

Impact of Women's Economic Dependency on Women's Political Participation in Pakhtun Society

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In most of the societies, a socio-economic divide exists between men and women in economic spheres. However, economic resources have similar effects on both the genders. The main objective of this study is to investigate the effects of women's economic deprivation on their political status in Pakhtun society. Quantitative method of social research was applied through a survey in seven districts of Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The data was collected from a sample of 320 women councilors using interview schedule. Univariate analyses were conducted for frequencies and percentages and bivariate analyses for the possible association between the variables by chi-square test, using SPSS 20. The study revealed that women's economic dependency has a significant impact upon their political participation in Pakhtun society. Due to strong patriarchy men are considered the only bread winners that deprive women from proprietorship and inheritance rights. Similarly, different gender roles, lack of vocational training and unpaid domestic labor lead to women's dependency in the socio-economic structure of society. Women are stereotyped under the false conception of least intelligence and unproductive. Strong honor codes and gender segregation limit their access to employment that limit women's participation in public spheres. Hence, women remain on the disposal of men in every decision including politics. This study recommends the role of mass

media to spread awareness, legislating gender friendly policies and strict implementation. Similarly, campaigns of civil society would certainly yield long lasting effects on women's economic uplifting and their political participation.

Key Words: *women's political participation; economic dependency; patriarchy; inheritance; women empowerment.*

1. Introduction

Women's status in politics is quite dynamic across the world with tremendous variations according to the environment they live (Erez & Gati, 2004). Puddington (Puddington, 2008), discovered that the primary causes of these variations are the beliefs and norms within the social structure which affect women's participation in civic life. In a particular situation, woman is affected by the economic culture which includes labor, wages, taxation and economic opportunities (Bank, 2008). Similarly, the fundamental social, innovation (Rabbani, Sarmad, Khattak, & Khan, 2020) and developmental conditions like education, health, food, and physical environment also plays an important role (Lieb & Thistle, 2005). The significance of technological development and the distribution of goods and services are also considered central (Hill & Hernández-Requejo, 2008; Khan, Yong, & Han, 2019). Khan et al., (Khan, Lee, & Bae, 2018) stated that technology create linkage between foreign direct inflow and the host country's economy development. Whereas, Khan & Bae (Khan & Bae, 2017) reported that Pakistan has been facing technological constraint.

However, civil liberties and political rights are utmost significant as they are primordial to the rest of women's rights (House, 2008). Women's participation in politics in Pakistan is very low, which is 20.6% as recorded by Inter Parliamentarian Union as of 1st October, 2018. Women's participation in politics is a tool to empower women and a leading factor for development of society. Women's empowerment not only paves the way to their socio-economic and political development but is considered a compulsory element for their independence, production, and reproduction (Rouse, 2006). A study conducted by Ali et, al., (Ali, Fani, Afzal, & Yasin, 2010), illustrated that the major source of stratification in Pakistani society is gender based which in many cases lead to gender discrimination, female subordination, and little economic freedom. Similarly, Plain (Plain & Sellers, 2007), advocates that men's political participation has been significantly amassed in developing countries whereas women are still sidelined, which has negatively affected their potentialities and psychological competences. It has been further elaborated by studies that women have been allotted secondary role and status and are deprived of political and economic affairs (Arab Naz, Daraz, Hussain, Mughal, & Alam, 2012).

On the one hand, Pakistan is ranked in the top 10 among the most vulnerable countries around the world (Khan, Lee, & Bae, 2019) facing different kind of disasters. On the other hand, literature reveals that majority of women in Pakistani society depends economically on their male counterparts. Women mainly involved in their household labor go un-paid, vis-a-vis the commercial nature of politics, which obstruct their way in to political participation (Arab Naz et al., 2012). There is a general perception in community that men are considered the only bread earners and consequently women remain dependent on the men. This dependency limits their authority in decision making and social mobility and thus curtails women's representation in politics (Griffith, 2007).

However, women empowerment has remained a burning issue in the last two decades according to the UNO and other international humanitarian organizations (Kabeer, 2001). Despite their contribution to the development of civilization, women status has never been equal in majority of the world societies since the history of time (Rahman & Naoroze, 2007). It has been recorded by UN in (2007) (IONS) that 60% of the world unpaid labor is done by the women. This is why, two third of the world poorest population is women (Bernstein, 2002). Furthermore, only 1% of the total world's assets are in control of women globally (Jennings & McDougald, 2007).

Economists like Jain (Jennings & McDougald, 2007) argued that gender inequalities in economy have two different aspects. The first aspect is 'inequality in the outcomes', which is comprised of income generation and its consumption. The second aspect explains, 'inequality in opportunities' which is comprised of inaccessibility to resources, segmented markets, economic discrimination, and structural inequalities. Thus, it's evident that gender discrimination in economic opportunities is a global phenomenon which can be observed in both personal and organizational levels. Gender gap, therefore, exists in the economic opportunities (Irfan, Hussain, & Yousaf, 2009). This discrimination is not an abrupt eruption but has reached the current state as a result of long historical gender perceptions where segmentation of gender has taken place through assigning different qualities to male and female. This uneven distribution of opportunities leads to the super ordination of one gender and subordination of the other (Khera, 2010).

However, it is believed that in the recent decades due to economic instability, increased female literacy and domestic challenges have endorsed more job opportunities for women at the workplace in developing countries including Pakistan (Irfan et al., 2009). But for general development, the policy makers on the organizational basis and the government levels shall devise plans policies to protect the rights of the women in workplace. Nevertheless, discrimination among the male and female within the organization needs a focus on all levels to equalize men and women (Gelfand, Nishii, Raver, & Schneider, 2007). It has been argued that men are privileged over women in the workplace, in the process of hiring and promotion, which underestimate underutilize the skills of women and thus lead to low economic efficiency. This unfair and unequal treatment

to women affects their morale and decreases their employment opportunities. Similarly, this affects organizational efficiency because of the neglect of one segment of society (Pang, 2010).

Researchers, (Khera, 2010) have observed that educated and qualified female manager would lose an opportunity in promotion to a less deserving and least experienced male. Partially this is because of the female biological make up e.g. the menstruation periods and maternity leaves which is considered some sort of inefficiency on the part of the female. It has further been noted that such discrimination is at alarming rate in the Muslim countries. Furthermore, globally men are perceived to be more efficient and productive than women. This discrimination is not only evident in manufacturing organization but also in the servicing organization of Pakistan (Abbas, Athar, & Herani, 2010). It is commonly known fact that a healthy environment without gender discrimination increases the productivity of the employees and the organization.

Workplace barriers for women are countless which include, promotion barriers, turnover, lack of consistency, managing family responsibilities, work stress, job quality, and work schedule flexibility. This is because of the numerous cultural barriers faced by women in their day today activities including financial activities and jobs. Researchers like Welle and Heilman, (Welle & Heilman, 2007) believed that due to masculinity of the popular culture; customs, traditions, law and policy procedures are discriminatory in nature in the economic institutions and provide little opportunities for women to take a lead among the men. Similarly, Bravo et al., (Bravo, Sanhueza, & Urzúa, 2006) provide evidence from the Chilean labor market where genders are openly discriminated in terms of wages and duty hours.

Studies have discovered that rewards play an enormous role in better performance and elevate the confidence of the employees. However, discrimination and stressful environment kill the creativity of individual in any situation. Thus, disfavor of women in workforce not only affect their presence in economic fields but also their public and private life (Qureshi, Zaman, & Shah, 2010). Similarly, there are commonly prevalent unscientific attributions and negative characteristics associated with women personality. For example, Roscigno, Garcia, and Bobbitt, (Roscigno, Garcia, & Bobbitt-Zeher, 2007) analyzed that women are assumed as less intelligent, sensitive and hormonal which lead to their discrimination in the job market. Similarly, engendering jobs or job typology on the basis of nature and then its association with a particular gender further curtail the way for women to avail opportunities in open market (Abbas et al., 2010).

A study conducted by Haas et al., (Haas & Hwang, 2007) calculated the women in top management. Ironically, two-third which is 68% of the companies had no women in the top management. By further calculation, it was found that only 4.3 percent of the totals were women as top managers. However, changes in the status of women in employment and labor market are directly related to change in their position within the family, culture and the system (Bondi, 1991). According to Huffman and Cohen (Huffman & Cohen, 2004) (Huffman & Cohen, 2004), gender



differences in the work place and wage differences are just like the tip of an iceberg while there are numerous other unexplained causes starts from the birth and continue throughout the life of the women in their socio cultural and political status.

However, this is a bitter truth that gender is one of the basic aspects of the work organization in industrial societies. The supposition of the employers and organizations where men are considered the only earning hands in maintaining the family expenses has resulted in the little wages for the female in the labor market (Haas & Hwang, 2007). In this situation, women are supposed to get lower salaries than their men counterparts even when job age, education, level, and work experience is closely related (Truman & Baroudi, 1994). Women are also vulnerable in coping with the difficulties created by men in work place. For example, in a study conducted by Allen (Allen, Armstrong, Riemenschneider, & Reid, 2006) found that women complained about many things regarding their previous employers, in many respects which include poor and improper management, travel issues, stress and burnout, role conflicts, family conflicts, bad work environment, low wages, medical reasons, lack of acknowledgement, seeking flexibility and little chances to learn. But among all these, the mostly repeated answer was the situation where they did not receive their deserved respect from their managers, colleagues, and clients (Allen et al., 2006).

According to survey research conducted by Acker (Acker, 1990), among the 500 companies, only eight companies had their women CEOs which could hardly make 1.6 percent of the total. This persistent gender inequality in the economic paradigm is widely recognized a significant factor toward the spread and entrenchment of the poverty among the population of majority of the countries in third world including Pakistan (Schech & Vas Dev, 2007). Poverty too has severe repercussion on the role and status of the women in the family and society (SamiUllah, 2017). For instance, Acharya and Ghimire (Acharya & Ghimire, 2005) opined that poverty is a state where people are deficient in income and assets to gain basic necessities of life, wanting in power and voice in the institutions, society, and state, scarcity of freedom to choose a profession and play a role in society. Due to their volatile status, women are most vulnerable to the adverse shocks of physical, social and financial disasters. Thus, women least participation in politics is because of their low economic status and higher dependency on their men for the fulfillment of their monetary needs (Oswald & Lindstedt, 2006).

Empowerment in public life, including political empowerment, is therefore directly associated with the economic empowerment. To address their economic disadvantageous status, women are needed to be equipped and streamlined in the job market. This will lead to their comfort, self-worth amongst the female and would polish the qualities and capabilities of the women. It is therefore concluded that economic autonomy plays a vital role in the inclusion of women in the public sphere, their role and status in society and decision-making process.

1.2 Women's Economic Status in Pakhtun Society

The third, Millennium Development Goal urges to achieve women empowerment and gender equality. Developing countries like Pakistan is experiencing conventional patriarchy where the amenities of life in public and private spheres are associated with men only. Hence, women labor force rate in Pakistan has remained less than 19.1 percent and thus World Economic Forum (Porter & Schwab, 2008) has ranked Pakistan second lowest in the world whereas the male labor force rate is 70.1%, (Bashir, Mehmood, & Hassan, 2010). As discussed earlier it was noted that economy plays a very important role in the formation of social status of individual in society in all the developed and undeveloped societies. Dependency of women on men in the economic spheres is the main cause of their lagging behind in society. Vocational training which is not available for women is one of the most important tools to empower women in society (Arab Naz et al., 2012). This practice of deprivation from the property has negative impacts on her role in society.

The case in the *Pakhtun* built is more serious, where daughters are deprived of the inheritance in favor of sons as a common practice (Zafar, 1993). Moreover, women in *Pakhtun* areas are not allowed to take decision or initiate a business for their well-being even in case of women headed household. Entrepreneurship is the prerogative of the men member of the society only and hence poverty among women is increasing with passage of time (Habib, 1996). Improvement in their life condition and empowerment of women in these areas is a prerequisite and need of the hour.

In third world countries including Pakistan, women seats have been increased in provincial and national assembly (Bari, 2009). In Musharraf's regime (1999-2007), women's seats in local self-government were increased to 33 percent while the national and provincial seats were increased to 17 percent. However, women's participation in politics seems token representation due to reserved nature of their seats (Sami, 2015). Conversely, it has been revealed that in election the reserved seats are typically occupied by closest kinsfolk of male politicians that again is discrimination (Noreen & Musarrat, 2013). Similarly, Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has confirmed a significant decrease of women turnout during elections of 2002 and 2007. Pattan (2013), affirmed that many districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, witnessed lowest women's turnout in previous local government elections, for instance, Dir (Upper) (0%) Dir (Lower) (0.06%) and in Bunir (0.07%) turnout was recorded. This is important that in Dir Lower and Upper, the study area, women were formally debarred from the election process through written agreement. This situation was further aggravated by intimidations from extremist elements (Jahangir, 2015, May 24). Moreover, it was confirmed that out of 138,910 registered women voters in NA-32 in district Chitral, only one woman cast vote (Sherazi, 2013, May 16). Among the other reasons, economic dependency is considered one of the main hindrances toward women's least participation in politics.

Secondary data reveals that majority of women in *Pakhtun* society depend economically on their male counterparts, as their household labor goes un-paid, vis-a-vis the commercial nature of



politics, which obstruct their way in to political participation (Arab Naz et al., 2012). The institutional dominancy of men and the socialization process further reinforce male dominancy in society (Bari, 2009). Similarly, lack of infrastructure, unavailability of educational facilities, social conduct, poverty, and general perceptions are always not in favor of female education (Israr, Gul, et al., 2018). In some parts of the country especially Pakhtun society, women are still prevented from casting their vote (Aziz & Abdullah, 2012).

Socio-cultural environment plays a dominant role in describing social roles among male and female (Mead, 1930). However, Rothbard, (Rothbard, 2001) believes that these trends are socially built and meant to be changing with the passage of time and geography. Similarly, transformation occurs in the family structure, household composition, roles and relationships among family members (Aldrich & Cliff, 2003). Study shows that in almost all the societies female are persistently associated with household demands and family responsibilities (Moen & Yu, 2000). This not only reduces the chances of their time for work outside the home but also lead to psychological disorders which include stress, work-family conflict, and attitudinal changes. Society, on the other hand, expects that men as “breadwinners” and depict that they are abler and important in comparison to the women (Jennings & McDougald, 2007)-(Rothbard, 2001).

This study argues the vitality of women inclusion in politics, as a necessary element, as natural human right and unavoidable importance for the better half of any social structure. The study has been delimited to *Pakhtun* society where women are sidelined from the civic life as a cultural phenomenon and marginalized to domestic chores only. It has commonly been noted that in majority of the cases the men don't care for the women rights and focus on the men issues in the civic life. As a result, women's issues are not resolved in the political system of the country and specifically in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a Pakhtun populated province of Pakistan. There are very few studies that explore the importance of women in the political arena of the country and specifically in *Pakhtun* society. Preference to women inclusion in political system of the country is negligible both on the research and policy level. This article thus stresses the inclusion of women on two basic propositions. Firstly, women in politics are necessary for overall women empowerment and women development a key indicator to the development of almost half of the society. Secondly, women inclusion in politics would bring up those issues which are related to women. For example, family planning, health related issues, water management and peaceful coexistence.

There are several socio cultural variables that affect women participation in politics. It may include the culture of the area, the religious codes, customs and traditions. However, little head has been given in the existing literature to the role of economic independence and its impact upon the role and status of women in a society. Specifically, *Pakhtun* society which is extremely traditional and conventional in nature, women have no job and entrepreneurship opportunities which compel them



to sideline from the decision making power regarding their choices, education (Khan, Sarmad, Shah, & Han, 2020), mate selection, and politics. The current study thus brings forth the novelty from the already existing literature in the emancipation of women through economic liberation from the strong patriarchic economic social structure. This economic independence would lead to women empowerment and enhance her decision making power according to her choice and needs. As a result women participation in politics would increase by manifold in real sense against the current practice of token representation of being selected by men political leader on reserved seats and indirect election. Similarly, it will pave the way for women to participate in mainstream activities and contribute to the development of society in a productive way.

The rest of this article has been organized as under. Section 2, of the article gives a detail account of the materials and methods. Section 3, comprises results and discussion of the study. Section 4, lays out the conclusions of the study and the final section 5, presents the references of the study.

2. Materials and Methods

This study was carried out in Malakand division using positivistic paradigm of social research and framed under quantitative approach. The data was collected in the field through interview schedule from women respondents. Due to strong purdah system, the female students from the university were utilized in data collection. The data were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20, for inferences. Univariate analysis was conducted for getting frequencies and percentages. Bivariate analyses were conducted through chi-square test at 0.05, level of significance, to test the possible association between the dependent and independent variables.

The universe of this study remained the seven districts of Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. Out of the total 1871, indirectly elected women councilors serving on reserved seats at local government, a sample of 320 women councilors in the district council, tehsil council, union council, and village council was selected through Sekaran Table (2013). To decrease sampling error, proportional representation technique was adopted, as given in the following Table, 1:

Table 1: District wise proportional allocation of the sample

S. No	District	Stratum Population	Stratum Sample
1.	Chitral	217	38
2.	Dir Upper	263	44
3.	Dir Lower	421	73
4.	Swat	328	56
5.	Shangla	230	39
6.	Buner	228	38
7.	Malakand	184	32
Grand Total		1871	320

Sample Frame: 1871

Sample size: 320

Formula:
$$\frac{\text{Population of Stratum} \times \text{Sample Size}}{\text{Total Population}}$$

The above table 1 shows the total number of women representatives in Malakand Division is 1871 councilors at local government. The sample size for the current study was selected according to Sekaran & Bougie (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016) table of sample selection for the given sample frame. Hypotheses of the study are as under:

H₀: Women's economic dependency in *Pakhtun* society has no association with women's political participation

H₁: Women's economic dependency in *Pakhtun* society has significant association with women's political participation

The study was carried out according to research ethics where the data was used for academic and research purpose only. The names of the respondents were not recorded for confidentiality and secrecy of the data was ensured.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. UNIVARIATE ANALYSIS

Univariate analysis in this study is composed of frequencies and percentages tables. The results in this segment have been discussed in three sections. Section I, reveals discussion on 'Demographic Profile, which is followed by Section II, '*Pakhtun* Social Structure' that is independent variable. Section III of this segment explains, 'Women's political participation' that is the dependent variable of the current study. Detailed discussion of the univariate analyses is given as under.

3.1.1. Demographic Profile

This section is an important indicator toward the social, economic and psychological representation of the respondents and their thinking preferences. In the current study demographic profile is composed of; age wise distribution, educational status, marital status and professional status. The following table-2 will guide us further in the mentioned regard:

Table 2: Age, Marital Status, Educational Status, Family Type, Occupation of Respondents

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Age of the respondents		
25-35	118	36.9
36-45	152	47.5
Above 46	50	15.6
Total	320	100.0
Marital status of the respondents		
Married	234	73.1
Single	73	22.8
Separated	13	4.1
Total	320	100.0
Educational status of the respondents		
Illiterate	119	37.2
Metric	121	37.8
Bachelor	55	17.2
Master	25	7.8
Total	320	100.0
Family type of respondent		
Nuclear	102	31.9
Joint	201	62.8
Extended	17	5.3
Total	320	100.0
Occupation of the respondent		
Housewife	252	78.8
own business	44	13.8
Employee	24	7.5
Total	320	100.0



Overhead Table- 2 displays age wise distribution of the sample respondents. It is apparent from the data that out of 320 (100 %) respondents, 118 (36.9 %) were in the range of age group 25-35 years, 152 (47.5 %) respondents were in age group of 36-45 years, while 50 beings (15.6%) were in age group of 46 years and above. The table showed that majority of the respondents were in the age group 36-45 years which is a group of mature and well experienced people. The second major age group 25-35 indicates that majority of the respondents have educated youth serving as representative in the local government.

Similarly, among the total 320 being (100%); 234 (73.1 %) a significant majority is married. It has been noted that the married women are more trusted to take part in the activities outside home especially in the politics (Lieb & Thistle, 2005). Similarly, out of the total 73 (22.8 %) are single while, a minimum number 13 being (4.1 %) have recognized themselves to be separated as divorced or widowed.

Table-2 further illustrates literacy ratio and educational level of the respondents. Out of the total 320 (100 %), 119 (37.2 %) respondents were illiterate, 121 (37.8 %) were matriculate, 55 (17.2 %) had bachelors' degrees and only 25 (7.8 %) are masters' degree holder. These statistics depict that literacy ratio is not satisfactory among the women involved in the political process. However, these are politically conscious families who are well educated and allow their women to participate in public spheres like education and politics.

The specified table-2 further shows the family type of the respondent which elucidates that majority 201 (62.8%) of respondents are coming from joint family system, 102 (31.9%) belongs to nuclear family and 17 beings (5.3%) belong to extended family system. Majority of the respondents belong to joint family system where women have maximum responsibility at home in *Pakhtun* society and are prevented engage in public activities (Aziz & Abdullah, 2012).

The table further explores that a vast majority of the respondents are housewives 252 (78.8%), 44 (13.8%) have their own businesses and only 24 (7.5%) are formally employed. This shows that women are not allowed to participate in the public sphere. Due to low literacy women in target area, their participation in employment is also quite low.

3.1.2. Women's Economic Dependency (IV)

Despite their contribution to the development of civilization, woman's status has never been equal historically in majority of the world societies (Rahman & Naoroze, 2007). Generally, men are considered the bread winners and women are reliant on their men for food, health, education and any other public activity including politics (Griffith, 2007). UN in (2007) (IONS) recorded that

60% of the world unpaid labor is done by the women. This is why, two third of the world poorest population is women (Bernstein, 2002). The following table-3 will guide us in this regard.

Table-3. Women’s Economic Dependency and Political Participation

Statement	Frequency	Percent
The Only Bread Winners in <i>Pakhtun</i> Culture are Men		
Agree	246	76.9
Disagree	54	16.9
Neutral	20	6.3
Total	320	100.0
Lack of Job Opportunities for Women		
Agree	238	74.4
Disagree	59	18.4
Neutral	23	7.2
Total	320	100.0
Property Rights Remains with Male Members of the Family, Always		
Agree	255	79.7
Disagree	39	12.2
Neutral	26	8.1
Total	320	100.0
Lack of Vocational Skills for Women		
Agree	236	73.8
Disagree	60	18.8
Neutral	24	7.5
Total	320	100.0
Unpaid Labor at Home		
Agree	246	76.9
Disagree	46	14.4
Neutral	28	8.8
Total	320	100.0
Men’s Superiority over Women in Economic Endures		
Agree	240	75.0
Disagree	57	17.8
Neutral	23	7.2
Total	320	100.0

Women Deprivation from Inheritance and Increased Dependency		
Agree	251	78.4
Disagree	39	12.2
Neutral	30	9.4
Total	320	100.0
Gender Roles is a Cause of Women's Least Participation in Politics		
Agree	253	79.1
Disagree	37	11.6
Neutral	30	9.4
Total	320	100.0
Women are Least Intelligent, a Common Understanding		
Agree	251	78.4
Disagree	34	10.6
Neutral	35	10.9
Total	320	100.0
Women are Least Productive *, a Common Notion		
Agree	241	75.3
Disagree	52	16.3
Neutral	27	8.4
Total	320	100.0

The given table-3 demonstrates that out of the total 320 (100%), 246 (76.9%) agreed with that men are considered the only breadwinner in *Pakhtun* society; 54 (16.9%) disagreed and 20 (6.3%) remained neutral in this context. Jennings & McDougald (Jennings & McDougald, 2007); Rothbard, (Rothbard, 2001), believed that society expects that men as “breadwinners” and depict that they are abler and important in comparison to the women.

Table-3 further reveals that out of the total 320 (100%), 238 (74.4%) agreed that lack of job opportunities is an obstacle to women employment and hence their political participation; 59 (18.4%) disagreed and 23 (7.2%) remained neutral. Noreen & Musarrat, (Noreen & Musarrat, 2013) argued that women in the rural areas portray a worsen picture where the traditional codes of life assign more powers and privileges to men as compared to women.

Table-3 also determines that 255 (79.7%) agreed that in *Pakhtun* society property rights remain with men only; 39 (12.1%) disagreed and 26 (8.1%) were found neutral. Zia (Zia, 2013) assumed that local customs sideline women from production and property rights and prepare her for domestic activities.

The given table-3 demonstrates that 236 (73.8%) agreed that lack of vocational skills for women is a hindrance toward women earning and thus affect woman's participation in politics in *Pakhtun* society; 60 (18.8%) disagreed and 24 (7.5%) remained neutral. (Arab Naz et al., 2012) revealed that women's dependency on men in economic is the main cause of their lagging behind in another field of public activities. Similarly, vocational training is considered one of the most important tools for women's empowerment in society (Arab Naz et al., 2012).

Table-3 further proves that 246 (76.9%) agreed that unpaid labor at home leads to women's dependency and discrimination in society; 46 (14.4%) disagreed and 28 (8.8%) were neutral. (Bashir et al., 2010), believes that Pakistan's conventional patriarchy distribute the amenities of life in public and private spheres and the public life is the prerogative of men only. Hence, women labor force rate in Pakistan is less than 19.1 percent as compared to male labor force rate which is 70.1%.

Afore mentioned table-3 exhibit that out of the total 320 (100%), 240 (75.0%) agreed with the statement that men's superiority over women in economic endure is a cause of their least participation in politics; 57 (17.8%) disagreed and 23 (7.2%) remained neutral. Omar (Omar, 2011) explored that women's economic empowerment is prerequisite to achieve sustainable socio-cultural and political security in society. Cross cultural studies reveal that women are disempowered because of the problems ordained in the rigid socio-cultural conditions backed by religious misappropriation, economic dependency, and male dominated values (Naz & Ahmad, 2012).

Table-3 shows that 251 (78.4%) agreed that women are deprived of the property rights; 39 (12.2%) disagreed and 30 (9.4%) remained neutral. Zafar (Zafar, 1993) disclosed that depriving daughters of inheritance in favor of sons is a common practice in Pakistan while the case in the *Pakhtun* built is more serious, where this practice is a trend.

The mentioned table-3 proves that 253 (79.1%) agreed that different gender roles assigned in *Pakhtun* society are the main cause of women least participation in politics; 37 (11.6%) disagreed and 30 (9.4%) were neutral. Wide (Wide, 2006), explored that the main structures which influence the gender in society are socioeconomic structure. Thus, countries with advanced socio-economic structure have less obvious gender role in comparison to traditional societies where gender roles are very defined, and women are restricted to domestic spheres.

Table-3 further shows that out of the total 320 (100%), 251 (78.4%) agreed that according to common understanding women are considered least intelligent in *Pakhtun* society; 34 (10.6%) disagreed and 35 (10.9%) remained neutral. Abbas et. al. (Abbas et al., 2010), opined that engendering jobs on the basis of intelligence and then its association with a particular gender

hinder the way for women to avail the opportunities in the open market. Similarly, changes in the status of women in employment and labor market are directly related to change in their position within the family, culture and the system (Bondi, 1991).

Overhead table-3 further reveals that 241 (75.3%) agreed that this is a common notion in *Pakhtun* societies that women are least productive; 52 (16.3%) disagreed and 27 (8.4%) were neutral. The supposition that men are the only earning hands in maintaining the family expenses has resulted in the little wages for women in the labor market (Haas & Hwang, 2007). Globally men are perceived to be more efficient and productive than women as evident in manufacturing organization and servicing organization of Pakistan (Abbas et al., 2010).

3.1.3. Women's Political Participation (DV)

Women constitute almost half of the world population but have traditionally been discriminated in many aspects of life including politics (Aslam, 2002). Currently, developed countries are in a better position to address gender issues due to women's movements and awareness (Israr, Naz, Gul, Khan, & Khan, 2018). On the contrary, developing countries still experience gender gaps that manifest poor developmental indicators (Omvedt, 2005). The following table-4 highlights the women's political participation frequency and percentage ratio as follows:

Table 4: Women's Political Participation

Statement	Frequency	Percent
Pakhtun Social Structure and Women's Participation in Politics		
Agree	270	84.4
Disagree	28	8.8
Neutral	22	6.9
Total	320	100.0
Women's Economic Dependency and Political Participation		
Agree	265	82.8
Disagree	31	9.7
Neutral	24	7.5
Total	320	100.0
Mass Illiteracy and Women's least Interest in Politics		
Agree	277	86.6
Disagree	25	7.8
Neutral	18	5.6
Total	320	100.0
Weak and Deficient Policies and Women's Political Participation		

Agree	264	82.5
Disagree	27	8.4
Neutral	29	9.1
Total	320	100.0
Masculine Interpretation of Religion and Women's Deprivation		
Agree	272	85.0
Disagree	26	8.1
Neutral	22	6.9
Total	320	100.0
Women's Nominal Representation in Political Parties		
Agree	276	86.3
Disagree	27	8.4
Neutral	17	5.3
Total	320	100.0

The above table-4 displays that out of the total 320 (100%), 270 (84.4%) agreed that *Pakhtun* social structure is not supportive to women's political empowerment, 28 (8.8%) disagreed and 22 beings (6.9%) were found neutral. (Arab Naz et al., 2012) believe that cultural values and misinterpreted folk wisdom consider women a delicate gender who could not shoulder power and political responsibilities.

Table 4, further ascertains that 265 (82.8%) agreed that dependence of women on men economically in *Pakhtun* culture sideline women from power and authority, 31 (9.7%) disagreed and 24 (7.5%) remained neutral. Welle and Heilman, (Welle & Heilman, 2007) believe masculine popular culture customs, traditions, law, and policy procedures provide little opportunities for women to take a lead. Women thus remain dependent on men economically, decision making and politics.

Table-4 further tells us that out of the total 320 (100%), 277 (86.6%) agreed that mass illiteracy in female leads to least understanding of the political system, 25 (7.8%) disagreed and 18 (5.6%) remained neutral. (Hashim, Alam, & Siraj, 2010) identifies the main obstacles to women's participation in politics as their low education, illiteracy, lack of access to information, and low socialization.

The mentioned table-4 explains that out of the total 320 (100%), 264 (82.5%) agreed that enactment of proper policies for mainstreaming women in politics are deficient while 27 (8.4%) disagreed and 29 (9.1%) remained neutral. Kingdon (Kingdon & Thurber, 1984) observes that lack

of rational policies hinders promotion of gender equality in politics. Prudent policies by professionals are more important than any method and technique of empowerment.

The given table-4 elucidates that out of the total 320 (100%), 272 (85.0%) agreed that male dominated religious institutions stop women to participate in public activities including politics, 42 (13.1%) disagreed and 21 (6.6%) remained neutral. It is commonly understood that non-participation of women in politics is obstructed by three distinct but interconnected variables i.e. social structure, economic disadvantages and religious miss interpretation (Hanif, 2009).

Next, table-4 ascertains that out of the total 320 (100%), 276 (86.3%) agreed that women are not included in political parties, 27 (8.4%) disagreed and 17 (5.3%) remained neutral. Roza (Roza, 2010), understand that political parties influence the whole political milieu, yet they too are shaped by patriarchic system.

It is evident from the above discussion that in addition to structural barriers the economic dependence of women is always on the disposal of men in each and every decision including politics. Similarly, illiteracy not only affects their life at home but also the public sphere of women as well. Besides, timely legislation and implementation in the real sense is further important. This way the rights of the women can be safeguarded and will eventually eradicate all sort of discrimination against her. The role of political parties to streamline women in politics is of utmost significance. (Rabbani et al., 2020)

3.2. Bi-Variate Analysis

Women's Economic Dependency and Political Participation

Generally, men are considered the bread earners thus they remain self-reliant and women in majority of the societies remain dependent on their male counterparts. This limited their authority in decision making and social mobility and curtailed their presence in politics (Griffith, 2007). However, women empowerment has remained a burning issue in the last two decades according to the UNO and other international humanitarian organizations (Kabeer, 2005). Despite their contribution to the development of civilization, its status has never been equal historically in majority of the world societies Rahman and Naoroze, (Rahman & Naoroze, 2007). UN in (2007) (IONS) recorded that 60% of the world unpaid labor is done by the women. This is why, two third of the world poorest population is women (Bernstein, 2002). The following table will tell us in detail association between independent variable women economic dependency and women's political participation as under:

Table 5: Women's Economic Dependency and Political Participation

S.N 0	Statements	Response	WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION			Statistic
			Agree	Disagree	Neutral	
1	In <i>Pakhtun</i> culture, only men are considered bread winners which lead to economic dependency of female-	Agree	229(89.8%)	34(68%)	14(93.3%)	$x^2 = 21.730$ $p = 0.000$
		Disagree	17(6.7%)	7(14%)	1(6.7%)	
		Neutral	9(3.5%)	9(18%)	0(0%)	
2	Lack of job opportunities hinders women from political participation	Agree	222(76.8%)	14(51.9%)	2(50%)	$x^2 = 12.213$ $p = 0.016$
		Disagree	49(17%)	8(29.6%)	2(50%)	
		Neutral	18(6.2%)	5(18.5%)	0(0%)	
3	Property rights in the hands of male members of the family deprive women of taking part in politics	Agree	238(82.4%)	15(55.6%)	2(50%)	$x^2 = 24.631$ $p = 0.000$
		Disagree	33(11.4%)	4(14.8%)	2(50%)	
		Neutral	18(6.2%)	8(29.6%)	0(0%)	
4	Lack of vocational skills for women hinder them to participate in civic activities	Agree	219(75.8%)	20(74.1%)	3(75%)	$x^2 = 1.266$ $p = 0.867$
		Disagree	49(17%)	6(22.2%)	1(25%)	
		Neutral	21(7.3%)	1(3.7%)	0(0%)	
5	Unpaid labor at home leads to gender discrimination in politics	Agree	221(86.7%)	35(70%)	9(60%)	$x^2 = 14.615$ $p = 0.006$
		Disagree	19(7.5%)	8(16%)	6(40%)	
		Neutral	15(5.9%)	7(14%)	0(0%)	
6	Men's superiority over women in economic endures leading to lack of participation in Politics	Agree	237(82%)	22(81.5%)	3(75%)	$x^2 = 1.737$ $p = 0.784$
		Disagree	29(10%)	2(7.4%)	1(25%)	
		Neutral	23(8%)	3(11.1%)	0(0%)	
7	Women deprivation from inheritance rights lead to dependency over men	Agree	236(81.7%)	13(48.1%)	2(50%)	$x^2 = 22.484$ $p = 0.000$
		Disagree	30(10.4%)	7(25.9%)	2(50%)	

	and their political participation					
		Neutral	23(8%)	7(25.9%)	0(0%)	
8	Different gender roles as a cause of women's least participation in politics	Agree	230(79.6%)	20(74.1%)	3(75%)	$x^2 = 2.009$ $p = 0.734$
		Disagree	33(11.4%)	3(11.1%)	1(25%)	
		Neutral	26(9%)	4(14.8%)	1(25%)	
9	Women are least intelligent; a common understanding is a cause of least of participation in politics	Agree	232(80.3%)	18(66.7%)	1(25%)	$x^2 = 12.364$ $p = 0.015$
		Disagree	27(9.3%)	6(22.2%)	1(50%)	
		Neutral	2(10.4%)	3(11.1%)	2(50%)	
10	Women are least productive, a common cultural notion, is a cause of least participation in politics	Agree	223(87.5%)	37(74.%)	10(66.7%)	$x^2 = 17.873$ $p = 0.001$
		Disagree	22(8.6%)	4(8%)	5(33.3%)	
		Neutral	10(3.9%)	9(18.%)	0(0%)	

Afore mentioned table-5 elucidate the Chi-square value (21.730) having a 'p' value (0.000) tells us a strong association between the independent and dependent variable. The highly significant 'p' value explains that considering men to be the earning hands affect women's participation in politics because they remain dependent on men for the whole life. Rothbard, (Rothbard, 2001)- (Jennings & McDougald, 2007), believed that society expects only men as "breadwinners" and depict that they are abler and important in comparison to women. Similarly, men due to their economic capabilities are more self-reliant. This lead toward limiting women's authority in decision making and social mobility which also curtails women's role in politics (Griffith, 2007).

Next row on table-5 gives Chi-square value (12.213) with 'p' value (0.016). This means that there is a strong association between women's lack of jobs opportunities and their political participation. Noreen & Musarrat, (Noreen & Musarrat, 2013) explored that the rural areas of Pakistan portray worsen picture due to cultural codes and traditions. The local culture assigns more powers and privileges, to men including politics, in comparison to women of the society.

The next row gives us the chi-square value (24.631) having 'p' value (0.000) which is highly significant. Thus, property rights in the hands of men members hinder women to get access to economic resources and this affects their power and status in family and society. Zia (Zia, 2013) believed that local customs exclude women from production and property rights.

Similarly, Chi-square value (1.266) demonstrates the ‘p’ value (0.867) which is not significant and hence lack of vocational training have no effect on women economic status and political participation.

Next, on the table, the Chi-square value is (14.615) which carry ‘p’ value (0.006), is a highly significant and hence significant association between unpaid labor at home and women political participation is found according to the sampled respondents. (Bashir et al., 2010), revealed that Pakistan due to its conventional patriarchy, amenities of life in public have been associated with men only. Hence, women labor force rate in Pakistan has remained less than 19.1 percent in comparison to the men labor force rate is 70.1%.

Next, on the table, the Chi-square value (1.737) carry the ‘p’ value (0.784) which is non-significant and thus according to the sampled respondents there is no significant association between men’s superiority in economic endures on the political status of women. However, Omar (Omar, 2011) discovered that economic empowerment of women is a prerequisite to achieving sustainable socio-cultural and political security in society.

Next row on the table claims the Chi-square value (22.484) shows ‘p’ value (0.000) is highly significant. This means that women deprivation in inheritance right has a strong association with women’s political participation. Zafar (Zafar, 1993) has disclosed that depriving daughters of inheritance in favor of sons is a common practice in Pakistan while the case in the *Pakhtun* built is more serious where this is a common practice.

Similarly, the chi-square value (2.009) elucidates ‘p’ value, (0.734) which is non-significant and hence there is no relation between the two variables. The value predicted that according to the sample respondents different gender roles in *Pakhtun* society has no effect on their political participation. However, the popular culture has assigned some particular roles on gender basis which is passing through traditions for centuries and conventions remain intact (Bari, 2009).

Similarly, the chi-square value (12.364) carry ‘p’ value (0.015) which is highly significant and thus, in *Pakhtun* society women are considered least intelligent as a popular misconception which hinders their way in political participation. Roscigno, Garcia, and Bobbitt, (Roscigno et al., 2007) analyzed that women are assumed as less intelligent, sensitive and hormonal which is connected to their discrimination in the job market and other public activities.

The final row of table-5 elucidates the chi-square value (17.873) which carries ‘p’ value (0.001) which is again highly significant and hence the common notion that women are least productive has high effect on women’s political participation. Globally men are perceived to be more efficient

and productive than women. This discrimination is evident in manufacturing and servicing organization in Pakhtun societies (Abbas et al., 2010).

The above discussion showed that out of ten indicators seven were significant and three were non-significant. Thus, it is inferred that women economic dependency is highly affecting their political participation. Thus, the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. To sum up it can be detected that women's dependence on men for their needs and lack of income opportunities lead to their subservient status in the family and society and hence no choice is given to her for life priorities. The given discussion tells us that women economic dependency has unprecedented impacts on their political participation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Conventionally, Pakistani politics is of hereditary nature, where succeeding generations are usually expected to follow the inbred political philosophy of the predecessors. Similarly, it is commonly observed that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a strong majority of women are either relegated from the public life or subservient to their counterpart in political choices, which is against the natural rights, religious injunctions, and democratic process. The study revealed that women economic independence would result in women empowerment and give them an opportunity to participate in public life. Women's maximum political participation can be obtained when they are able to carry the expenses required for political process; i.e. selecting a party of choice, participation in political congregation, access to information, voting and contesting election. This study signifies a wide variety of implications to the policy makers in shape of information, identification of the lacunas in the system and areas of concentration for the development of an equitable environment for women of the target area in particular and the country in general. In a nut shell it is therefore concluded that alongside other sociocultural and religious factors the economic variable has significant role in the women empowerment and their participation in politics alongside men. This would enhance their capabilities and would lead to better development indicators not only for their selves but for the children and society as a whole.



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