Women's Education and Empowerment in Islamabad, Pakistan

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Abstract *The present research study was conducted in two public sector universities in Islamabad, Pakistan to explore the relationship between women's education and empowerment. In this research we have looked at the five major dimensions of the women's empowerment in conjunction with education i.e. (1) freedom of movement, (2) economic activism, familial and social affairs (3) freedom from domination and support by the family, (4) decision-making in daily life, and (5) political participation and community engagement. The data was collected from 30 female respondents (15 university teachers and 15 recently passed-out university graduates). The selection of the respondents was made through purposive sampling but with a special inclusion criterion. Based on the research findings, we can suggest that higher levels of education could positively be associated with the higher levels of women's empowerment.*

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (4 and 5) stress on 'quality education' and 'gender equality'. Both goals address a long-awaited wish for most of the women in developing and underdeveloped worlds. Since ages women have been suffering to achieve equality and their access to quality education also remained a desire. According to the constitution of Pakistan, education is the fundamental right of every female residing in Pakistan but in reality, the situation is not in good shape. They had to face several challenges when it comes to acquiring higher education. The ratios of Pakistani women in higher education are depressing in comparison to the men. This research primarily focused on how the levels of education could possibly be related to the levels of women's empowerment in urban settings of Pakistan especially in the case of Islamabad. In Pakistan, the access to higher education is limited for women and those who acquire this had to fight for this fundamental right. In most of the cases, these variables (like levels of education and levels of women's empowerment) are positively associated.

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Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan and the most modern metropolises of the country which hosts over one million populations in the capital territory alone additionally with almost the same size of population residing in its rural settings (PBS, 2018). The city has swelled exponentially over the last two decades with an increase of almost a hundred percent- as there were half a million residents at time of 1998 census (PBS, 1999).

In this globalized and economically reliant world, one cannot negate the importance of higher education for women (Mehmood, Chong & Hussain, 2018). In most countries including Pakistan, the importance of higher education is not understood properly and this is the reason that the state is not investing in its education sector (Haider, 2008). The main purpose of the higher education institutions since ages remained to produce a skilled lot to serve the society in a better way. Pakistan is at the bottom in the South Asian region in terms of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), as per the recent statistics of 2015-16 Pakistan had only 10% GER while Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India had 13%, 21%, and 24% GERs respectively (Mehmood, Chong & Hussain, 2018: 380). It is estimated that less than 3% of the 17-23 aged group in Pakistan make it to higher education (Batool, Sajid and Masood-UR-Rehman, 2013). Pakistan only spends about 2.4% of its total budget on education which again palaces it at nethermost among the rest of the world including the neighboring countries (Nisar, 2019).

Empowerment is a blanket term that presages several meanings but for the current research purpose we have used the definition of European Institute for Gender Equality (2020) "process by which women gain power and control over their own lives and acquire the ability to make strategic choices." Empowerment is a process which enables the people to take specific actions in the way they like to do. It can help individuals to revitalize their thinking and imagining capabilities for their future life passage (Bhat, 2015: 188). Empowerment could be related to the levels of education, especially the higher levels of education, in terms of the way it paves for women to achieve their several personal, familial and societal goals. Empowerment strengthens the innate ability by way of acquiring knowledge, power and experience (Hashemi Schuler & Riley, 1996). Education can make a great change in the life of individuals. One can gain control over the future course of life with the help of education. Women's education can play a pivotal role not for the individuals who acquire it but for the country as well- as women contribute to the country's economy by participating as a skilled labor force. Thus, education could resultant in improved quality of life for the individuals and their families (Bhat, 2015:188). It has been noted that education in general and higher education, in particular, is recognized as an instrument for social change (Malik & Courtney, 2011). Building on this, women could be the catalysts to that change in the case of Pakistan if they are provided with such avenues of higher education.

Review of Literature: Contextualizing Women's Empowerment

A lot has been said about the women's empowerment by various researchers. Since ages, the term has been used replaceable to emancipation, autonomy, ability and power. Although, many researchers opined that we have overused and to some extent misused the term empowerment (Stromquist, 2002; Stacki and Monkman, 2003). There could be a number of meaning annexed to this term but in most of the case it is used alternatively to "power," "participating," "voicing out," and "enabling". The meaning of empowerment has been associated to the significant collective change (Stromquist, 1995: 13) for those

who remained under the nod of other's control. Their reliance on others for petty issues to major life aspects diminish their control over the deciding factors that what is good for them and what is bad. Rather they normally look forward to what others decide about them. Others living around them could have influences on women's lives in terms of the actions which matters a lot for their welfare also comes under the domain of empowerment. If the people associated with women especially the men have all the privileges to decide what women had to do then in such a case their "empowerment" is under control of others and thus has not been achieved by these women (Batliwala, 1994).

Many scholars have contextualized women empowerment in terms of the various strings/indicators under this broader notion. Parveen and Leonhauser (2004) mentioned about the four strings (self-confidence, freedom of choices, resources, and power relations) of women's empowerment in a household level study conducted in a sampled location in Bangladesh. They found low levels of empowerment among the selected families in the locale. Jan and Akhter (2008) identified five main indicators of women's empowerment; (a) participation in local government, (b) choices for undertaking income-generating activities, (c) visit to relatives, (d) visit to friends, and (e) sale and purchase of the property. They found that in most of the cases these domains were dominated by the male members of the families for both the married and unmarried women. Fotso, Azeh and Essendi (2009) assert that the commonly used dimensions of women's autonomy include; (a) freedom of movement, (b) discretion over earned income, (c) freedom from violence or intimidation by husbands, (d) decision-making related to economic matters and (e) health care. The consensus among researchers seems to be that women's autonomy is influenced mainly by three factors: (a) socioeconomic status, (b) level of education and (c) family system. Kawaguchi et al. (2014) discusses the five dimensions of women's empowerment; (a) freedom of movement, (b) economic security and stability (c) support by family/freedom from domination, (d) decision-making in daily life, and (e) relationship with community/ participation in society.

One of the most comprehensive definitions has been given by Kabeer (2001) who offers a very essential conceptualization in terms of its application across various contexts such as development, social and familial affairs, and economic autonomy. It further explains that empowerment is concerns about people's ability to make choices about their life independently as in those cases such people were denied to do so even having the fullest abilities to make choice about their life aspects. Kabeer has presented two main strings in it: (a) this process leads to a change from disempowerment to autonomy and (b) empowerment is all about human "agency and choice"- without paying high costs one chooses the real alternatives for better life aspects.

When it comes to measuring empowerment among women in most of the developing countries various scholars have devised few dimensions of it but these dimensions could vary from one scholar to another given the background and the scope of their research. For instance, Kawaguchi et al. (2014: 164) tried to measure the levels of women's empowerment in the case of an Egyptian village where they asked various questions within the five dimensions of the women's empowerment and we have employed the same dimensions, as given above in this section, to understand the levels of empowerment from the selected female respondents of this research. On the other side, Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002:13) have used six dimensions of women's empowerment with its subsidiary dimensions, like; (a) economic, (b) sociocultural, (c)

familial/interpersonal, (d) legal, (e) political, and (f) psychological. These dimensions are father divided into various categories like household, community and broader area. In addition to the Kawaguchi *et al.* (2014: 164) we have also used a part of the dimensions of women's empowerment given by Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002:13).

Women's Education and Empowerment

Various studies have been conducted to explore the relationship between education and women's empowerment and findings of some researchers have been mentioned here. In some cases, the researchers found a positive association between the levels of education and the levels of empowerment which lead us to conduct the current research to look at the association between these two variables in the case of Islamabad, Pakistan. We need to understand under what circumstances and to what extent these two variables are associated (Stromquist, 2002; DaCosta, 2008; Murphy-Graham, 2008). Education could be one of the leading factors for women's empowerment (Sundaram, Sekar, & Subburaj, 2014: 76). Stromquist (1995: 19) mentioned that the role of education, especially the formal education, is very essential in achieving women's empowerment related goals. It can improve the gender identities or refute the sexual stereotypes through literature especially the textbooks and curricula. The formal education can also do a lot in devising guidelines for the teachers to be gender-sensitive and nonsexist. These are the academic institutions that effectively brainstorm the individuals in terms of being neutral towards other genders especially women. So, coming out of the academic institutions with a nonsexist training that can be a good contribution to bourgeoning women's empowerment.

In the case of Nigeria, Achunine (2004) stressed the role of educational curriculum to train women for particular roles. Initially, the curricula were prepared to only train women for specific roles like nurses, clerks, and teachers but that fired back when they faced a shortage of women in other fields like politics, engineering, medicine, law, and other areas. In the Nigerian case, the majority of the women are still not being trained to become top leaders and such other domains which directly hinder them to compete for their counterparts on equal footings which consequently reduce their chances to be empowered (Ojobo, 2008: 94). Khan and Mohammad (2003) found a positive relationship between women's education and empowerment in terms of accessing and controlling the knowledge resources to advance with a clear mind to shatter the discrimination and subordination over them. The National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women (2002) rightly fixed a goal to help women in realizing their full potential in almost all spheres of their life (Government of Pakistan, 2002). Robinson-Pant (2004) identifies the positive role of education in providing women a much brighter path to achieve success in their life. In the findings, the researcher further mentioned the positive role of financial outcomes gained by the women due to the education in northern areas of Pakistan. The incomes generated by women due to higher education resulted in the flexibility shown by the families towards women teachers in this region (Ashraf and Farah, 2007: 29). This attitude of families towards women's earning comes under the domain of modernization paradigm which explains that women's education as an indispensable action to be more productive for the economy in contrast to their own emancipation (Robinson-Pant, 2004).

Research Hypothesis

The current research was conducted under the following hypothesis:

"higher the levels of education higher would be the empowerment of women."

Research Methodology

The current research was conducted in two public sector universities (i.e. Quaid-i-Azam University and International Islamic University) in Islamabad with to explore the association between women's education and empowerment. We used the qualitative research approach and the data was collected through 30 in-depth interviews (IDIs) with the help of a semi-scheduled interview guide. The unit of data collection were university female teachers and recently university graduated female students. We selected 15 each category of respondents with the help of purposive sampling but with a special inclusion criterion. For the female teacher, we fix at least five-year experience of teaching at one of the sampled universities and for female graduates, we fixed they must have passed their last degree from any of the two sampled universities about five years or more before the interview.

About 24 of the IDIs were conducted at respondents' homes while the rest 6 were conducted at two universities. The respondents were asked about their educational levels and the degree of empowerment. The data collected through the in-depth interviews were further coded and grouped under various themes. The data was analyzed while using the thick description of Clifford Geertz (1973: 5-6) to break the descriptive data sorting through layers of significance to stem the meaning from the emic perspective.

Major Findings

The data was collected from the 30 respondents (15 female teachers and 15 females graduated) from two public sector universities (Quaid-i-Azam University and International Islamic University) in Islamabad, Pakistan. Table 1. presents the detailed socio-economic and demographic profiles of these selected respondents. They were asked about five categories of information; (a) age, (b) marital status, (c) income, (d) family structure, and (e) profession.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents *(n=30)*

Attributes	*f*	*%*
Age		
<25	10	33.4
26-30	05	16.6
31-35	02	6.6
36>	13	43.4
Marital Status		
Unmarried	04	13.4
Married	26	86.6
Income (Pak Rupees)		
<40,000	03	10.0
40,001-80,000	04	13.4
80,001-120,000	12	40.0
120,001>	11	36.6

Family Structure		
Nuclear	17	56.6
Joint	13	43.3
Profession		
University Teacher	15	50.0
Private Job	04	13.4
Public Sector Job	04	13.4
Self-Business	02	6.6
Housewife	05	16.6

The first variable we asked in table 1 was about the age of the respondents. The data shows that about 43.4% of respondents' age was 36 years or above while 33.4% of respondents age was below 25 years. The rest of the respondents' ages were in between 26 to 35 years. The second indicator was about the marital status of the respondents the data shows that majority (86.6%) of the respondents were married as these trends were in line with the overall societal trends of Pakistani society as in most of the women either working or nonworking get marry between their mid-twenties. The next indicator was about the income of female respondents and the data depicts that about 76.6% of respondents' incomes were ranging between 80,001-120,001 and beyond. Since we took fifty percent female teachers as respondent so these incomes were fully justified.

The fourth variable was about the family structure of the respondents and data depicts that a minor majority of the female was living in nuclear families while the rest were living in a joint family system. The last variable was about the profession of the selected respondents and data shows that fifty percent were university teachers while the rest of the respondents were further divided into four various categories; (a) private job, (b) public sector job, (c) self-business, and (d) housewife. An equal number of respondents (four each) were doing private and public sector jobs while two respondents were own business. The five respondents were living at home and taking care of their families as housewives.

In the proceeding section of this article, we have presented the descriptive findings under five major categories of women's empowerment in connection with education, such as; (1) freedom of movement, (2) economic activism, familial and social affairs (3) freedom from domination and support by the family, (4) decision-making in daily life, and (5) political participation and community engagement in line with the findings of Kawaguchi *et al*. (2014:164) and Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002:13) as cited above in the review section.

Freedom of Movement

Although the research respondents were coming from those families who had no issues with their females to acquire education especially higher education. But even then we had to ask them about the strictness they had to face in terms of going outside home to visit (a) friends or relatives, (b) to visit a doctor or other health-related purposes, (c) visiting market to do the shopping for personal and family needs, (d) visiting any other city for a special reason like academic engagement, and (e) visiting university. We found some sundry responses from the respondents as most of them were having no issues when it comes to visiting relatives and friends. They had to give a proper justification of the said visits and need to take prior permission from the family elders especially fathers. One of the respondents mentioned:

"I am fond of going out, hanging out with friends and dining. But my such habits make my family angry with me as they don't like my such outing goals. Whenever I plan to go out, I had to justify my purpose of the visit."

The health-related visits were also not easy to be paid individually in such cases these females had to accompany either the elder women or a male member of the family. Even in an emergency, they had to go with a family member. It was not common for all the respondents as a university teacher stated that:

"I usually visit my doctor twice a month to consult about the skin-related issues. I visit the doctor freely and I even don't need to take prior permission from my family. I am a shopaholic and found of dining out and even in such cases I don't take permissions."

Another female teacher told that it is normal for her to visit any other city in Pakistan for academic purposes or in some case I also visit abroad. Her family never showed any resistance but it was not the case for all respondents. When we asked it from a housewife, she opined that?

"I never visited any other city independently. I think my family will never allow me to do this if there would be any situation in which I had to visit. I normally remain at home and perform household chores."

One of the respondents mentioned that when I was studying at Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU) it was quite a normal thing to go university even through public transport. My family never had any issues with my visits to friends and for shopping. But things have changed over the time since I am graduated from the QAU. On the other side, the teachers had to visit their respective universities on a regular basis and it was quite normal and acceptable for their families. So, we can say that the women who were working and earning some money had no issues in their movement out of home either for shopping, visiting friends, dining out, or health-related purposes. But in the case of the housewives, their autonomy was compromised and they had to take permissions for each purpose of the visits.

Economic Activism, Familial and Social Affairs

The second category of women's empowerment was about economic activism, familial and social affairs. Most of the female respondents (83.4%) were engaged in economic activities and were working as; (a) university teacher, (b) doing government and private job and (c) having a self-business. These respondents were asked about the following sub-categories of economic activism, familial and social affairs in conjunction with their levels of education; (a) total monthly income, (b) economic support to the family, (c) facing any discrimination, and (d) family shows respect to their personal space.

The data collected through the IDIs shows that most of the respondents mentioned that most of their earnings' go directly to the family's daily needs and for such support, they get due credit from their families. Since their jobs are not the sole income-generating activities for the families but their contributions make the livings better. One of the respondents mentioned that:

"I am running a boutique and on average I earn about hundred thousand per month. A part of these incomes goes to my savings and about half of it I give to my family. Since we are five members-family and living in a rented house. So, there are a lot of expenses to be made every month. My father pays rent out of my share and he looks after other expenses such as (a) expenses related kitchen, (b) utility bills, and (c) tuition fee of my

younger sister and brother. We are living a happy life as my father always prays about my decision to open up the boutique which ultimately helped my family in making a better living. My educational background trained me to become self-sufficient to do such a bold decision of opening up a personal business."

One of the university teachers said that a part of her salary is allocated to the family's needs while the rest goes to the daily expenses. Since she has to visit university, consume daily lunch at the university campus and to maintain her lifestyle being a university teacher. But proportion of salary helps her family in making a better living. Those women who were contributing to the family with their continued incomes were having their say in every family's affair. Parents regularly ask them about different aspects of life and the advices matter a lot for the family. Also, the housewives added that:

"My husband works in a factory as a manager and the family solely depends on his earnings. I try to keep the expenses in control as we need to cater to all needs of our young kids. I normally don't go for the extra demands about the clothing since I know our financial position. My husband discusses all familial affairs with me and he considers my advice in not all but in some of those cases which concerns me directly."

A respondent, who was doing a private job, mentioned that she has never been discriminated and all the time gets equal treatment by her parents in all spheres of life. They were two sisters and one brother and their family shows respect to each one of them. Their health, education, clothing and other needs were equally considered important as of other male members.

Freedom from Domination and Support Extended by the Family

The third indicator of the women's empowerment which we tried to explore in the current research was about the freedom from domination and support extended by the family in various issues. In this section, we also tried to explain few sub-categories of this dimension in detail, such as; (a) physical support extended by the family in household tasks, (b) cohesiveness with the co-habitants, (c) the prevalence of domestic violence, and (d) awareness about personal and legal rights. In Pakistani society, the gendered division of labor is widely practiced. Women, especially the housewives, had to perform the household chores without any hesitation as they are being tamed by their families in the same way. These women do not ask their male counterparts for help in such tasks. On the other side, men have to look after the external issues as they go out to perform a job and do the daily tasks which are assigned to them being a male member of the family. A university teacher replied to a question concerning the support extended by the family in household chores:

"I never asked my husband to do the routine household tasks as this is not his responsibility. He is also a working man and normally returns late. I usually do all the chores but sometimes I had to stretch my working hours at home since there are a lot of things to do being a female."

In some cases, it becomes very challenging for the newly wedded women to live with the in-laws and acts in accordance with the expectation of them. One of the respondents mentioned such issues she faced three years back when she got married and had to live in a joint family setup with his in-laws. She added that:

"My mother-in-law was very strict and she usually teased me on each task I perform. She had set up her own rules of doing the household chores and wanted me to do it in the same way. It took me almost one year to understand her fully and after a two-year time we shifted in a separate house. Now we are living a prosperous life without any interference of in-laws."

Most of the Pakistani women are not of about their personal and legal rights as they are not trained by the family in this way. In most of the case, they do not even bother to take their share in the property inheritance. They usually give it to their male siblings. But the situation is now changing as the state has devised strict regulations on the family inheritance. Women living in an urban center are more aware of their personal and legal rights since their educational levels and exposure are much better than those who live in rural settings. One of the university teachers mentioned that:

"I got my share in family's inheritance and my father was very clear on it. At the time of my marriage, he told me that I will give you the due share in the property and he did it in the same way after a few months of my marriage. Although, I didn't ask for it my right rather they gave me without any hesitation as a goodwill gesture."

Decision-Making

The fourth dimension of the empowerment was about the involvement of women in the household related decision-making. They were asked about; (a) having say in petty household's decision-making, like cooking and dressing etc., (b) having say in small and large purchases, (c) having say in health and education-related decision-making, (d) having say in maintaining relations with close and remote relatives, and (e) having say in family planning related issues.

Pakistani women normally don't cross their limits when it comes to the gendered roles and responsibility to run a house. They comply with what they have been trained for. Normally women look after the household affairs without any interference from their counterparts. In line with this, one of the respondents mentioned that:

"It is my sole responsibility for deciding what to cook in daily meals. My husband never resisted what I made for him. I cook every meal with the fullest devotion and consider it my prime responsibility since he works for the family's wellbeing so I should do my best to provide him quality meals."

In Pakistani society, it is normal for families to comply with the authority of the male members to decide about families' welfare but in some cases, they also take advice from their female counterparts about such affairs. When it comes the small and large purchases; the advising mechanisms could vary from the nuclear to joint family. In a nuclear family, mostly the husbands ask their counterparts about such affairs but this might not by the case for even all nuclear households. In the case of a joint family system, the male members are more provocative to make decisions about small and large purchases. One of the housewives mentioned that:

"I never intervened in such affairs as I find my husband good at doing such decisions. He has all the privileges to invest for the good future of the family. But he always discusses few issues but not in that much detail even then I have no issues if he doesn't discuss these things with me."

In most of the joint families, the decisions about health and education were mostly taken by the male members and women were not interfering in such affairs as they are

stuck to the household chores only. But in the nuclear families, it was totally different as women were not only consulted rather than their say was having some weight in the selection of such service providers. A university teacher mentioned that:

"I feel pride being heard in children's health and education-related issues. My husband asks me on a regular basis about such affairs and he normally respect my advice."

In the case of maintaining relations with the close and remote relative, no generic approach is being adopted by the families. Since it varies from one family to another depending on their personal desires about maintaining relations with others or not. It was very common among both the nuclear and joint families to discuss such issues at length and each one's say was considered and, in the end, the collective decisions for the betterment of the family were made. Family planning is not easy and common issue to be discussed at the family level. It depends on the orientation of the individuals about such affairs. Some people who are more religious in ideology and practice they normally avoid even thinking and discussing such matters with their counterparts. For them, the sole purpose of wedlock is to produce the next generation and the role of the family is to train them well to serve society in a better way. Since the last few decades, the government of Pakistan is trying to the control population through family planning strategy but they failed to change the ideology of people about contraceptive methods, birth-space and even on the total size of the family. In this regard, the population welfare department normally launches awareness campaigns but remained unable to squared it properly. The case of the educated couples was totally different from the rigid ones. They were more inclined towards family planning and the decisions were made in consultation.

Political Participation and Community Engagement

The final dimension covers two distinct but relevant sub-categories of the empowerment. In this section, we asked respondents about; (a) political participation and mobilization, and (b) their engagement in community services. In response to the question about their political participation, most of the women said their family decides collectively about the casting of vote to the specific candidates at times of elections while it was noted that some of the women remained reluctant in considering this act of casting vote as an individual act rather to them it had to be decided by the family. Only two respondents mentioned that they occasionally participated in the political rallies during the elections of 2018 but they regretted by the end since the party whom they were supporting never performed up to their expectations when they made government in Pakistan. She added:

"It was an amazing experience to visit the political rallies during the 2018 election in Islamabad. We all were pumped up about the election campaign. I convince a few of my friends to cast vote to the party of my choice considering it will make a great change in the existing landscape of the politics in Pakistan. But it was tuned out to be a disaster for me when things started moving in different directions. We never expected that this will happen by the end when the out party will make a government."

Most of the respondents were not that much active in the community service, only two respondents mentioned that they usually work with INGO as volunteers in the various slum areas in Islamabad to create awareness among the inhabitant about health and hygiene, water and sanitation, and education.

"I feel pride in doing community services since there shall be a humane goal in our lives to work for the betterment of the others. I chose this community-based activity of advocacy for the better future of the destitute people and I am happy with what I did for them."

Discussion and Conclusion

The current research was conducted in Islamabad with to explore the relationship between women's education and empowerment. We sampled 30 female respondents from two public sector universities in Islamabad through purposive sampling technique. We devised five major dimensions of women and data was collected from the respondents and was aligned under five categories. The levels of women's empowerment could vary from one region to another depending on the socio-political and religious exposures of the people. For a comprehensive understanding of empowerment, we used the two major frameworks (Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender, 2002:13; Kawaguchi *et al.*, 2014:164) and the five dimensions we discussed in the results sections were derived from these two frameworks. Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender (2002:13) have used six dimensions of women's empowerment with its subsidiary variables; (a) economic, (b) socio-cultural, (c) familial/interpersonal, (d) legal, (e) political, and (f) psychological. These dimensions are father divided into various categories like household, community and broader area. In addition to that, Kawaguchi *et al.* (2014: 164) also developed a five strings' model of women's empowerment which contained; (a) freedom of movement, (b) economic security and stability (c) support by family/freedom from domination, (d) decision-making in daily life, and (e) relationship with community/ participation in society.

We transformed these six and five dimensions into an amalgam five-dimensions, such as; (1) freedom of movement, (2) economic activism, familial and social affairs (3) freedom from domination and support extended by the family, (4) decision-making in daily life, and (5) political participation and community engagement. Although, a major part was taken from the Kawaguchi *et al.* (2014: 164) but to some extent we have taken some parts of these dimensions and sub-categories from Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender' (2002:13) model of women's empowerment as well. The data presented in the above section portrayed a vivid picture of the role of women's education in their empowerment in the case of Islamabad in Pakistan. Various perspectives came through the verbatim and some of them are in line with the findings of the Kawaguchi *et al.* (2014: 164) and Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002:13). But of the findings were typically different in many ways from what other scholars have said in the context of their studies.

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