers. Actually, the scene was that I had to present an article that I prepared well. I was already suffering from fear of failure and the humiliation results in failure. When I went to present my presentation, I got confused that my heart started beating fast. I could not present well out of confusion and fear. My teacher insulted me so much at such high level that I wanted to die with shame. That incident hit me so hard that I left my M.Phil. and ruined both money and effort.'' (Participant 07, DU41).

1.5. Favoritism

Participants reported favoritism as one of their traumatic incidents that lead them to feel useless and make them do no hard work. One of the participants reported that

''I have seen teachers doing injustice to the students. Teachers who are happy with students, they give them high grades as one of the students of our class was fail for sure. He did nothing in the paper but when result came out, she had A-grade. This is not a single incident. Thousands of similar incidents can be told. Those who do hard work and urge to get good grades stop doing enough hard work because eventually they realize that teachers are not going to do justice. They are going to make happy those students who are their favorite. This hurts me so much and I promise this to myself that I will not do the same with my students. I will treat all the students equally so that no one has to feel inferiority complex.'' (Participant 13, DU12).

''I feel so sad to see when teachers do favoritism. This puts many students in complex that they are not teacher's favorite. Trust me one of our teachers does so much favoritism that she does not even like listening to other students. She mocks them and gives their opinions no importance. Poor students suffer a lot and teachers do not care.'' (Participant 12, DU15).

1.6. Loss in Business

Male participants reported to have experienced loss in business that caused them to have Atychiphobia. They reported that starting up a business itself is a difficult task, one needs money first of all to invest and then your energy and time of course. Loss in business feels like a personal loss and the person who is bearing this loss might never think of this again if he has fulfilled all the prerequisites. One of them reported that

''I started my business when I was in the last semester of my BS. I was very passionate about it and tried to give my best as you know starting up a business in an underdeveloped country Pakistan is way too difficult. There are no resources for the students to start their own business. First you have to invest a heavy amount of money that might be the savings of your parents that they did for years or the loan

that you have taken. Secondly, things are overpriced so much that those who are thinking of starting up a business are taking a risk clearly. Anyhow, I took the risk but guess what? I lost. But I tried again and interestingly I lost again. Everybody scolded me so much for wasting both money and efforts. They simply asked me to do a job straightforwardly. Last days, one of my friends again asked me to start a business with him and few other people but I am afraid now that I might have to face failure again. He even counseled me that profit and loss are the part of the business but now I am convinced that I cannot succeed.'' (Participant 13, DU70).

''My father started a business with so much passion but he had to face loss in it. Now he is so disheartened that he prefers not doing it at any cost. He doesn't let me start a business because he thinks it will not succeed. I so want to do my own business but I cannot unless or until I make my own money and invest in my business.'' (Participant 09, DU92).

4.2. Students Confined by the Society and its Standards

Students confined by the society and its standards are the 2nd theme of this study that is further divided into two subthemes discussed below. Participants reported to have faced many societal issues that gave rise to their fear of failure.

TABLE II: Subthemes under the theme ''Students Confined by the Society and its Standards''
2.1 Social Comparison

Social comparison has been the worst issue of our society where people especially this youth is mentally abused and is asked to become the way others are. Few participants reported that
   ''When I was in Intermediate, I was told that you are supposed to be a doctor at any cost. You need to work harder as if someone gets into the medical then he is extremely loved and respected by everyone. Be it known or unknown, everyone respects you. I worked harder day and night but I could not get into the medical. That pressure I can never forget. I think that pressure became me what I am today, a person who has an inferiority complex who is always reminded by her relatives that I could not make it to the medical where my cousin is in the medical. This pressure and comparison sucks.'' (Participant 07, DU33).
   ''When I decided to leave the university, everybody scolded me up so much. Instead of realizing what I am going through, everyone blamed me. I have always been a good student and maintained good marks, if I am going to leave the university then there must be something very serious and problematic those made me take this decision but nobody thought that way. My aunts, uncles, parents everyone said, look at your elder sisters. One is going to do PhD and the other has done M.Phil. with gold medal and now, look at yourself who is running away just because of small stressors. Shame on you, you are going to disrespect us in front of the people. My elder sister and Phuppho said Look at Aniqa, she is my cousin, she is becoming a doctor and you cannot even do masters. You are going to waste your parents' money. What is wrong with you?'' (Participant 07, DU122).

2.2 Societal Standards
Participants are disheartened the way society deals them. They think, it is impossible to meet the standards of these society and in order to do so, your ''poor self'' remains left behind and you become a robot who has to do what this society wants from them. One of them reported that   ''I feel inferiority complex that despite of doing such difficult studies, I am still mocked by people that DPT degree holders are not doctors. They are ''Maalshiye''. This hurts me so much that my father invested so much money into my degree and I worked harder day and night to become ''Dr. of Physical Therapist'' and here I am not appreciated at all.'' (Participant 17, DU47).

4.3. Diverse Social Challenges Faced by the Students

Diverse social challenges faced by the students is the 3rd theme of this qualitative study which has further

3 subthemes including classroom environment, teachers' attitude and social media influence.

TABLE III: Subthemes under the theme ''Diverse Social Challenges Faced by the Students''
3.1. Class Room Environment
There is so much hidden jealousy and envy found in friends, fellows and colleagues. They might taunt you and make you feel inferior in such a way that you unconsciously start possessing negative feelings about yourself. One of the participants stated this as follows   ''I have always been into such unhealthy class environment in fact in university as well that you cannot imagine the amount of jealousy one has for you. My friend made me feel the worst when I could not pass my MCAT. So, I have been unlucky when it comes to friends because they are jealous of your success either they are proud of their success that they start taking others lightly. In such environment, I don't think so nobody can perform up to his maximum potential because class environment matters a lot. Your fellows don't dare to tell you anything because they are afraid, you might get good marks than them. This has taken into so much that some people clearly don't enjoy being in the class and university.'' (Participant 02, DU53).   ''I have seen students getting jealous of each other. One of the toppers of our class who was not my friend but was a good fellow did very badly. She was asked by teacher to share her notes but she did not because she was might afraid of someone getting better grades than her. Upon asking many times, she did not share her notes, instead she kept on making excuses.'' (Participant 08, DU180).
3.2. Teachers' Attitude
A teacher plays an important role in the lives of his students. His attitude like the way he deals his students leaves a long-term impact on students. One of the participants reported that   ''We used to get insulted on daily basis that I started having fear of getting fail. Our teachers make us feel that we are dumb and the worst creation ever. I got preoccupied that I cannot do better no matter what I do or how much hard work I am going to do. Once, I was insulted extremely badly by one of our teachers. Actually, the scene was that I had to present an article that I prepared well. I was already suffering from fear of failure and the humiliation results in failure. When I went to present my presentation, I got confused that my heart started beating fast. My teacher insulted me so much at such high level that I wanted to die with shame. That incident hit me so hard that I left my M.Phil. and ruined both money and effort.'' (Participant 07, DU41).   ''I have always encountered with good teachers but I only had a bad experience with one teacher in school who used to torture me so much. She used to torn my copies if I made a mistake. I was weak in mathematics. Therefore, I used to understand concepts slower than other students. I don't know if she had a personal grudge with me. She used to yell at me so much, curse me and slap me if I attempted wrong question. Since then, I have severe mathematics anxiety no matter what I believe I am going to fail this. I think if she would have dealt me with kind words I would have done way better. Sigh!'' (Participant 19, DU44).
3.3. Social Media Influence
Social media also influences a person and can put him/her in inferiority complex as the person starts comparing himself with others and wants to be like them as successful as they are. One of the participants stated this   ''When I use Instagram, I see bloggers with such beauty, glam, happy life, success and lots of money. I feel inferiority complex that despite of doing such difficult studies, I am still mocked by people that DPT degree holders are not doctors. They are ''Maalshiye''. This hurts me so much that my father invested so much money into my degree and I worked harder day and night to be called as a ''Dr. of Physical Therapist'' and here I am not appreciated at all. I wish I would have also become a blogger. They only do make up and dress up and loved by everyone as well as earning way better than a degree holder earns. Seriously, I regret for wasting my five years.'' (Participant 17, DU47).

4.4. Different Facets of Parenting Leading to Atychiphobia

Different facets of parenting are a 4th theme of this study which is further divided into 4 subthemes discussed below. More often fear of failure is generated the way our parents treat us. Factors like parents' child relationship, comparison among siblings, parents' high expectations and pressure from them play an important role in this regard.

TABLE IV: Subthemes under the theme ''Different Facets of Parenting Leading to Atychiphobia''
4.1. Comparison with Other Children/Siblings

Comparison among siblings at times happen to be a positive reinforcement that you want your other children to be as successful as they are but at times, it is worst and can create gap, envy and inferiority complex among siblings. Participants reported that
 	
   ''When I decided to leave the university, everybody scolded me up so much. Instead of realizing what I am going through, everyone blamed me. I have always been a good student and maintain good marks, if I am going to leave the university then there must be something very serious and problematic those made me take this decision but nobody thought that way. My aunts, uncles, parents everyone said, look at your elder sisters. One is going to do PhD and the other has done M.Phil. with a gold medal. Now, just have a look at yourself who is running away just because of small stressors. Shame on you, you are going to disrespect us in front of the people. After all this, I don't feel like talking to my sisters because of them, I am always discouraged'' (Participant 07, DU122).
 	
   ''I am jealous of my big brother that he is so perfect that because of him I am always taunted that I am worthless as compared to him. He has been earning since metric and here I am who has never earned and always sitting idle. Bro, I am studying and currently I am educated more than my brother is. If one does comparison, compares this as well. They make me feel useless and because of their constant curse, I believe I will never succeed.'' (Participant 20, DU49).

4.2. Parents' High Expectations and Already Set Goals

When parents put high expectations and set certain fields for them, children become conscious and feel pressured. One of the participants stated this
 	
   ''When I was in metric, even before my metric, I was told that my parents want me to be a doctor. Because I used to stand first in the class, they decided that I am able enough to get into a medical college. They trained me that way. Their dream became mine as well. When I took admission in F.sc, there were lots of expectations, my parents, put on me. In the first year of my F.sc, they started calling me ''Doctor Saab''. This made me very conscious and I worked harder than before. I used to pray to Allah please fulfill my wish, I want nothing else and guess what happened, I could not pass my MCAT. My parents' expectations got shattered and on the other hand, I got shattered badly. That was the worst phase of my life. I am afraid of someone to put his trust in me. I cannot fulfill anyone's dream. I am a loser.'' (Participant 17, DU35).
 	
   ''I did not want to take admission in Masters. It was my parents who forced me and wanted me to be a MS degree holder. I used to listen day and night that we want you to do it so you must have to do so. I could have left the MS a whole month back but why did not I? Because of my parents, unless they saw me suffering, they did not realize their wrong decision that they made for me.'' (Participant 07, DU47).

4.3. Being Pressurized and Criticized
Participants reported that constant criticism and pressure from the parents lead them to have fear of failure and a sense of worthlessness. One of the participants reported that   ''I am still highly criticized for leaving my MS. Despite of knowing everything that what I have been through, what my mental condition has been and my physical health, they still blame me for not being strong enough. Where you are insulted by your teachers, mocked by your fellows, not understood by

your family then what you are supposed to do? You are expected to stay strong and positive no matter how much taunts, insult and pressure thrown at you?'' (Participant 07, DU70).

''I am extremely criticized for the business loss but I did not do that intentionally. Did I want that loss? Pathetic! I am equally disturbed. In fact, I am more guilty and sad than them but still I am blamed all the time. I have promised to myself that I will never take this risk again ever.'' (Participant 13, DU18).

4.4. Learned Helplessness

At times, it's the parents who instill fear of failure in children unknowingly. They train their children in such a way where their children think of themselves to be incompetent. One of the participants reported this

''I belong to a poor and an uneducated family. My father is labor who was never in the favor of my education. Because of being poor, I never had the opportunity to study in any prestigious institute hence I end up lacking many things like poor English and lack of confidence. Even being in the last semester of M.Phil., I am unable to find any job and my father says, we already asked you not to study and waste money. You are not going to be a millionaire. Be in capacity and be my helping hand. This degree will give you nothing because you are still unable to earn and here, I am totally uneducated but can earn money more than an educated man like you. Now I think the same. I wish I would not have wasted this money. I know I can't find a good job because a poor man has no value in this country. If you have lots of many, then you can purchase anything. I have nothing attractive in me neither a degree from a prestigious institute or skills.'' (Participant 12, DU54).

4.5. Lack of Resources or Financial Collapse Acting as a Fuel to Atychiphobia

It is the 5th theme of this qualitative study which is further divided into 4 subthemes including poor family background, jobless/low income, uneducated family and loss in business. Participants reported to have experienced lack of resources and financial crisis and it has many root causes that are not discussed much in previous researches. Financial crisis or lack of resources happens to be few of the major causes of AFP.

TABLE V: Subthemes under the theme ''Lack of Resources or Financial Collapse Acting as a Fuel to Atychiphobia''

5.1. Poor Family Background

Poor family background contributes to financial a crisis which further leads to lack of opportunities and hence, end up causing disappointment in the individual. One of the participants reported that

''I have always been told that we are not made to study and do jobs. We are poor people so we will not be given jobs because we will not have enough money to buy that seat. I have almost my masters completed but I am forced to job a 20k job. My father was right and now I think that education really does not matter, money works. I regret doing my masters. I have taken many job interviews but usually the seat is already booked. Now, whenever I go for a job interview, I am preoccupied that I will not be given this job. Can't tell how much disappointed I am. Wish my father had money and he could do something for me. Son of a poor man is only suffering in this country.'' (Participant 12, DU36).

5.2. Loss in Business

Business loss is one of the chief reasons that prevent a person from taking risks and implementing his ideas. One of the participants reported that

''I started my business when I was in the last semester of my BS. I was very passionate about it and tried to give my best as you know starting up a business in an underdeveloped country Pakistan is way too difficult. There are no resources for the students to start their own business. First you have to invest a heavy amount of money that might be the savings of your parents that they did for years or the loan that you have taken. Secondly, things are overpriced so much that those who are thinking of starting up a business are taking a risk clearly. Anyhow, I took the risk but guess what? I lost. But I tried again and

interestingly I lost again. Everybody scolded me so much for wasting both money and efforts. They simply asked me to do a job straightforwardly. Last days, one of my friends again asked me to start a business with him and few other people but I am afraid now that I might have to face failure again. He even counseled me that profit and loss are the part of the business but now I am convinced that I cannot succeed.'' (Participant 13, DU70).

5.3. Jobless/Low income

Low income and being jobless have also been great sources of stress financial and contribute to stress. One of the participants reported that

''I have got rejected many times in many job interviews. It is not possible for a person who is educated to have a single good paying job. You must agree with me. But surprisingly, I got none because the jobs usually are already booked. I am sick of failing in getting a job. Now I don't apply anymore anywhere. I just want to leave Pakistan and settle abroad. There is no future here in Pakistan for students.'' (Participant 12, DU12).

5.4. Uneducated Family

Uneducated family also happens to be factor that contributes to financial crisis. If family is uneducated, they are given low paid jobs or are bound to do labor ship. One of the participants reported that

''If parents were educated, we would have been on a different status. At least, being educated counts as well to some extent. As I told you about my Rishtaa, the girl's family knew that my father is a laborer that's one of the reasons they did not give me her Rishtaa. Would an upper middle-class family give their daughter's rishtaa to a lower middle-class family, a son of a labor? At least, if my family was educated, my father would have a respectable job even of less money but at least, people would have considered him poor in my perception but at least, he would be educated. Though, out of disappointment I tend to agree with him but to be an educated person is an honor. But yes, a poor man has no respect and importance in this country.'' (Participant 12, DU56).

Effects of Atychiphobia

4.6. Several untold mental health issues

Psychological Health Problems are the 6th theme of my study which has further 6 subthemes discussed below. Fear of failure does not occur abruptly or quite suddenly; it may be formed in the result of a powerful incident or series of incidents that lead the person to be vulnerable to many other aspects of it.

TABLE VI: Subthemes under the theme '' Several Untold Mental Health Issues''

6.1. Fear of Humiliation

Participants stated that humiliation is one of the main reasons behind fear of failure. It's just like we are afraid of facing shame and embarrassment. We are made to feel this way and so much disgusted that we try our best to avoid it by leaving the tasks or by doing extra hard work. Participants reported that

''When I could not pass my MCAT, I was made feel shameful and embarrassed for must have not done enough hard work as others must have done to get into the medical. Now I am totally into a different field but before doing anything, I think and think and think unless I am sure of doing it the way I will not have to face shame. Throughout this process, I am continuously pressurized. I feel like I am not enjoying and loving what I am doing. I am actually doing it for the sake of social approval and to avoid shame.'' (Participant 02, DU08).

''When I took admission in my M.Phil., I had to face so much difficulty because that was not what I wanted to do but I had to because my parents and older siblings wanted me to pursue that. I kept on trying but I could not perform well. My parents and older siblings made me feel so shameful. They were pressurizing me to maintain good marks at any cost. I found myself in so much tension that now I have become a tension myself. The ultimate goal of my life is to make them happy more than my own peace.

I was afraid of the humiliation they threw at me. I was always on the edge and because of all this; I had extreme fear of getting lower grades which is why I was losing my interest in everything. I wished to leave everything and ran away.'' (Participant 07, DU35).

6.2. Emotional disturbances

Fear of failure causes emotional and mental health problems to the students. Participants reported to have surrounded by many negative emotional states that are deteriorating their mental health. Crying spells, feelings of worthlessness, over thinking, disturb sleep, inferiority complex; learned helplessness, pessimism and low self-esteem are the factors participants went through. One of the participants that

   ''When I was facing hard time in the university, I used to cry so much and still, people make me feel like a useless person who ran out of university because I did not have the ability to pursue a master's degree. I just wanted an excuse to leave so I did. This makes me sad and I am afraid of facing people who make me feel this way. What you are going through, nobody understands. I also consider myself to be a loser who could not even make it to the end. Whatever I have done well in the past, it's just by luck.'' (Participant 11, DU59).

   ''When I gave up on giving my test for Air force just because my eye sight was weak, I can't tell you how much depressed I was as I told you, I thought if don't get to pass it what people would think of me especially my mother and my uncle. I already scored bad marks in inter which disappointed everyone. Leaving that opportunity did not put me at ease. It made me depressed and it took me 7-8 months to come out of that. Whenever I see and listen anything about Air force, I become very sad and I cannot sleep. I feel like a loser who couldn't peruse a single thing.'' (Participant 01, DU13).

6.3. Panic Attacks

Participants reported to have panic attacks when they have to face a triggering situation in which they feel like they might not do well though there is not a guarantee of doing bad but still they feel so much afraid that their heart starts beating fast and they feel like numb and losing their mind also. Few participants reported that

   ''Whenever I have to give presentation, I feel like my heart is beating so fast because of the fear of not presenting well. Though I am prepared well but because of extreme nervousness and pressure, I start losing my mind and forget everything. My legs shake that I may not get insulted again. Last experience has influenced me badly.'' (Participant 10, DU57).

   ''Whenever I get to know that result has come, my heart starts beating so damn fast and I experience shallow breathing that I feel like dying just by thinking if I do not get A-grade. More often, I ask my friends to check my result because if I don't get to see A-grade, I will get an attack that might be fatal for me. This situation happens every time I feel like I might get low grade.'' (Participant 06, DU58).

6.4. Anxiety

Participants reported to experience severe anxiety due to the no. of events like losing others' interest, fear of failing, not coming up to others' expectations, fear of getting low grades and not meeting a deadline on time. Participants reported that

   ''When I scored lower grade, I could not eat and sleep for many days. It still makes me anxious thinking that if it ever happened again, what would I do? This is something, I cannot afford.'' (Participant 06, DU42).

   ''I am a CSS aspirant but whenever I sit down to study, I get anxious by thinking either I will pass this or not. I don't study the way I over think and remain worried. I could not concentrate properly because of the fear of failing. What if my efforts and money go waste? How will I face everyone? Everyone says that this is not the attitude of CSS aspirants; you don't seem like to do that. I can't make them understand what I am going through.'' (Participant 17, DU51).

6.5. Poor self-image

Many participants reported to have poor self-images of themselves because of the traumatic incident of failure happened in their lives. Participants think of themselves to be worthless, useless, incompetent, feel no confidence in whatever they do and inferiority complex. They reported that

''Since I have done DPT because of not getting into MBBS, I feel an inferiority complex. As my husband wants me to give that test in Australia (alongside CSS) but I don't feel like giving that because I think, I don't have enough guts to do so. I cannot pass it. I often get depressed and have trouble sleeping at night thinking that why people are putting expectations from me where I am only a loser. I have this feeling that why am I so unlucky? I wish I was a MBBS doctor.'' (Participant 17, DU41).

''When I couldn't pass my exam at GCUL for masters, I was so stressed and sad. I felt like a loser and I lost the opportunity next year because I thought, I cannot pass it. This is something very difficult which a below average student like me cannot pass. It's better not waste my parents' money and their expectations of me. I still have this in me. Even If I am fully prepared for something, someone from inside says, you cannot do it so sit down and stop being positive. You are a loser.'' (Participant 08, DU91).

''This has taken so much influence on me that I feel like lost. I am disappointed and have lost opportunities because I feel like I am nothing and I cannot do anything in life.'' (Participant 05, DU74).

6.6. Severe Stress

Multiple participants reported about psychological distress. They described no. of reasons which are causing stress and frustration as being pressurized from parents, non-empathetic behavior of family and teachers, meeting a deadline, maintain high grades and fear of failure. Few of the participants reported

''When parents keep on asking me to do my best and tell me to bring certain grades, I feel so frustrated and stressed. They give me lectures every hour how much they are doing for me so I must have to pay them off.'' (Participant 11, DU75).

''I feel stressed because of multiple things. A student is already pressurized and nobody understands this. Teachers think we do nothing and parents think we have nothing to worry about just we have to study. They don't know the pressure behind.'' (Participant 05, DU 117).

''During my masters, I was so stressed because of all the burden university put on us. This is that extreme stress that made me leave the university because that stress was causing me depression. I was stressed and afraid about failing any exam as I got into inferiority complex because of the teachers who were like ''what you guys have studied from your previous university? You all are stupid.'' (Participant 07, DU23).

4.7. Physical Health Problems

Physical Health Problems are the 7th theme of this qualitative study which has further two subthemes including somatic health complaints and weight gain and weight loss. Participants reported to have experienced not only their psychological health failing apart but physical health as well.

TABLE VII: Subthemes under the theme ''Physical Health Problems''
7.1. Somatic Health Complaints

Participants reported about having muscle tension, migraine and heart related issues because of the extreme tension about getting fail. Due to the extreme stress and anxiety, they experienced non-rhythmic heart rate, severe headaches especially migraine and back pain. One of them reported that

''In the university, my heartbeat was not rhythmic due to the constant tension and fear about how will I manage to do everything alongside getting good grades. My health was falling apart that my doctor suggested me to leave what is bothering me. I also experienced severe hair fall and due to extreme cry out of fear, I experienced blurred vision as well. Those were the worst days of my life.'' (Participant 07, DU82).

''Out of fear of getting lower grades, I am experiencing heart problem. One of the doctors suggested me to let go off my all tensions but this university life is full of tensions. At least, while staying in this university, I am not going to be well.'' (Participant 06, DU56).

''When I had to face loss in business and the person who betrayed me, I experienced severe headaches. In fact, still I get severe headaches when I think about my future and realize that I have nothing in my hand and I did nothing as well. The tension of failing in anything again has caused me migraine'' (Participant 13, DU72).

7.2. Weight Gain and Loss

Participants reported about their journey of weight gain and loss as how in tension they had food more than usual or experienced poor appetite out of tension and fear. One of them reported that

''You can't believe how much thin I was, I mean I had a perfect figure. Neither I was smart nor I was weak but since I experienced rejection and had that strong feeling of getting rejected again, I gained weight because I started to eat so much. To get out of that phase, I used to go out a lot on regular basis and had fast food. Now when someone sees me says I have changed a lot physically and have become fat. It may sound like a story but it is what it is'' (Participant 04, DU69).

''Being in that stressful phase of my life at university, I lost 5kgs within few days and to see my health falling and me getting weaker day by day, my mother decided to make me leave the university. Nobody believes that I am the same Sania who used be physically fit. They get worried.'' (Participant 07, DU107).

4.8. AFP as a Barrier to Success

Fear of failure as a barrier to success is the 8th and last theme of this qualitative study which has further 4 subthemes including procrastination/avoidance, self-sabotaging, self-comparison and burn-out. AFP brings negativity to one's life. Not only has it caused psychological and physical problems to the students but it changes them into a whole new person who attempts different actions to combat with AFP.

TABLE VIII: Subthemes under the theme ''AFP as a Barrier to Success''

8.1. Procrastination

Procrastination results in AFP. The person remains in confusion to perform or not to perform a thing. If something difficult that a person thinks himself, s/he cannot do, he starts procrastinate. One of the participants stated that

''My parents want me to do CSS. Even my husband also and he is very passionate about it but I think of myself to be very unsuitable for the CSS. I want to do it as well but I feel like I don't have enough guts to pass this test but upon insistence of my family, I bought books for CSS and joined an academy and trust me, I don't go to the academy neither I study. It's been two months since I am on the same book of general sciences. I do not feel like studying out of fear. I do not know what will happen. Everyone has trust in me but I do not believe my guts to pass the CSS. It makes me feel sad and I waste my time sitting. When my husband sees me wasting the time, he fights with me but what do I do? Nobody understands what I am going through and even if I give CSS exams and what if I do not pass? This will be extremely embarrassing and what people will think about me that I am such a dumb who could not pass the CSS.'' (Participant 17, DU53).

8.2. Self-sabotaging

Participants reported to have experienced self-sabotaging since they are in fear of getting fail. They do not find themselves capable enough to do something, to achieve something so they start underestimating themselves. One of the participants stated that

''I left the university because I started thinking that I cannot do it. Everyone in the class room seemed to be very capable enough. I felt like a loser among those students and above all, our teachers made

me feel this way. I can't say anything about others but I feel like our teachers degraded us so much and I took this to my heart. The ongoing difficult presentations and assignments, teachers' bad attitude and my inferiority complex made me leave the university. Nobody had the courage to ask questions from the teachers because once a teacher badly insulted the student ''where did you come from? You don't know a simple thing.'' I wanted to ask her, we paid thousands of money to learn from you. If we know everything already then there is no need of you to stand here and call yourself a teacher.'' (Participant 07, DU53).

8.3. Self-comparison

Self-comparison means not to be satisfied with what you have. One feels inferiority complex when he becomes preoccupied with the thinking that he cannot do this the way others are doing or he cannot master a thing because he is not capable enough. One of the participants stated that as follows:

''When I see anyone in Air force uniform, I feel very sad and think, why I have been so unlucky who could not have it. That was my biggest dream ever to serve in Air force but sadly, I could not.'' (Participant 01, DU28).

''today I see my friends are successful in their lives and I did nothing. Studies that I am barely completing, grades that I do not have and business that I lost remind me of my failures in life. I am such a loser and I cannot do anything best in life. Look at my friends, they are going high and high MashaALLAH. I pray for their more success.'' (Participant 13, DU68).

8.4. Burn Out

Individuals eventually burn out by the constant stress and fear that they give up on doing efforts and think that leaving is the best suitable option left behind. One of the participants reported that

''I am still highly criticized for leaving my MS. That was the only suitable option that I thought is left because I could not do it even, I forced myself. Despite of knowing everything that what I have been through, what my mental condition has been and my physical, they still blame me for not being strong enough. Miss where you are insulted by your teachers, mocked by your fellows, not understood by your family then what you are supposed to do? You are expected to stay strong and positive no matter how much taunts, insult and pressure thrown at you?'' (Participant 07, DU70).

5.   Discussion

In-depth analysis of participants' responses concluded that traumatic life experiences have been triggering points that made students to develop fear of failure. Experiences that they went through, have left negative impact on them such failing a test, rejection, not maintaining good grades, not being able to reach the high merit, getting insulted in front of the whole class and facing favoritism. People are often afraid for having bad past experiences related to the failure and they think of facing painful consequences that failure accompany. Hence, they doubt their abilities and become unsure of succeeding in particular tasks (Krista et al., 2013).

One more important theme that majority of the participants reported to have gone through is ''psychological problems''. Key mental health problems reported by the participants include humiliation, emotional disturbances, panic attacks, severe anxiety, chronic stress and poor self-image as well as crying spells, feelings of worthlessness, over thinking, disturbed sleep, inferiority complex; learned helplessness, pessimism and low self-esteem are the factors participants went through. Disappointment and having doubts in their true-selves are reported that they start missing the opportunities. Research done by Nsiah demonstrated that students suffering from fear of failure go through anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, disappointment, lack of confidence, low control perception, gloom, self-handicapping and increased cheating habits. Such students engage in goal avoidance activities and tend to have lower intrinsic motivation; reduced quality engagement and subjective well-being hence end up having poorer grades (Vanlauwe et al., 2017)

Another significant factor ''physical health problem'' which participants have stated that it is the result of such dreadfulness which ultimately has put negative effects on them by causing nutritional problems like bulimia and anorexia which leads to weight loss or weight gain as well as other somatic problems such as migraine, hair loss, weakening eye sight, muscle tension and heart issue. Researchers indicated that disappointments lead individuals to experience nervousness and trepidation which is a quality characteristic of fear of failure (Young et al., 2003).

An in-depth analysis of participants' responses concluded that ''societal issues'' gave rise to AFP. As society processes in such a way where an individual feels bound and is trained to perform certain actions in order to be more welcoming. This phenomenon can be seen in schools where students are prone to make efforts to get good grades in a competitive class environment and barely strive to pay attention to their inner satisfaction which is not considered by the societal standards. Everyone seems to be in a race where he wants to achieve something for the sake of social approval (Bauer et al., 2010).

''Different facets of parenting'' is one of the themes that has great impact on students which unknowingly leads AFP. Participants reported that when parents put high expectations and set careers for them, children become conscious and feel pressured. It is instilled in children that they have to do something in order to be appreciated, loved and welcomed. Most of the times, parents already choose fields of their own choice for their children and train them respectively without knowing they are capable of doing so or not. In the long terms, factors like humiliating or insulting parents and family members, any traumatic event in which one faced failure and was felt embarrassed or shameful over being fail lead to AFP. In return, the child might unable to cope up with the resulting feelings and eventually, they lead him to develop fear of failure (Ratcliffe et al., 2013).

''Diverse Social challenges faced by the students'' also play an important role in developing AFP. The people you meet and interact with on daily basis influence you in both positive and negative ways be it your friends, colleagues, class fellows and teachers. The expectations others put on them and negative evaluation by people around them which is also known as ''fear of negative evaluation'' lead towards AFP (Milosevic & McCabe, 2015). People's tendency to see failing as an awful, dreadful and shaming event is due to the presence of societal norms (Cacciotti & Hayton, 2015).

''Lack of resources and financial crisis'' happen to be one of the major causes of AFP. Participants who stated having fear of failure are afraid to take risk and implement their ideas because they think, they might face failure that will bring shame and embarrassment. To avoid such consequences, they stop taking risks. More than often, it is the loss in business that happens to be a triggering event for the individuals and hence individuals end up setting back. Fear of failure is defined as a risk-avoidant in several studies. Few authors described it as an aversive behavior to the threat (Gualdrón & Roig, 2005; Amorós & Stiepovi, 2007; Langowitz & Minniti, 2007).

''AFP as a Barrier to Success'' deteriorates a person's performance by preventing him from performing certain actions. Such students show or possess almost no resilience and they tend to sabotage their chances of success by actively engage in activities i.e., leaving particular tasks they think, are difficult, procrastinate a lot and put little effort or no effort when AFP is already predicted. In return, they have an excuse or justification for their failure. These excuses serve as a shield that protect them. For example, procrastination leads to poor performance (Covington, 1992).

6. Conclusion

The current study gives an in-depth and interesting information about factors leading to AFP and how and in what ways it impacts one's life. Findings revealed that participants have missed many opportunities because of AFP like starting up their business again, to give a test, to give themselves a one more try as

they got influenced so much that they tried to escape. Majority of the participants were not positively influenced by the fear of failure instead it has caused pessimistic outcomes in the participants.

6.1. Theoretical implications

First, this study stresses on the existing gap in the literature, which is that although AFP and its relation with other psychological constructs as well as its impact on academic performance have been measured, there is insufficient studies directly linking it to the UFs and in what way does it cause damage other than academic procrastination, is important. This study contributes to the literature by revealing that it is important to focus on UFs, as they link both AFP and overall health of the students, meeting institutional and students' requirements. Secondly, unlike previous researches that predominantly focus on academic performance/procrastination only, this study found out that UFs are a major cause of AFP resulting in negative impact on students. It also gives insight into how students are getting affected mentally, emotionally and physically. Additionally, it increases the understanding of UFs and AFP by providing information on the groundwork for developing an integrative theoretical model to, thereby, understand multidimensional impact of AFP. Moreover, it asserts not only the environmental factors contributing to a student's experience of AFP but also the social influences that shape their perspective of AFP.

6.2. Recommendations and Propositions

This study finds that with the deeper understanding of UFs, students experiencing AFP can be understood more in a holistic way while identifying the root cause, thereby, giving them the right amount of help they need. Based on RQ1, we develop the following propositions:

P_1: To promote a growth mindset and instilling a positive approach towards setbacks is very important.

It is a need of the hour for the educational institutes to start integrating programs that encourage students to approach a positive attitude towards failures and setbacks while perceiving failure as a part of the learning process. In order to help students develop resilience and a positive approach, seminars and workshops should be conducted.

Based on RQ2, the following proposition is proposed:

P_2: Both teachers and parents should be given education over supportive attitudes.

To guide parents and teachers about fostering a nurturing environment where a student can feel safe and independent enough to make independent choices without being pressurized and overwhelmed with AFP, awareness sessions should be conducted.

P_3: Teacher training program should be held to foster a learning environment that helps reducing AFP.

In order to create a learning atmosphere as well as a supportive class environment, teachers training programs should be introduced. Teachers should be trained in such a way where students can participate without the fear of being judged. They can communicate openly and know that they are heard.

P_4: Students should be given financial support to pursue their dream of education.

To enable students, manage their expenses, it is important for the government to allocate funds to support students financially. Financial stress, one of the causes of AFP, can lead students to leave their education therefore, it is important to introduce grants, interest-free loans, and scholarships to the deserving students.

Based on RQ3, the following proposition is proposed:

P_5: University counseling services should be established.

It is very important for educational institutions to implement exclusive counseling services to help students so that, they could manage their educational, career, personal, and emotional concerns. In these counseling sessions, AFP should be addressed and professional counseling should be given so that students can deal with their academic failures, career uncertainties, and personal problems.

P_6: Career counseling based on aptitude test.

It is equally important for the educational institutes to introduce and implement aptitude-based career counseling besides educational counseling. It has been seen that students lacking career counseling happen to select a career that is not suitable for them and hence, they end up having problems which results in AFP. With proper establishment of aptitude-based career counseling, we can assist students to make proper decisions that align with their interest and skills.

P_7: Establishment of open communication channels for students.

Sometimes, students want to share or discuss something with the senior faculty but they do not as they think, their insecurities or challenges will not be heard and solved. They will be judged and ridiculed. So, it is essential to introduce policies that allow students to communicate openly with the seniors regarding their academic and personal concerns, thereby, a senior can take proper steps to ensure that problem is resolved.

Finally, with reference to RQ4 and based on the existing literature, we develop the following proposition:

P_8: Encourage entrepreneurship in students.

Students should be encouraged to explore entrepreneurship by providing them financial assistance, funds, business incubation centers, and mentorship programs. It will help them earn without the fear of instability in job market.

P_9: To mitigate the adverse effects of AFP, educational psychologists should be hired.

There are many students who struggle with mental health issues that often go unnoticed and unheard. To support such students, it is very important for the educational institutes to hire educational psychologists who should offer therapeutic sessions to help students manage their stress, anxiety, depression, and any other concern related to AFP effectively.

P_{10}: Revise high merit criteria for university admissions.

Often the right number of students do not get admissions into the field that is more aligned with their skills and interest because the merit thresholds are set excessively high or the aptitude-based career counseling (discussed above) is not done. It is important for the universities to revise admission policies in order to ensure that maximum number of students apply without the fear of rejection. It will also reduce the anxiety and pressure associated with university admissions.

6.3. Limitations and scope for future research

This research faces several limitations. Firstly, the research is conducted only in Faisalabad, Pakistan that ultimately limit the generalization of the results to other universities and their students from other regions

and countries having different educational and socio-economic conditions. Moreover, convenient sampling technique is used in the first phase of data collection in which participants had to go through a self-selection process that may have biasness and can lead to a non-representative sample. Additionally, the tool used in this research is self-reported questionnaire and the responses it got might be influenced by social desirability or inaccurate self-assessment.

Secondly, the questionnaire used has no standardized scoring method. It is only used to categorize students into ''high-mid-low'' fear of failure. Furthermore, the sample size was relatively small although, in-depth interviews are conducted but it may have limited the diversity of insights. Also, the study limits insight into gender differences as the study does not investigate the development of AFP caused or affected by gender-specific socialization. Moreover, other domains such as arts, sports and personal relationships are underexplored.

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