

Assessing the Impact of Socioeconomic Factors on Women Empowerment: Recent Evidence from National Survey of Pakistan (PDHS)

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Abstract

The study examines empirically the behaviour of social and economic factors that can contribute to women empowerment taking into consideration the impact of two important factors; power in decision-making process and occurrence of domestic violence. Therefore, women empowerment is operationalized in this study via two factors; one is as a decision-maker within the household and secondly through the reporting of domestic violence. Recent Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017-18 is used for estimation. The findings of the binary logistic regression model show that women's education, employment, exposure to mass media and possession of assets are positively related to decision-making power or women empowerment. However, in the case of other measures of empowerment i.e. reporting domestic violence, educated and employed women are observed less vulnerable to sexual and psychological violence. Nonetheless, for emotional violence, the results depict that more educated women suffer from more emotional violence but not any other kind of violence.

Keywords: Demographic, Health, Empowerment, media, violence, education, employment, possession of house, newspaper, physical violence, emotional violence, internet use.

JEL Codes: E24, L82, M54, N30, I12.

Introduction

Women are an important element of any country's population. Their contribution is equally important in country's development as of men. In order to make them active participant of development there is need of proper initiatives. From recent years there has been an ideological revolution of human rights theories. This ideological shift is also to improve the status of women worldwide. In 2000, the United Nations (UN) system developed eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for eradication of global poverty. Its third objective was to promote gender equality and women empowerment. Women empowerment can be described in two ways and the most notable features of empowerment have been defined as: Power or autonomy over freedom and control over resources. While the instrumental way regards empowerment as the means to a better family, economy, society and nation.

Pakistan planning commission defines empowerment as instrument that involves access to information, education, and resources; decision-making power and authority; and control over one's life. Control over violence is another form of women empowerment. Globally gender-based violence is increasingly recognized as a human rights problem that is crossing regional, social and cultural boundaries. Surveys suggested that between 15 to 71 percent ever married women have been physically or sexually assaulted by an intimate partner at global level. Intimate violence has also adversely affected women's status and restricts a woman in making independent decisions about their health care and children's schooling. Hence it is the barrier to women empowerment and country's development. According to a report of UN (2015), Pakistan stands at 143rd in economic participation and opportunities and ranks 135 in educational attainment showing worst position of Pakistan with respect to gender equality. Human rights commission of Pakistan published the facts in 2014 that from 2008 till 2014, there has been 33 percent increase in cases of violence against women in which highest number of attackers are their husbands i.e. 51.56 percent.

Women have very limited participation in economic sphere of life in Pakistan. Factors like less participation in labor force, more women engaged with informal settings of works, small proportion of women employed in formal sectors and employment quota are not portraying a satisfactory situation for

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improving woman's living standards up to the mark. These are the serious setbacks for women autonomy in their economic empowerment. Therefore, the present study aims to find those socio-economic determinants which are acting as hindrance in women's autonomy and their economic power. Moreover, it also targets that how the socio-economic environment in our society is playing its role in domestic violence. Decision making power and Domestic Violence are taken as the measures of Empowerment here in this study.

Research Questions

The study is focusing to investigate the following questions:

1. Whether the socioeconomic conditions of the society affect the women empowerment in avoiding domestic violence or not?
2. To what extent socioeconomic values are having their impact on the power of decision making of women in Pakistan which is another important indicator of woman empowerment?

Research Objectives

The objectives of the research work are as follows;

- To examine the impact of socioeconomic factors on women empowerment measured through power of decision making.
- To explore the nature of relationship between socioeconomic indicators on women empowerment measured through domestic violence in Pakistan.

Literature Review

Women empowerment is an important issue in developing countries which is somehow retarding the pace of economic growth of these economies as well. However, knowing about empowerment is a bit complex concept. Sometimes a working woman may not be empowered, or a non-working may be. Its more about the 'rights' of a woman rather than only 'working opportunity' for her. According to recent development on this concept by the World Bank, empowerment is related to power of decision making and having rights of ownership of assets. Hence this can be observed from here that empowerment should be taken as a measure of 'inclusivity' to enhance the capacity of economy. Below is given a glimpse of few of the literature in this context for having an idea that where the gap exists in exploring the relationship between the socio-economic culture of a society and its impact on the woman empowerment.

Simbolon et al. (2023) highlighted those factors which are affecting the domestic violence on women. The findings of the study showed that the power of perpetrator (husband) affects the extent of women independence. And equal distribution of power between husband and wife determines the level of conflict and violence.

Mohammad et al. (2021) recently tried to explore the relationship between socio-economic determinants and women empowerment using Household survey. The author highlighted the impact of education, and wealth index on social and economic empowerment of women in Pakistan using regression analysis however the authors used a different approach for defining the social and economic empowerment and considered the variables as the exogenous in their impact on empowerment. Nonetheless the authors endorsed that self-reliant women are more empowered as compared to dependent on their husbands for their well-being.

Saharwadi and Ahmed (2020) worked upon the determinants and dimensions of women empowerment in developing countries. The authors determined the women empowerment index and tried to find the impact of each factor on that index. Using five dimensions of empowerment for 38 developing countries the findings suggested that a woman with higher education and wealth is positively related with decision making power of woman and her self-confidence.

Ali and Gavino (2017) conducted a study on prevalence of domestic violence and its reasons among women of low socioeconomic areas of Karachi. The study reported that the majority of women 97.7 percent experiencing domestic violence from their husbands and 97 percent of that experienced abuse from their in-laws. 80 percent women were reported receiving beating by their husbands termed as physical violence and 57 percent experienced such violence from their in-laws. 98.5 % women were reported feeling stressed and

emotional violence from their husbands and 97.3 percent from their in-laws. The main reasons of violence were reported as; infertility, financial matters, not having a son, husband being addicted to drug, refusal of sex by wife, disobeying of women with in laws, arguing with husband, dowry matters, exchange marriages and going out without permission. The study suggested that media can play a purposive role for enhancing women role in society.

Ugal (2015) also explored the determinants of women empowerment in Nigeria. The study proposed that ability of women to make decisions is crucial for empowerment. Education influences more decision-making power on their own health and purchases. The study indicated that the lesser the education there was, the more justification towards wife beating. Women take only very few decisions alone and mostly decision are made jointly. Study also indicated that the higher a respondent believe a woman can refuse to sexual intercourse the higher the chances of attaining personal health care and postnatal care. The study estimated that indicators of empowerment have negative significance on women's health and women's inability to determine the number of children. So there is a need to improve women's socio-economic condition in the country.

Pambe, Gnoumou and Kabore (2014) has developed a study on relationship between socio-economic status and empowerment of women in Burkina Faso. They concluded that an educated women is likely to be better in terms of knowledge to participate in household decisions. Similarly paid employment also upgrade the position of women in decision making power in terms of contributing to their own health care and household purchases. While poor women are less active in decision making power. Domestic violence was reported weakly related to socioeconomic factors such as education. More educated women were reported more likely to experience psychological pressure.

West (2006) worked on the question, does employment empower the women? The study analyzed the link between women empowerment and women participation in labor force at individual level for India using Demographic Health Survey (DHS) of ever married women age 15-49 years. Empowerment was measured through four indicators: decision making, mobility, control over resources and violence against women. Ordered logistic models were used to estimate these four indicators of empowerment in terms of various occupation classifications. The empirical results showed that working is more important to empower women while women have limited decision making power, limited mobility, limited control of resources and highly vulnerable to domestic violence.

Sathar and Kazi (2000) explored that status of women is heterogeneous in terms of community and individual levels. The data was collected from ten communities of most populous rural Punjab. The study found that factors are likely to vary across these ten rural communities in ten different areas of Punjab. For this purpose, the communities were regrouped as northern Barani, North western mixed, central, Peri-urban and southern. The study found that northern women of Punjab have lower economic autonomy but greater freedom of movement and decision making then of southern Punjab. Education does not have much influence to female autonomy in rural Punjab. Central Punjab and Southern Punjab have lower educational status of women but greater opportunity to paid employment.

Theoretical Framework

This study aims to explore the major determinants of women empowerment in the province of Punjab, Pakistan. Empowerment is defined in many ways in existing literature but here the analysis is done following these two aspects of empowerment mentioned in past studies i.e. participation in decision-making and experience of domestic violence. Women empowerment is vital for creating better quality of life and balanced growth as women are comprising half of the population of the world. Many scholars consider women empowerment as a multidimensional phenomenon. Because of different socio-cultural systems, women have heterogeneous characteristics, so this is the reason that this concept is to be discussed taking into consideration both the context specificity and regional specificity. This study explores the women empowerment by using indicators of decision making power and prevalence of domestic violence. Decision making tendency tells us something to the extent that women is already empowered in household. While

experience of domestic violence reports the ability of household to accept and promote women empowerment. The present study designs its framework with this proposition that socioeconomic indicators: age, education, employment, possession of assets, regional disparity (rural and Urban) and exposure to mass media are associated to decision making power and domestic violence outcomes. Below is given detailed

Table 1: Outcome Variables

Variable Name	Variable Label	Values
Decision making	Person who usually decides on respondent's healthcare	0 = by others 1 = by herself
	Person who usually decides on large household purchases	0 = by others 1 = by herself
	Person who usually decides on visits to family or relatives	0 = by others 1 = by herself
Report on Domestic violence	Experienced any emotional violence	0 = No, 1 = Yes
	Experienced any less severe violence	0 = No, 1 = Yes
	Experience any severe violence	0 = No, 1 = Yes
	Experience any sexual violence	0 = No, 1 = Yes
	Husband/partner accuses respondent of unfaithfulness	0 = No, 1 = Yes

theoretical underpinnings of the idea of present study through which these factors can have their possible effects on both of the measures of empowerment i.e. Decision making and prevalence of domestic violence.

Education and women empowerment

Education is very important aspect. It is a social institution through which society equips its masses with knowledge, job skills, and cultural norms and values (Macionic, 2006). The current study expects that there is positive association of education with women's participation in decision-making and a negative association of education with domestic violence as already proved by Pambe et al. (2014). Education is the medium by which a woman can gain her status as education leads to earning good sources of employment and awareness about their rights. Education builds confidence of women to exert a point of view. This knowledge increases their competency and chances for a paid job and other benefits (Heaton et al. (2005). An educated woman is more likely to move in the society with confidence. Education increase the women empowerment at household level (Shoaib, 2012).

Wealth and women empowerment

Literature reports that wealthier women are likely to have more empowerment. They are having more powers to take decisions about their own health care (Boateng, 2012). Awumbila (2006) and Mehra (1997) found in their study that poverty of women is causing lesser autonomy. Moreover, women in the highest wealth quintiles are found to be less likely to have experienced physical violence than those in the poorest quintiles (Naved & Persson 2008; Koenig et al., 2003).

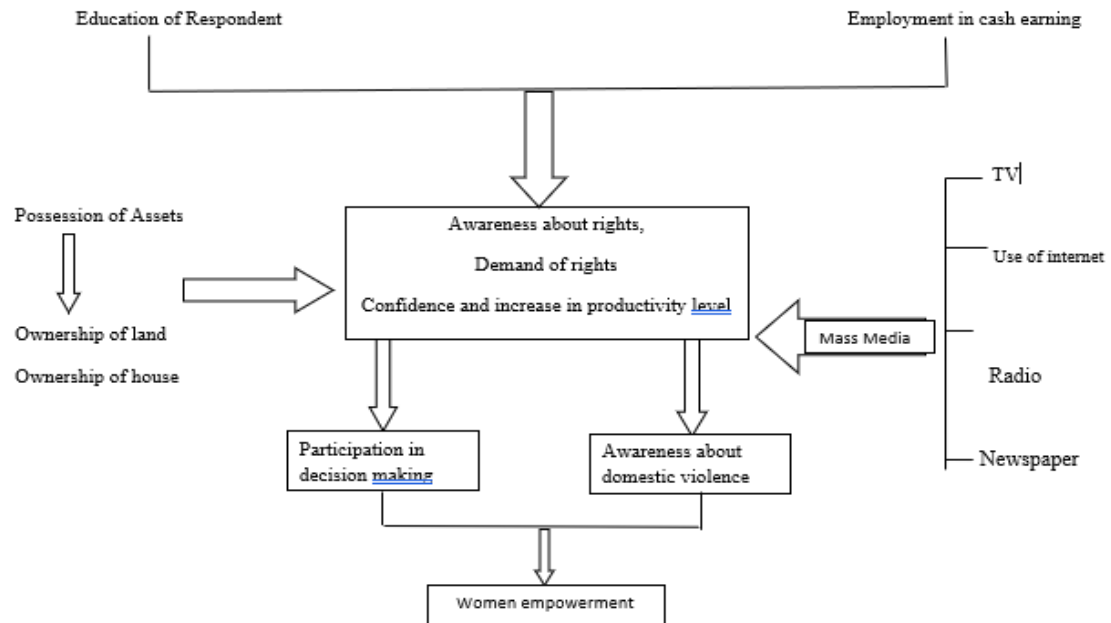
Possession of assets

Possession of assets is a good indicator to analyze women empowerment. Possession of property decreases women's economic dependency that is the one of the foremost important factor in their empowerment. There exists both the direct and indirect association between women empowerment and possession of assets. Quartey (2005) described that physical asset ownership is positively related to household welfare. Furthermore, Land ownership is also another important source of empowerment as this enhances the security of woman and their control over household decisions (Haddad et al., 1997; Agarwal, 1997).

Exposure to mass media and women empowerment

Various studies in existing literature highlighted this relationship for different societies and concluded that radio and television provide awareness to women about their rights and gender equality through various programs and empower them (Ali & Sultan, 1999; Parveen, 2005). Hence, on the basis of above ideologies, below is developed a conceptual framework based on the above theoretical foundations.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework



Source: Authors' own idea.

Key Variables

The study examines the behavior of indicators representing decision-making power and experience of domestic violence and how these factors are influenced by socioeconomic factors like education, employment, possession of assets, exposure to mass media, wealth and residence area. The study uses Cross sectional data from Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18 released by National Institute of Population Studies. The two important outcome variables used in this study to know the extent and nature of women empowerment are: decision making power and report of their domestic violence. Decision making power is represented in terms of respondent's health care, major purchases and visits to family and friends. The domestic violence variable is proxied by these variables from survey; emotional violence, sexual violence, physical violence and psychological violence. The variables have been converted in to binary variable by giving codes. The respective codes are given in table 1.

Explanatory Variables

Independent variables used in this study are given in table 2 with their respective values. These variables are also converted to binary units.

The Covariates

There are some other socioeconomic indicators which can contribute in decision making and domestic violence, therefore these have also been added in model as control variables. The existing literature suggests that age of women, their residential area and wealth index are the strong determinants of women autonomous status in the society. These variables are also available in the employed dataset and being converted into binary variable for using in Model.

Table 2: Explanatory Variables

Variable Name	Variable Label	Values
Education	Highest educational level	0 = no education
		1 = education attained
Exposure to mass media	Frequency of reading newspaper or magazine	0 = not at all 1 = yes reading
	Frequency of listening to radio	0 = not at all 1 = yes listening
	Frequency of watching television	0 = not at all 1 = yes watching
	Frequency of using internet last month	0 not at all 1 = yes using
	Employment	Respondent currently working
Possession of assets	Type of earnings from respondent's work	0 = others, 1 = cash
	Owns a house alone or jointly	0 = by others 1 = alone
	Owns land alone or jointly	0 = by others, 1 = alone

Source: PDHS dataset.

Table 3: Control Variables

Variable Name	Variable Label	Values
Age	Age of woman	
Residence	Area of residence	1 = Urban. 2 = Rural
Wealth	Wealth index	1 = poorest 2 = poorer 3 = middle 4 = richer 5 = richest

Source: PDHS dataset.

Empirical Methodology

Logistic regression is the appropriate regression model to be used when our dependent variable is dichotomous (binary). Like all the regressions, logistic regression is also a predictive analysis. This regression helps to explain the relationship among one dependent variable and independent variables. As in this analysis dependent variable is an indicator of the choice as “Yes” or “No” therefore such type of models cannot be explained with the help of simple Ordinary Least Square (OLS) models. Therefore, the Binary logistic model is suitable to explain dichotomized variables such as “Yes” / “No”, Agree/Disagree etc. The general form of binary logistic regression model is in equation (1),

$$\log p_i/(1-p_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_p X_m \quad (1)$$

where, $P(Y_i = 1) = p_i$ and $P(Y_i = 0) = 1 - p_i$; X_i = Independent variables such as woman's demographic, socioeconomic and program-related characteristics, b_0 = Intercept term of the regression model, b_i = Regression co-efficient of the respective variable, representing the effect or association for individual characteristics.

The coefficients in this model represent Odd Ratios; measuring an increase or decrease in the log odds of occurrence of an event (versus not occurrence) associated with a unit or category change in an independent variable. The Odds ratios are to be used when we want to compare the relative odds of occurrence of outcome of interest; for example, ‘disease’ or ‘disorder’ given exposure to the variable of interest like ‘characteristics of health’ and ‘aspect of medical history’. The following rule of thumb is used in this regard:

- Odd Ratio =1 Exposure does not affect the odds of outcome
- Odd Ratio >1 Exposure associated with higher odds of outcome
- Odd Ratio <1 Exposure associated with lower odds of outcome

Wald Test is used to measure the significance of the model. Moreover, goodness of fit is measured through the Hosmer-Lemshow statistic. Furthermore, other diagnostic measures like Cox & Snell's R^2 and Nagelkerke's R^2 are also applied for knowing the validity and reliability of analysis (see appendix).

Descriptive Analysis

This section describes the facts collected by PDHS survey in Pakistan descriptively. It has been done by calculating the proportion and ratios of the responses of the individuals in the PDHS survey. PDHS data set is comprised of 48.6 percent urban respondents and 51.4 percent rural respondents. Combined wealth index is analyzed for measuring the different economic classes in PDHS. The calculations report that out of 100,869 households 20,305 live in poorest conditions while 20,590 households lie in richest class. Almost equal proportion of poor and middle class exist in the wealth index of PDHS. Wealth or economic class play an important role in attitude towards women empowerment. Wealth index revealed that highest percentage of people is poorer class which is 21.5 while richest and poorest are almost on equal proportion. As per the calculations from PDHS survey data, about 18.9 percent people has primary education while only 12.0 percent people have higher education.

Possession of assets shows the recorded response of women age 15-49 irrespective of marriage. Significantly larger proportion of men has property ownership than women. 97 percent of women do not own house or land. The response of possession is recorded as jointly or alone. Only 108 female respondent owns a house alone that is 0.9 percent. 12469 respondents have no possession of house. Women's individual possession of assets make them economically empowered and a protection against domestic violence. Information regarding the Ownership of land showed that about 98 percent respondents do not own land at all. Only 0.7 percent respondents of the question about land owns land alone while 0.6 percent owns land jointly with someone else. Regarding Media, PDHS revealed that television is the most used form of media among women. 47 percent of women have no access to any form of media. Only 5 percent respondents listen to radio once a week while 5 percent women listen to radio less than once a week while out of 12708 respondents 5596 use to watch television at least once a week while 45 percent respondents do not watch television at all. The category related to the frequency of using internet last month showed that 89 percent people women do not internet at all. Only 10 percent respondents use internet. Three percent women use internet at least once a week while only one percent women use internet less than once a week. Overall 12 percent of women are reported using internet on daily basis in last 12 months. PDHS 2017-18 has collected information about decision making power of women in three perspectives: their own health care, their participation for large purchases of household and to visit for family and friends. Sample was conducted from currently married women age 15-49. PDHS indicated that overall 36 percent of women participate in all three types of decision making while 39 percent participate in none of these decisions. Decision making power categorize jointly with their husbands or alone. Decision making plays an important role in women empowerment and serves as an important indicator for their development. Following tables show the responses of decision making in these three perspectives separately.

Gender based violence especially towards women is acknowledged as violation of basic human rights. Gender based violence categorizes as any sexual, physical, psychological or emotional harm. In this PDHS, ever married women are included in sample who were asked about experience of violence by their current or former husbands and by others. Women are included of age 15-49. Survey reported that 30 percent ever married female respondents have experienced emotional violence while 70 percent respondents feel safe. Physical violence is categorized in two forms here; less severe violence and severe violence. Responses indicated that 24 percent women experienced less severe violence. Seventy-eight percent of ever-married women who have experienced sexual violence since age 15 report. Psychological peace plays an important role in female development and empowerment. A woman with peace of mind can boost her skills and abilities to compete unpleasant things of her life. Survey indicated that nine percent husbands accuses respondent of unfaithfulness. Twelve percent husbands do not permit respondent to meet female friends and seven percent husbands try to limit their contacts with family.

Empirical Estimation

Model 1: Logistic Model Incorporating Domestic Violence as an Indicator of Women Empowerment

Various models of logistic regression are run and their interpretations are also given. Experience of emotional violence is a good proxy to check women empowerment status in PDHS 2018. The continuous variables are converted into dichotomized variables to run the logistic regression using binary logistic regression. The women who are experiencing violence are coded (= 1, Yes) and women who are not experiencing violence are coded (= 0, No).

Table 4: Results of logistic regression explaining women's empowerment through the report of various types of violence by socio-economic characteristics

Socio-economic factors	EV		PV		SV		PsyV	
	β	OR	β	OR	β	OR	β	OR
Education	0.263**	1.323	-0.117	0.117	-1.49***	0.989	-0.17**	0.839
Employment	-0.167	0.846	-0.577	0.754	-0.26	0.845	-0.27	0.762
Reading newspaper	0.043	1.068	-0.279	1.382	1.053	1.212	0.287	1.333
Watching TV	-0.046	0.955	0.712	0.954	0.24	1.121	0.114	1.121
Using internet	0.138	1.148	-0.360	0.986	-0.84	1.294	0.258	1.294
Owens house	0.470	1.600	1.051	1.980	-	-	0.815	2.258
Owens land	0.741***	2.097	-18.23	2.023	-	-	0.498**	1.646
Listening radio	-	-	0.024	0.897	0.23	1.100	-2.35**	1.100
Constant	-0.957*	0.384	-3.864*	0.077	-2.89*	0.055	-2.35*	0.095

Source: Author's own estimation using PDHS data. *** significance at 10%, ** significance at 5%, * significance level at 1%. EV: Emotional Violence, PV: Physical Violence, SV: Sexual Violence, PsyV: Psychological Violence

Table 4 shows the estimation of binary logistic regression model and reports both the co-efficient of the variables and the odd-ratios. For different dependent variables have been used for measuring empowerment of women through the incidences of domestic violence. Discussing first the role of socio-economic factors on the emotional violence, it appears that more education, more emotional violence a woman can face and the odd ratio 1.32 shows that on average increase in education increases the odds of emotional violence. However, in case of physical, sexual and psychological violence, increase in education reduces on average the incidence of violence with odd ratios 0.117, 0.989, and 0.839 respectively. Results are very interesting in case of employment showing that increase in employment is reducing on average the domestic violence on women in each category with odd ratios 0.84, 0.754, 0.845, and 0.762. It means that more economically independent women are having more chances for not facing any kind of domestic violence. Similar is the case for the possession of land. But in case of media exposure, TV and internet, the results are though positive in sign but insignificant statistically, showing no effect of such factors on the domestic violence of women. One of the reasons can be the non-availability of such services at the disposal of women in Pakistan. Table 5 reports the findings of the same model but with different proxy variable for measuring empowerment i.e. decision making. Post estimations of the model are given in Appendix.

Model 2: Logistic Model Incorporating Decision-Making Power as an Indicator of Women Empowerment

Decision-making power is a good proxy to check women's empowerment status within households in PDHS 2018. This continuous variable is converted into dichotomized variables for running the logistic regression. The women who are autonomous to make decisions are coded (= 1 by herself) and women who are not empowered to make decisions alone or with the collaboration of others, family members, and with husband jointly or others alone are coded (= 0 by others).

Table 5 shows education is positively related to decision-making regarding healthcare visits to family and friends and household purchase decisions. The odd ratios show that on average increase in education is increasing decision power odds by 1.426, 1.532 and 1.507, respectively. Employment is also having the same positive impact on women decision power autonomy. One of the interesting findings of this

model is that the more a woman is using internet media and TV, the more she is empowered in decision-making in all categories. Possession of land and ownership of a house also shows a positive impact on women empowerment but it is observed only in the case of healthcare decision not in all categories. All these findings show that socioeconomic factors play their role in women's autonomy but her employment status, education, and media contribute more to this compared to possession of assets. Post estimations of the model are given in Appendix A1.

Table 5: Results of logistic regression explaining women's empowerment in decision making by socioeconomic characteristics

Socioeconomic factors	HCD		VFFD		HPD	
	β	OR	β	OR	β	OR
Education	0.355*	1.426	0.427*	1.532	0.410*	1.507
Employment	0.371*	1.449	0.076	0.992	0.464*	1.590
Reading newspaper	-0.01	0.984	-0.06	0.909	0.122	1.130
Using internet	0.654*	1.923	0.326*	1.386	0.395*	1.484
Owens a house	0.493*	1.638	0.539	1.715	-0.91	0.400
Owens a land	0.733*	2.082	-0.29	0.748	-0.29	0.742
Listening radio	0.136	1.145	0.018	1.018	0.218**	1.243
Watching TV	0.314*	1.368	0.160*	1.173	0.258*	1.295
Area			-0.11	0.893		
Constant	-3.11*	0.045	-2.75	0.064*	-3.69	0.093

Source: Author's own calculation using PDHS data.

*** significance at 10%, ** significance at 5%, * significance level at 1%.

HCD: health care decision, **VFFD:** Visit to family and friend related decision, **HPD:** Household Purchase Decision

Conclusion

The results of the study show that socioeconomic indicators are strongly related to women autonomy both related to the power of decision making and incidences of domestic violence. All indicators education, employment, exposure to mass media and possession of land or house are positively related to the decision making about women health care. Education and employment are positively related to decision making as an educated woman has better knowledge to negotiate with others about decisions within household and with paid employment she is better able to make decisions (Soharwardi et al., 2020; Muhammad et al., 2021; Reshi et al., 2022) as she has the means and supporting costs about health care and major purchases.

While in case of visits to family and friends' employment has not much effect for empowerment. So study supports our hypothesis that uneducated and poor women are less likely to involve in decision making concluding less empowerment. Possession of assets has not positive affect on decision making regarding purchases while they are positively related to decision about health care. Regarding visits to family and friends only education of women and their exposure to mass media have significant affect.

However, results about domestic violence are quite different. Regarding sexual violence and psychological violence, education and employment have negative impact which shows that with no education and employment, women are more vulnerable to face physical violence which ultimately is a sign of women disempowerment (the same results supported by Dabaghi et al., 2023). About emotional violence the findings show that more educated women are suffering with more emotional violence. This means that with education women are more sensitive and vulnerable in case of emotional abuse. Employment has negative affect as women with no employment are more susceptible to emotional violence (Simbolon et al., 2023).

Women with possession of assets are also suffering with emotional violence. With possession of assets women are more in danger in terms of psychological violence as their husband accuse them of unfaithfulness. Possession of assets has also not proved as a security to prevent physical violence. This has been expanded to more explicitly as the relative resource theory (McCloskey, 1996; Macmillan & Gartner, 1999). According to these findings, it can be stated that when status inconsistency exists (i.e. women who

are employed when their partners are not and have possession of asset while their partners have not and when women have higher economic status comparing to their spouses) women are at increased risk of violence in this case (Chauhan & Jungari, 2022). This is because they are challenging men's status as head of the household.

Hence considering all variables in this analysis for decision making and domestic violence the analysis of study confirmed that education and employment are key social and economic factors for improving the women empowerment status in Punjab. Furthermore, it has also been observed from the findings that socioeconomic factors used in this study showing a strong impact more towards decision-making power of a woman than domestic violence on her. Perhaps this may be due to less exposure to mass media and possession of assets to counter domestic violence, or may be less report of domestic violence and less proportion of possession of assets among women in Pakistan.

Policy Recommendations

Taking into consideration the findings of the study, following important recommendations are presented:

- Educational opportunities should be provided to women both in rural and urban areas. The govt. should make such arrangements that primary education should be made compulsory for women in any case. Specific measures should be taken such as girls' scholarships and quotas for women at work place. These measures could be justified not only they are key to gender equity and to foster socio-cultural attitudes toward gender equality but also they are necessary to accelerate development.
- Remote and rural women's involvement in income generation activities is another aspect of women's empowerment. As the results showed that employed women is having lesser chances of physical abuse and more participation in decision making process therefore the govt. should provide such facilities to this vulnerable segment of the society that their services must be paid in nature at any stage of employment. It should be supported by encouraging them in entrepreneurship and making accessible the property ownership rights, trainings and access to finance and markets. Another comprehensive strategy which is important to develop is to formulate women protection laws specifically to counter domestic violence incidences. This is something our society is strongly missing, and this is the reason that society is more biased in its norms towards male segment and is not at all balanced in its actual plot.
- Last but not the least, the government should create awareness about the rights of women through various media sources. The government should increase the access of such facilities for rural women also on equal grounds so that they could be well informed and more empowered.

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APPENDIX

A1: Diagnostics of TWO Models

Empowerment as reporting of Violence

EV: Cox and Snell test			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
1	4170.596 ^a	0.008	0.034
a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 4 because parameter estimates are changed by less than 0.001.			
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			
Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	26.398	6	0.000

PV: Cox and snell test			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
1	193.963 ^a	0.012	0.034
a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 20 because maximum iterations have been reached. Final solution cannot be found.			
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			
Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	5.592	9	0.780

SV: Cox and snell test			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
1	154.163 ^a	0.022	0.072
a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 07 because parameter estimates are changed by less than 0.01.			
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			
Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	10.017	9	0.349

PsyV: Cox and snell test			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
1	2059.128 ^a	0.004	0.008
a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 5 because parameter estimates are changed by less than 0.001.			
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			
Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	11.978	8	0.152

Empowerment as Decision making

HCD: Cox and Snell test			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
1	6360.928 ^a	0.015	0.037
a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 06 because parameter estimates are changed by less than 0.001.			
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			
Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	189.95	8	0.000

VFFD: Cox and snell test			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
1	6454.99 ^a	0.008	0.019
a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 05 because parameter estimates are changed by less than 0.001.			
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			
Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	95.888	9	0.000

HPD: Cox and snell test			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R ²	Nagelkerke R ²
1	4248.083 ^a	0.008	0.026
a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 7 because parameter estimates are changed by less than 0.001.			
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			
Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	94.977	8	0.000