





## Socio-economic empowerment of women with Sustainable Development Goal 05, and Pakistan's commitment (Sindh): An assessment

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### Abstract

*In the Sindh province of Pakistan, the study examines the variables that affect women's empowerment in terms of household decision-making. The term "women's empowerment" simply refers to giving women the means to achieve social and financial independence. The degree of control individuals have over outside factors that have an impact on their wellbeing is referred to as empowerment. Economic growth is boosted by women's empowerment, which results from investments in their health and education. Rural areas are home to the majority of the population's females. By improving the health and education of future generations, educated and empowered women in these places can either directly or indirectly contribute to economic prosperity. The household purchase is unaffected by the husband's educational background. Women who are employed are more likely to make decisions than those who are unemployed. There is a direct correlation between the number of sons, marital violence, and living conditions and major household purchases. Decisions about property ownership are closely related. This study shows that having a job, a source of income, a higher education, a mother who has a higher degree, owning property in her name, having more mobility, and feeling empowered increases women's domestic earning capacity. There are specific policy alternatives provided for developing economies.*

**Keywords:** PDHS 2017-18; Sindh; employment; sustainable development; education  
**GEL:** M5, Q01, 123

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamic process of empowering women is influenced by economic, sociological, familial/interpersonal, legal, political, and psychological issues. Assessment of women's empowerment presents some challenges. Some of these problems have been deemed to be particularly important by the literature, such as the use of proxy indicators rather than direct measurements, the lack of data availability and use over time, the individualised nature of the evaluation process, and changes in the relevance of indicators over time. Nyelele, C., Egoh, B. N., & Manley, K. 2022 The topic of women's economic and social empowerment has been given great emphasis in several countries. In addition, the Sustainable Development Goals are intended to improve women's empowerment and gender equality. Since the inability to meet basic needs frequently rules out the inability to make important decisions, this trend is drawing more attention given the positive logical relationship between poverty and disempowerment (Mirziyoyeva, Z., & Salahodjaev, R. (2022).

As a notion, women's empowerment implies providing a setting in which women may make wise decisions about their lives in a given circumstance (Leder, S. 2016). Quantifying the notion has never been easy due to its broad scope. As a result of this paradox, numerous studies have established multiple conceptualization methodologies and metrics to evaluate the complex notion (Kabeer, N. 2014; Mubeen, S et al., 2019). Cultural norms, social standing, and life possibilities, for instance, have an impact on women's empowerment (Domingo et al., 2015; S. Mubeen et al., 2021). Women's empowerment can occur on three different levels: the micro (individual), the meso (beliefs and actions in relation to others), and the macro (outcomes in a larger, social context). According to Costell et al. (2012), there are four subcategories of women's empowerment: sociocultural, economic, educational, and health. While there are considerable differences in the methods used to measure empowerment, some research findings are consistent. Some of the key components that are typically used to conceptualise women's empowerment in this context are resource control, household decision-making, economic decision-making, and physical mobility (Hameed et al., 2014; Sharma, 2015). Vickers, NJ; 2017; Parmley, 2019; Mubeen, SH, & Hye, Q. M. A. (2022).

Even though discrimination against women is a worldwide problem, Pakistani women's empowerment needs specific consideration (Bushra, A., & Wajiha, N., 2015; Abbas, S et al, 2022; Mubeen, S., Shahid, M. H., & Hye, Q. M. A. (2022). Pakistani society is hierarchical in both its normative and existential order, with unequal power relations between men and women, with women being positioned beneath men (Rahman et al., 2018; Zandi, G., et al., 2022). Gender equality and women's emancipation appear to be far-off goals in this non-egalitarian culture with significant gender differences (Raza, A., & Murad, H. S. 2010; Mubeen, S., et al., 2022). Given that Pakistan is ranked 151st out of 153 nations in the Gender Gap Index (Gap, 2017), the low level of women's empowerment there is a real problem.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

1994's Batliwala The degree of control individuals have over outside factors that have an impact on their wellbeing is referred to as empowerment. (Hashemi et al. 1996; S. Mubeen et al. Empowerment is a strategy for fostering a social environment in which individuals and groups can make decisions and selections for social transformation. By gaining information, skills, and authority, it enhances innate ability. (Bennett, 2002; Mubeen, S., Quddus, M. A., & Shahid, M. H. (2021; 2022)). According to the author, empowerment is the enhancement of one's resources and skills. Women's empowerment includes welfare, awareness, resource access, and resource control (Kabeer, 1999; Mubeen, S., Shahid, M. H., & Khan, M. K., 2022). In a similar vein, women's empowerment includes awareness, self-esteem, self-confidence, and agency. Welfare has connections with monetary gain, awareness, easier access to resources, control over gender equality, and women's empowerment. According to Kabeer (2001), empowerment is the expansion of a person's capacity to make wise decisions about their lives in circumstances where they previously lacked that capacity.

According to Keller and Mbwewe (1991), women's empowerment is a process in which they acquire the capacity to organise themselves in order to strengthen their independence, assert their individual right to make decisions, and manage resources in order to confront and end their subordination. According to UNDP (2015), the degree to which women are able to make decisions independently at home, at work, and in their communities as well as engage in socio-economic and political life is a key indicator of women's empowerment. According to Keller and Mbwewe (1991), women's empowerment is a process in which they acquire the capacity to organise themselves in order to strengthen their independence, assert their individual right to make decisions, and manage resources in order to confront and end their subordination. According to UNDP (2015), the degree to which women are able to make decisions independently at home, at work, and in their communities as well as engage in socio-economic and political life is a key indicator of women's empowerment. Jejeebhoy and Sathar (2001) conducted a quantitative investigation in Pakistan and India. Freedom from threat, mobility, and control over economic resources were used to gauge one's level of empowerment. Khan and Maan (2008) created a women's empowerment index using the elements of control over financial resources, mobility in family decision-making, and involvement in family discussions.

The goal of the current study is to narrow this gap by evaluating women's empowerment as a process governed by both direct and indirect indicators of women's empowerment, such as self-esteem, self-confidence, awareness, decision-making, and work status of women, in a single study. The research on women's empowerment is frequently context-oriented, such as region- or religion-specific, based on an examination of the microcredit framework, or with an emphasis on certain factors including age, education, marital status, health, and age. [Njoh, A. J., & Akiwumi, F. A. (2012); Al-Shami, S. S. A., Razali, R. M., & Rashid, N. (2018) Age, education, marital status, and health are all inversely connected. The current study contributes to the body of literature by examining the five different aspects

of women's empowerment, including, among other things, the characteristics of women, husbands, heads of households, and children. The primary objective of the study is to investigate the influence of household characteristics and those of other family members on the many dimensions of women's empowerment.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

We used this model for analysis

$$P(1/p) = b_0 + b_1 \text{age} + b_2 \text{res} + b_3 \text{edu} + b_4 \text{Hedu} + b_5 \text{Account} + b_6 \text{BISP} + b_7 \text{emp} + b_8 \text{violence} + b_9 \text{P.Media} + b_{10} \text{E.Media} + b_{11} \text{No of sons} + b_{12} \text{F.pref} + b_{13} \text{wealth s} + b_{14} \text{prop}$$

Dependent variable is women empowerment and independent variables include age of respondent, residence of respondent education of both husband and respondent, BISP and media with the same time properly and wealth index, number of sons

The empowerment of women is our dependent variable which contains four proxies of decision making including:

- Health care
- household purchases
- Visit to family
- Spending on husband's earnings

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Sindh (N= 2142)**

With a population of nearly 25 million, Sindh is Pakistan's most populous province. Less than half as many people are literate in rural areas as in metropolitan ones. There were 30, 20 percent in 1972 and 45, 30 percent in 1998, respectively. It was 69 percent, 60 percent, and 56 percent in 2010, 2013, and 2014, respectively. The greater rate indicates that many children and teenagers are denied access to education. In 2018, 62.2 percent of people can read and write. There are 14.7 million people in the labour force overall, with a participation rate of 50.0 percent; men make up 81.9 percent of the workforce, while women make up 18.1 percent. The overall unemployment rate in Sindh was 11.8 percent, or 5.0 percent for males and 4.0 percent for women. Agriculture employs 35.8% of the workforce, compared to the industry's 22.2% workforce. According to Pakistan's Economic Survey, the service industry employs 42.2% of all workers.

**Participation of women in decision making related to health in Sindh**

Socio-economic characteristics of respondent	Beta	Sig	Odds Lower	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
				Upper	
<b>Age in 5-year groups</b>					
15-19	Ref				
20-24	.084	.748	1.087	.652	1.814
25-29	.541	.035	1.718	1.040	2.837
30-34	.663	.012	1.940	1.155	3.258
35-39	.618	.027	1.856	1.073	3.210
40-44	1.059	.003	2.884	1.426	5.832
45-49	.470	.288	1.600	.672	3.813
<b>place of residence</b>					
Rural	Ref				
Urban	.178	.092	1.194	.971	1.469
<b>The highest educational level of respondent</b>					
No education	Ref				
Primary	.411	.003	1.508	1.150	1.978
Secondary	.025	.844	1.025	.798	1.317
Higher	.626	.000	1.870	1.389	2.517
<b>Bank account</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.754	.011	2.125	1.187	3.801
<b>Husband education</b>					
No education	Ref				
Primary	.067	.629	1.070	.814	1.405
Secondary	-.152	.234	.859	.670	1.103
Higher	-.032	.818	.968	.737	1.273
<b>Respondent currently working</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.556	.000	1.743	1.351	2.249

<b>BISP</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.244	.135	1.277	.927	1.759
<b>Print media</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.180	.368	1.197	.810	1.769
<b>No of sons</b>					
No sons	Ref				
One sons	-.069	.606	.933	.717	1.214
Two sons	.092	.537	1.096	.819	1.467
Three sons	-.555	.002	.574	.407	.809
Four sons	-.583	.010	.558	.359	.868
Above four sons	-.151	.570	.860	.512	1.446
<b>Domestic violence</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-1.033	.000	.356	.288	.439
<b>Fertility preference</b>					
Have another	Ref				
Undecided	-.316	.014	.729	.566	.938
No more	-.004	.971	.996	.800	1.239
<b>Electronic media</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-.071	.485	.931	.762	1.138
<b>Wealth status</b>					
Poor	Ref				
Rich	-.442	.005	.643	.471	.878
<b>Own a property</b>					
Does not own	Ref				
Own	.386	.361	1.471	.643	3.366

Women in the 20–24 and 45–49 age groups are not significantly related to healthcare decisions, whereas women in the 20–24 and 45–49 age groups are. Men are more likely to take part in choices relating to health than women between the ages of 15 and 19. Healthcare choices are influenced by things like where you live, how educated you are, how much money you have, whether you have a job or not, and whether you have experienced domestic abuse. Preferences for fertility are less likely to influence choices. A woman in Sindh who has two boys has a 1:1 chance of making decisions. Women with BISP positivity are 1.277 times more likely to

make choices.

**Participation of women in decision making regarding household purchases in Sindh**

Socio-economic characteristics of respondent	Beta	Sig	Odds Lower	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
				Upper	
<b>Age in 5-year groups</b>					
15-19	Ref				
20-24	.179	.501	1.196	.710	2.014
25-29	.763	.003	2.144	1.288	3.570
30-34	.917	.001	2.501	1.479	4.228
35-39	.990	.000	2.692	1.548	4.680
40-44	1.504	.000	4.499	2.233	9.064
45-49	.598	.175	1.819	.766	4.323
<b>place of residence</b>					
Rural	Ref				
Urban	.097	.349	1.102	.899	1.352
<b>The highest educational level of respondent</b>					
No education	Ref				
Primary	.229	.090	1.257	.965	1.637
Secondary	-.119	.347	.888	.694	1.137
Higher	.574	.000	1.776	1.333	2.367
<b>Bank account</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.403	.131	1.496	.887	2.525
<b>Husband education</b>					
No education	Ref				
Primary	-.131	.338	.877	.671	1.147
Secondary	-.136	.279	.873	.682	1.117
Higher	-.152	.269	.859	.656	1.125
<b>Respondent currently working</b>					
No	Ref				

Yes	.493	.000	1.637	1.279	2.094
<b>BISP</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.186	.245	1.204	.880	1.647
<b>Print media</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.256	.184	1.291	.886	1.883
<b>No of sons</b>					
No sons	Ref				
One sons	-.235	.076	.791	.610	1.025
Two sons	-.084	.565	.920	.691	1.223
Three sons	-.676	.000	.509	.362	.714
Four sons	-.870	.000	.419	.270	.650
Above four sons	-.614	.018	.541	.325	.900
<b>Domestic violence</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-.787	.000	.455	.369	.561
<b>Fertility preference</b>					
Have another	Ref				
Undecided	-.160	.208	.852	.664	1.093
No more	-.028	.795	.972	.784	1.204
<b>Electronic media</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-.149	.140	.862	.707	1.050
<b>Wealth status</b>					
Poor	Ref				
Rich	-.318	.039	.728	.538	.985
<b>Own a property</b>					
Does not own	Ref				
Own	.802	.058	2.230	.974	5.108

Women are four times more likely than men to make decisions in the age range of 40 to 44. A person's decision is unaffected by where they live. Those who have completed elementary or secondary school are more likely to make decisions than those who have not. A bank account is essentially of no consequence while making household purchases. The household purchase is unaffected by the husband's educational



background (Mubeen, S., Shahid, M. H., & Saeed, A. (2022). Women who are employed are more likely to make decisions than those who are unemployed. There is a direct correlation between the number of sons, marital violence, and living conditions and major household purchases. Decision-making is closely correlated with property ownership, with those who do not own property 2.230 times more likely to participate in them.

**Women’s Contribution in Decision making related to visit to family or relatives in Sindh**

Socio-economic characteristics of respondent	Beta	Sig	Odds Lower	95% C.I.for EX-P(B)	
				Upper	
<b>Age in 5-year groups</b>					
15-19	Ref				
20-24	.531	.043	1.700	1.017	2.841
25-29	.840	.001	2.316	1.398	3.835
30-34	1.000	.000	2.718	1.614	4.577
35-39	1.211	.000	3.356	1.930	5.833
40-44	1.445	.000	4.240	2.080	8.642
45-49	1.474	.002	4.369	1.745	10.934
<b>place of residence</b>					
Rural	Ref				
Urban	-.055	.601	.947	.770	1.163
<b>The highest educational level of respondent</b>					
No education	Ref				
Primary	.343	.014	1.409	1.073	1.850
Secondary	-.078	.537	.925	.721	1.185
Higher	.528	.001	1.695	1.256	2.288
<b>Bank account</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.837	.006	2.309	1.264	4.217
<b>Husband education</b>					
No education	Ref				
Primary	.123	.373	1.131	.863	1.482
Secondary	-.045	.725	.956	.746	1.226

Higher	.273	.050	1.314	1.000	1.728
<b>Respondent currently working</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.356	.006	1.427	1.109	1.837
<b>BISP</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.094	.568	1.098	.797	1.513
<b>Print media</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-.111	.573	.895	.608	1.316
<b>No of sons</b>					
No sons	Ref				
One sons	-.180	.182	.835	.641	1.088
Two sons	-.199	.181	.820	.613	1.097
Three sons	-.617	.000	.540	.383	.761
Four sons	-.677	.003	.508	.327	.789
Above four sons	-.102	.712	.903	.527	1.549
<b>Domestic violence</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-.798	.000	.450	.366	.553
<b>Fertility preference</b>					
Have another	Ref				
Undecided	-.466	.000	.627	.488	.806
No more	-.172	.123	.842	.676	1.048
<b>Electronic media</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-.203	.047	.817	.669	.997
<b>Wealth status</b>					
Poor	Ref				
Rich	-.031	.840	.969	.716	1.313
<b>Own a property</b>					
Does not own	Ref				
Own	.154	.713	1.166	.515	2.640

Age, financial condition, career situation, domestic abuse, fertility, and electronic media all have a big impact on whether or not someone decides to visit family or relatives. Although it has a small effect, having property increases a person's

likelihood of making decisions compared to not having it. BISP is irrelevant even though it is more likely to make decisions.

**Participation of women in decisions regarding Spending on husband earnings in Sindh**

Socio-economic characteristics of respondent	Beta	Sig	Odds Lower	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
				U p - per	
<b>Age in 5-year groups</b>					
15-19	Ref				
20-24	.475	.070	1.608	.963	2.687
25-29	.783	.002	2.188	1.322	3.622
30-34	.756	.004	2.129	1.267	3.577
35-39	.825	.003	2.282	1.320	3.944
40-44	1.718	.000	5.574	2.716	11.440
45-49	.847	.056	2.332	.978	5.561
<b>place of residence</b>					
Rural	Ref				
Urban	.029	.783	1.029	.839	1.262
<b>The highest educational level of respondent</b>					
No education	Ref				
Primary	.471	.001	1.602	1.224	2.096
Secondary	.088	.485	1.092	.853	1.397
Higher	.504	.001	1.656	1.242	2.206
<b>Bank account</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.441	.101	1.555	.917	2.635
<b>Husband education</b>					
No education	Ref				
Primary	-.004	.977	.996	.761	1.303
Secondary	.086	.496	1.089	.851	1.394
Higher	-.165	.229	.848	.648	1.109
<b>Respondent currently working</b>					
No	Ref				

Yes	.552	.000	1.737	1.352	2.231
<b>BISP</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.352	.031	1.423	1.034	1.958
<b>Print media</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	.497	.012	1.644	1.118	2.418
<b>No of sons</b>					
No sons	Ref				
One sons	-.120	.365	.887	.685	1.149
Two sons	.014	.922	1.014	.763	1.349
Three sons	-.606	.000	.545	.389	.765
Four sons	-.593	.008	.553	.357	.857
Above four sons	-.658	.012	.518	.310	.866
<b>Domestic violence</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-.819	.000	.441	.358	.542
<b>Fertility preference</b>					
Have another	Ref				
Undecided	-.100	.433	.905	.706	1.161
No more	-.125	.255	.883	.712	1.094
<b>Electronic media</b>					
No	Ref				
Yes	-.187	.063	.829	.681	1.010
<b>Wealth status</b>					
Poor	Ref				
Rich	-.201	.193	.818	.604	1.107
<b>Own a property</b>					
Does not own	Ref				
Own	.348	.398	1.417	.631	3.180

Women are five times more likely to make decisions between the ages of 40 and 44 than men. Women with education are more likely to be decision-makers than women without education. Significant links connect BISP. When it comes to fertility desires, women are less prone to make decisions.

## 5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

According to the study, working women have greater power to make decisions than non-working women. Women's employment and education have been found to be significant predictors of rising decision-making power across the board. In this study, it was found that women's education was a significant predictor of growing decision-making authority. According to the literature, employment and income also increase women's mobility and confidence in their ability to make important decisions about their homes. Education gives women more power over their lives and raises their status within their families.

Women's empowerment and enhanced status are viewed as crucial to accomplishing women's development in the study, which is based on women and family development strategies. Similar to men, women's decision-making power is influenced by assets including wealth, employment, and education. According to the study, if women have more opportunities for education, employment, income, and household decision-making, their socioeconomic situation and family development may improve. Women can improve their family lives and aid in the development of their communities and countries. As a result, the research promotes the development of both the community and the country.

## DECLARATION OF INTEREST

It is declared that the authors of this research work have no competing interests.

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