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**Abstract**

In line with global trends, the rate of Iranian female students' enrolment in higher education has increased. However, some policy makers have been concerned about this and without considering the female voice, they have implemented strategies to balance the labour market, which has led to a decrease in female students in certain majors. The results of an empirical study showed that going to university is the primary route to empowerment for girls in Iran. The study into the meaning of empowerment adopted a qualitative approach using unstructured in-depth interviews with 80 Iranian female university students from seven provinces of Iran. The narrative responses were analysed using content analysis and grounded theory. The results of this study led to develop a new theory called 'Female Empowerment through Higher Education', which has several key constituents of female empowerment including: social presence, the power to make decision, autonomy, education and building up a new value framework. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)