

# A Sociological Study on Role of Education in Empowerment of Women: Cross-Sectional Study in Urban Areas of District Faisalabad Punjab, Pakistan

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## ABSTRACT

*In our civil society, women's education is essential because it contributes significantly to the growth of our nation. Education is crucial because it is a key component of women's autonomy; it empowers women to overcome obstacles, make positive changes in their lives, and, most importantly, foster the growth of their kids. Empowering women means offering them control or authority. It means to advance not just their economic standing but also their cultural, social, economic, and political status. Women faced discrimination and were denied access to fundamental needs, including family matters, health, and education. By empowering women in all areas of life, education can help eliminate these barriers and improve their status. By altering societal attitudes and ideologies, education improves the lives of women. The finest remedy for the development of women is education. The study's primary objective was to investigate role of education in women's empowerment in district Faisalabad Punjab Pakistan. Cross-sectional surveys were used to get the quantitative data. For the data gathering, a multistage random sampling technique was used. Two hundred women in district Faisalabad between the ages of 18 to 30 years were interviewed using a self-designed interview schedule. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed to analysis the data. Empirical results showed that 52% of respondents had graduation level education. 30% of respondents had, to great extent, decision-making power and control over resources. Bivariate analysis showed that education level had a significant and positive association with women's empowerment. The study recommended that the government should take steps to facilitate women's equal education and employment opportunities equal to males.*

## KEYWORDS

Role of education, women empowerment, urban area, district Faisalabad

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## INTRODUCTION

When you educate a man, you are educating a single person; however, when you educate a woman, you are educating a whole family. Education refers to obtaining fundamental knowledge, strengthening one's ability to reason and make decisions, and preparing oneself or others intellectually for a developing lifestyle. Education is thought to encompass both the act of teaching others and the process of learning something new (Butt et al., 2021). Education refers to knowledge obtained through formal education. Education also comprises the attitudes and behaviors that people learn informally. Giving future generations' access to cultural treasures was the original goal of education (Chorianopoulou, 2022).

In order to reform society, one might use empowerment as a tool to create a social context in which decisions can be made, either individually or collectively. Through the acquisition of information, power, and experience, empowerment enhances intrinsic talent (Doepke et al., 2012). The process of providing someone with the ability or authority to think, act, and manage their work autonomously is known as empowerment. It is the process through which one can take control of their destiny and circumstances in life. There are always a number of people who lack access to basic rights in every culture, state, or country, and they remain ignorant of those rights. Women would be at the top of this ranking (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). In actuality, women are the most crucial component of every community. Although everyone is aware of this truth, nobody is willing to accept it. It is impossible for a nation to become great in the future if it does not respect women (Groot & Oosterbeek, 2020).

Education comprises modifying one's attitude in multiple domains, such as thinking, perspective, attitude, and so on. Education is the foundation of a nation's progress, female empowerment, and the development of its culture. Women's education is very important since it influences the standard of life, consciousness level, and overall growth of society (Robinson, 2004). Any society, state, or nation must prioritise the empowerment of women. In a child's everyday existence, a mother assumes a dominant role. In contemporary society, women play a significant role. A shift in attitudes towards women's empowerment



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through education is possible. Because of this, it is essential for the advancement of society, the economy, and politics (Singh, 2015).

Well-educated women develop physical strength by learning about good health, which will ultimately help the wellbeing of the entire family. The ability to adapt to difficulties, to question their established roles, and to transform their lives is what makes education a key component of women's empowerment. Therefore, we must not undervalue the worth of education in terms of empowering women (Kishor & Subaiya, 2008).

The topic of empowering women has drawn a lot of attention and discussion globally. We now enjoy the advantages of living in a free country, but we should critically consider whether each of our country's residents is truly free and enjoying freedom in the genuine sense of the word. All around the world, there has been a problem with gender inequality and discrimination against women. Consequently, women's nostalgia for equality is a universal phenomenon. One of the most crucial ways to equip women with the information, abilities, and confidence required to actively engage in the development process is through education. Women should be treated equally with men in all domains of life. All women have a long-held desire for greater opportunities in life so they can have more successful lives. However, there is still debate surrounding the idea of women's empowerment. Gaining knowledge and understanding that enable one to live with more dignity and self-assurance is the process of empowerment.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In this regard, Sekaran and Bougie (2016) stated that women were empowered when a culture was created that allowed them to make independent choices for their own personal growth and the development of society. Women can become more equal to men in a range of contexts, such as the economic, social, cultural, political, and civil spheres, by increasing their authority and participation in decision-making. In order to empower women and promote a nation's overall economic success, education is undoubtedly the key. Women need education to acquire the skills, confidence, and knowledge required to engage actively in the development process.

Similarly, another study, Sridevi (2005) argued that education increases a woman's ability to make decisions for herself and her intimates, increases her ability to earn money, and gives her the confidence to face problems. Educated women, however, face barriers that limit their ability to become empowered. A higher level of education helped one sense of empowerment. According to Chandra (2007), women can become more empowered through higher education. The advantages of greater education were economic freedom and elevated status within the family. Additionally, it gave women the chance to influence discriminatory behaviors.

Likewise, Parveen and Leonhauser (2005) showed that women's empowerment may be greatly and favourably impacted by both formal and informal education. Women's socioeconomic standing was raised through education and abilities, which also increased their capacity to exercise and uphold their rights. Education was important in addressing the sociocultural norms that hinder people's well-being.

In this regard, Heaton et al., (2005) stated that women's lack of education, which inhibits them from getting paid jobs, health care, and awareness, was identified as one of the causes of their helplessness. Research indicated that supporting girls' education and socioeconomic growth together improves career chances for educated women, which empowers them. These results also show that in the majority of the regions, employment, education, and women's empowerment were closely related. Similarly, Lopez-Claros and Zahidi (2005) stated the importance of education in empowering women. Women who were illiterate or less educated had limited employment opportunities. Less literacy between the following generations may result from an increase in the number of illiterate women in society. Lack of education and understanding further exclude women from society's mainstream in their communities. Another important method of impacting the social environment is education.

According to Sarkar (2015) Education is a critical component in changing women's attitudes towards empowerment and their standing in the family and society. Undoubtedly, a healthy, educated, intelligent, and gainfully employed woman will be able to assert her rights and make a significant contribution to the process of development. Thus, education fosters the development of women, increases awareness of women's rights, and empowers individuals on all fronts.

### **OBJECTIVE**

**A.** To investigate the relationship between education and women's empowerment.

### **HYPOTHESES**

1. Relationship between females' education and decision making power.
2. Relationship between females' education and control over economic resources.
3. Relationship between females' education and freedom of mobility.

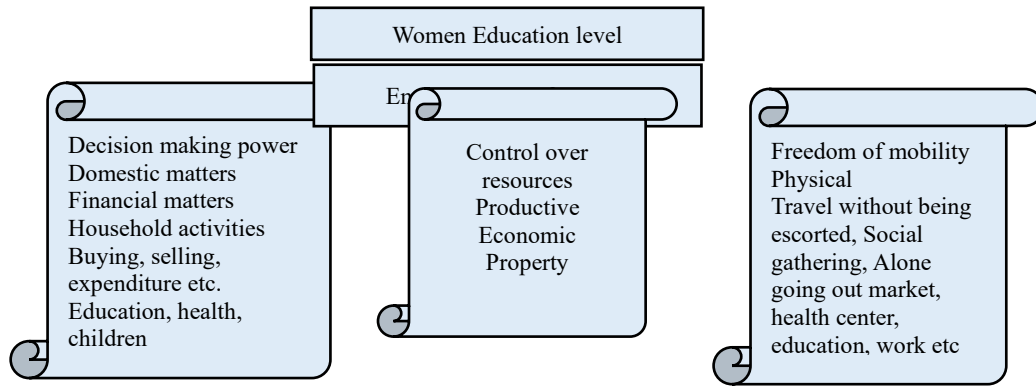


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

**METHODOLOGY**

The stages or methods used to find, select, organise, and assess data on a subject are referred to as research methodology. (Shetty et al., 2015). To characterise traits, identify correlations, or test hypotheses, quantitative research involves gathering and analysing numerical data. In the present study, a quantitative research design was used. District Faisalabad was the study's domain. Females between the ages of 18 and 30 made up the study's target population. The selected sample size of 200 respondents was chosen from 100 Public and 100 private educational institutions by using simple random sampling techniques. There are 36 districts in the province of Punjab. Faisalabad had the first district selected at random. In the second stage, one tehsil from Faisalabad (Saddar) was selected randomly. In the third stage, a simple random sampling technique was used to select four educational institutions, two from the public sector and two from the private sector. 50 respondents from each of the selected educational institutions made up the selected sample size of 200 respondents, which were selected through random sampling. In this study, selected respondents were interviewed. The structured interview schedule was designed as a tool for primary data collection. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used to compile the information for the current study. Cross-sectional field surveys were used to get primary data, and books, journals, research papers, dissertations, and reports were used to gather secondary data. Different descriptive and inferential statistical approaches (frequency, percentage, chi-square, gamma and regression) were used to analyse the data. For data analysis, the researcher used SPSS Software version 24.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1.Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Age group (years)	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Up to 25</b>	23	11.5
<b>26 to 30</b>	177	88.5
Education level	F	%
<b>Up to Matric</b>	20	10.0
<b>Intermediate</b>	75	37.5
<b>Graduation and above</b>	105	52.5
Family size	F	%
<b>Up to 5</b>	145	72.5
<b>6 to10</b>	49	24.5
<b>11to15</b>	6	3.0
Monthly income	F	%
<b>Up to 30000</b>	47	23.5
<b>30001 to 60000</b>	97	48.5
<b>60000 to 90000</b>	23	11.5
<b>90000 to above</b>	33	16.5

Table 1 shows that 11.5 percent of respondents were younger than 25 years old, while 88.5 percent belong to the 26 to 30 years old age group. In this regard, GOP (2022) presented that the life expectancy of women in Pakistan was 68.62 years, while the life expectancy of men was 63.79 years on average in 2021. Table 1 presents the education level of respondents, 10 percent had up to Matriculation level education, 37.5 percent had Intermediate level education, and 52.5% had graduation and above level education. According to the above finding, women generally had a higher level of education than their husbands. In this regard, Quinn et al. (2013) stated that the average number of school years in Pakistan for males and females was seven and six, respectively. The gender enrollment gap in Pakistan's educational system is 13%. Only 46.5% of women are educated, and 61.6 % went to basic school, 34.2 % finished high school, and 8.3% attended university education. Despite having the sixth-highest population in the world, more than 40% of women in Pakistan never attend school. Table 1 shows the number of

household members in the study area, 72.5 percent of respondents had up to 5 household members, 24.5 percent had 6-10 household members, and 3.0 percent had 11-15 household members. According to Susan (2012) high *women's empowerment* leads to small *family sizes*. A woman's domestic workload was correlated with her family size. Fewer children were provided with more freedom to take advantage of life's opportunities. Nationally, the average household size is 6.4 people. Table 1 shows monthly household income, 23.5 percent of respondents had up to 30,000 Rs. household income, 48.5 percent had 30001–60000 Rs. household income, and 11.5 percent had 60001–90000 Rs. household income, while 16.5 percent had 90000 Rs. and above in household income. According to GOP (2022), the average monthly household income in Pakistan was 41,545 Rs. Findings show that a 10% increase in *women's empowerment* scores will increase per capita *income* by 14%. A 70% increase in the likelihood of preserving household food security was seen among empowered women. In order for women to be economically empowered, they must have equal access to and control over resources that can be used to produce goods and services, as well as access to fair employment opportunities and autonomy over their own time, lives, and bodies. Employees in Pakistan make an average salary of 1,037,600 PKR for men and 884,700 PKR for women. This indicates that, across all occupations, males typically earn 17% more than women for doing a similar job.

Table 2. Relationship between females' education level and decision making power

Women's education level	Decision making power			Total
	High	Medium	Low	
Up to matric	5	8	7	20
	25.0%	40.0%	35.0%	100.0%
Intermediate	34	27	14	75
	45.3%	36.0%	18.7%	100.0%
Graduation and above	64	25	16	105
	61.0%	23.8%	15.2%	100.0%
Total	103	60	37	200
	51.5%	30.0%	18.5%	100.0%
Chi-square = 12.41    d.f. = 4			P-value = 0.015*	
Gamma ( $\lambda$ ) = 0.473			P-value = 0.011*	

Table 2 represents the relationship between females' education level and decision-making power. The chi-square and gamma values show a significant and positive ( $\chi^2 = 12.41, p = 0.015$ ), ( $\lambda = 0.473, p = 0.011$ ) relation among the variables. It means there is a positive relationship between females' education level and decision making power. So, the hypothesis that "Higher the females' education level, higher will be the decision making power" is accepted. In this regard, Parveen and Leonhauser (2005) presented that education helps women's socioeconomic standing and empowers them to fight for and defend their rights. In comparison, educated women were more capable and self-assured, which allowed them to participate in decision-making more effectively and to consider and make choices about their intimate relationships. Similarly, Rahman (2008) stated that education offers women the self-assurance they need to speak out regarding social injustice and participate in decision-making. Although education has the potential to empower women, it may be used more effectively if more jobs were made available to them and if they had a secure environment in which to work.

Table 3. Relationship between females' education level and control over economic resources

Women's education level	Control over economic resources			Total
	High	Medium	Low	
Up to matric	8	7	5	20
	40.0%	35.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Intermediate	40	23	12	75
	53.3%	30.7%	16.0%	100.0%
Graduation and above	55	30	20	105
	52.3%	28.5%	19.2%	100.0%
Total	103	60	37	200
	51.5%	30.0%	18.5%	100.0%
Chi-square = 16.27    d.f. = 4			P-value = 0.000*	
Gamma ( $\lambda$ ) = 0.430			P-value = 0.000*	

Table 3 represents the relationship between females' education level and control over economic resources. The chi-square and gamma values show a significant and positive ( $\chi^2 = 16.27, p = 0.000$ ), ( $\lambda = 0.430, p = 0.000$ ) relation among the variables. It means there is a positive relationship between females' education level and control over economic resources. So, the

hypothesis that “Higher the females’ education level, higher will be the control over economic resources” is accepted. In this regard, Heaton et al. (2005) stated that educated women had better access to knowledge and information, increasing their chances of obtaining paid employment as well as other advantages and control over economic resources. Similarly, Siegel (2022) shows that women who have greater financial control spend more money on education and essentials like food and health. Investing in women, and particularly in their education, had a variety of beneficial impacts on not only the women but also their children and families. These results not only enhance the lives of females and families but also fight poverty and promote economic development.

Table 4. Relationship between females’ education level and freedom of mobility

Women’s education level	Freedom of mobility			Total
	High	Medium	Low	
<b>Up to matric</b>	5	6	9	20
	25.0%	30.0%	45.0%	100.0%
<b>Intermediate</b>	32	28	15	75
	42.6%	37.4%	20.0%	100.0%
<b>Graduation and above</b>	66	26	13	105
	62.8%	24.7%	12.5%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	103	60	37	200
	51.5%	30.0%	18.5%	100.0%
<b>Chi-square = 13.12 d.f. = 4</b>			P-value = 0.005*	
<b>Gamma (λ) = 0.286</b>			P-value = 0.006*	

Table 4 represents the relationship between females’ education level and freedom of mobility. The chi-square and gamma values show a significant and positive ( $\chi^2 = 13.12, p = 0.005$ ), ( $\lambda = 0.286, p = 0.006$ ) relation among the variables. It means there is a positive relationship between females’ education level and freedom of mobility. So, the hypothesis that “Higher the females’ education level, higher will be the freedom of mobility” is accepted. In this regard, Batliwala (2004) argued that the primary causes of women's vulnerability were their illiteracy and economic dependence. Their dependence decreased, and their confidence increased, via education and paid employment. This self-assurance was essential for managing resources, making decisions about the home, enjoying freedom of movement, and ultimately becoming empowered. Similarly, Barr et al. (2019) stated that it was challenging for women to leave their homes to engage in discussions because they were typically not allowed to leave the house unless they were going to the market or to work. Women's capacity to participate in psychosocial support groups was influenced by a variety of other characteristics, including work and education; nevertheless, the effect of these other factors must be understood in relation to a gender order that restricts women's freedom of mobility.

Table 5. Multivariate analysis (Regression)

Independent variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	bi	Std. Error	Bi	t	Sig.
<b>Education (X1)</b>	0.428	0.654	0.138	3.714	0.000
<b>Awareness about the rights (X2)</b>	0.823	0.231	0.117	3.559	0.000
<b>Paid job involvement (X3)</b>	0.138	0.362	0.164	5.241	0.000
<b>Type of family (X4)</b>	0.540	0.769	0.107	3.303	0.001
<b>Family headship (X5)</b>	0.777	0.217	0.096	3.103	0.002
<b>Local level facilities (X6)</b>	0.186	0.086	0.170	2.166	0.031
<b>Husbands cooperation (X7)</b>	0.824	0.321	0.183	2.101	0.001

$R^2 = 0.516$   $F = 21.086$ , Sig. at  $p < 0.001$

Table 5 shows the multivariate analysis of different factors affecting the empowerment level of women. In this research, the F-test and  $R^2$  were used together for the validation and reliability of the significance of the model. Seven explanatory (independent variables) were included to explain the effect of various factors on empowerment level (dependent variable). X1=Education. The bi coefficient (0.428) indicated a positive and significant relationship between education and women empowerment. This shows that there was relationship between the variables. According to Siegel (2022), women with higher levels of education had higher earning potential than men do, making them more willing to give back to society. Likewise, Collins (2022) argued that girls who were educated are more able to succeed in their social, professional, economic, and family lives.

X2= Awareness about the rights. The bi coefficient (0.823) shows a positive and significant relationship between the variables. It demonstrates that highly educated women were more aware of their rights. In this regard, Taylor and Rupp (2003) stated that working women with high qualifications and status had more freedoms and an understanding of their rights, which was thought to have a good impact on women's emancipation. The accomplishment of gender equality, the empowerment of women and sustainable economic growth and development all depend on women having equal access to and control over economic and financial resources. Similarly, Collins (2022) argued that higher educated women, particularly those with university degrees, were shown to be more likely to be aware of their rights.

X3=Paid job involvement. The bi coefficient (0.138) shows that, compared to housewives, working women with higher wages had more power. So both variables had a positive and significant relationship. In this regard, Mayoux (2001) findings revealed that *women* with higher educational *levels* enjoyed better *job* positions. Similarly, Barr et al., (2019) stated that the employment and advancement of women in the workforce is significantly influenced by higher education.

X4=Type of family. The bi coefficient (0.540) shows a significant and positive relationship between family type and women's empowerment. In this regard, Collins (2022) argued that women who lived with their in-laws were perceived as being under the authority of senior family members. Similarly, Rahman (2008) stated that female autonomy is impacted by household structure, with women living in nuclear households having more control over decisions, freedom to leave the house, and employment opportunities than their counterparts in joint families. The study also showed that disparities in economic position, caste, and home location had an impact on women's autonomy in joint family formations.

X5=Family headship. The bi coefficient (0.777) representing a significant relationship between family headship and women's empowerment. According to the GOP (2004), discovered that when a husband was not home or passes away, women typically take charge of the family. Similarly, Rahman (2008) stated that one of the most vulnerable segments of society, female-headed households, face a variety of issues and difficulties due to their gender.

X6=Local level facilities. The bi coefficient (0.186) shows a Positive connections between amenities and women's empowerment were also found. Strong community resources give women the ability to increase their independence. Similarly, Quan et al. (2020) stated that the advancement of women's political, social, economic, and health status, together with their empowerment and autonomy, was a highly important aim.

X7=Husbands Cooperation. The bi coefficient (0.824) indicates a positive and significant relationship between husband cooperation and empowerment of women. According to Barr et al. (2019), the impacts of the husband's assistance and support in all spheres of life on women's empowerment were statistically significant.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Empirical findings shows that Education and women's empowerment go hand in hand. Education is seen as a crucial tool for the transformation that is ultimately in charge of a country's progress. Women who are educated and empowered change their homes, communities, and ultimately the country. According to the study, there is a strong positive relationship between education and women's status and positions in society. More than three-fourths of the respondents in the research area believed that education was a key factor in the shift in women's lifestyles. Additionally, their position and standing are improved.

The advancement and development of a nation are greatly aided by the contribution of women. If we want to see a bright future for women in our country, educating them must be a top priority because they are vital components of a vibrant humanity needed for national improvement. To exercise a power, one must move from a vulnerable posture. Women's education is the most effective means of changing society's perspective. Education also improves people's standing within their families and lessens disparities. Promoting women's education at all levels and reducing gender bias in the dissemination of knowledge and education are two goals that must be achieved. Most of the respondents agreed that education is a means to transform conservatism and narrow-mindedness and that education gives women significant respect in society. The majority of respondents concur that educated women are treated with greater respect than uneducated women. They are capable of making wiser choices for their family and society.

Nearly all respondents agreed with the study's conclusion that the best means of reducing gender discrimination is through education. In decision making, control over resources and freedom of mobility, educated women may have greater authority than illiterate women. The government should enact strong legislation and strictly enforce the laws regarding women. In this regard, local level committees should be strengthened to better support women by offering swift justice and a welcoming environment. Study recommended that government should take steps to facilitate women's regarding education and employment opportunities equal to males.

## CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT:

**Mehek Khaliq:** Conceptualization, conduct research, draft preparation, **Madiha Naz:** Supervision, **Rida Ikram:** finalized methodology, **Muhammad Furqan Nisar:** Analyzed the data, **Amara Amman:** Reviewing and editing manuscript, **Saima Afzal:** Data Analysis and editing.

### COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS:

It is declare that all authors don't have any conflict of interest. It is also declare that this article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors. Furthermore, informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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