



South Punjab's Economic Development in the Perspective of Women's Empowerment

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Abstract

In today's era, It is inevitable to think about the fast pace of growth without women's contribution. Studying the connection between women's economic empowerment and economic development is the focus of this article. Women who are self-reliant, respect women, are able to make decisions and have a sense of their own worth are some of the things that are of interest. They also have better health care facilities for women and children, better awareness of their rights, gender equity, women's participation and involvement in job performance. The questionnaire is used for data collection from university faculty and administrative staff of 9 districts of Punjab province. Results of empirical analysis approved all hypotheses revealing that women's empowerment has a significant impact on the development of an economy. Outcomes of this study are beneficial for the Government in designing the policies related to females.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Economic Development, Dignity of Women, Gender Equity, Self-Esteem.

Introduction

Females are a part of our culture, but they have less authority. Women's contributions are essential to the development of society. In general, there is discrimination between males and women. For women, every part of employment is difficult. Women haven't had the same rights as men for a long time because cultures have tried to grow without them. To benefit society, it is necessary to improve women's living situations. As members of society, men and women are mutually dependent on each other. That same clay was used to create both of them by Allah. Because men desire to control women, male-dominated cultures characterized by discrimination and injustice against women exist. People think about men and women today that men are strong and women are servants. Women are barred from obtaining citizenship in some countries. Women should be empowered since they are all equal human beings. Of course, men and women have their own unique set of characteristics. The role of one sex over the other in society should be discouraged under any circumstances. People of all races and genders should have their voices heard regardless of their gender, race, or ethnicity.

Women's empowerment has received a lot of attention recently. Women's empowerment benefits not only women but also society. It will contribute to growth if society is run by men and women equally. Women's empowerment is critical for the advancement of society. In today's world, Women perform a variety of jobs, but they are still not treated equally to men. When a woman knows her rights, the confidence to manage both her home and her life outside the home, the ability to make a difference in society, and so on, she is "empowered." The economic, social, political, and personal aspects

of empowerment are just a few interdependent factors. In economic empowerment, the right of a woman to participate in the economy is referred to as economic participation. To be socially empowered, she should be treated the same as a man. This means eliminating injustice and inequality. It is essential for women to be recognized for their contributions to society and held in high regard. For women to be politically empowered, they should be given seats in provincial and national legislatures, and each woman should be able to vote for herself. Women should be empowered personally, which means they should be able to make their own life choices.

Women can change their own economic, cultural, and national standing. We often underestimate and undervalue the economic contributions of women. Women's chances of escaping poverty and improving their lives are harmed by gender inequality. Inequalities between men and women are found, resulting in delayed economic progress since women have restricted access to money. Empowering women in the economy increase the number of women in the labor force and reduce poverty. Women farmers who have access to resources can be more productive, which helps them support their families. Women make financial contributions to their communities, economies, and nations. This will help the economy grow. Participation in the decision-making process by women is mandatory. Women should have access to the knowledge, skills, and resources they require. It is demonstrated in this paper that empowering women, that is, ensuring that they have equal access to education, health, employment opportunities, and decision-making capacity, will result in increased economic growth and the elimination of crime, poverty reduction, and social welfare. Though a lot of research has been done on women's empowerment, there has been very little research on this empowerment's effect on economic growth. According to this study, women's empowerment is

measured on eight dimensions:

1. The Dignity and Independence of Women
2. Decisiveness
3. Adherence to the norms governing small families
4. Improved Maternal and child health
5. A Better Understanding of Their Rights
6. Gender Equality Awareness Increases
7. Increasing the number of women in leadership positions
8. Enhanced Education and Literacy

As a country grows economically, it is measured by how well people can eat and how much freedom they have.

Literature Review

Women Emancipation:

It is a powerful thing to make people do things that aren't right or don't respect their rights in order to make them participate in society (Oxfam, 1995). To empower individuals, it is necessary to alter the social structures that perpetuate power imbalances and uneven distribution of resources and opportunities. Resources and agency are two intertwined factors of emancipation. Assets that are both tangible and intangible are included in this category. There are tangible and intangible resources, like money and material things. There are tangible and intangible resources, like money and material things. Intangible resources include knowledge, skills, abilities, and participation in political and social activities. When people use their power of agency, they can set their own goals and make sure they reach them (Kapitsa, L. M., 2008). According to some experts, empowerment has three components: self-empowerment, mutual

Empowerment, and Social Empowerment, all of which are interconnected. Self-empowerment refers to individual effort, mutual empowerment refers to relationships with others, and societal empowerment is achieved by reducing social, political, legal, and economic barriers to individual influence. It is not enough to concentrate on just one or two aspects of empowerment to effect significant change (Kenneth, E. Pigg, 2002). Not only is a development built for individuals, but it is also a collaborative effort. Participants in their own lives should take an active role in making decisions and taking action in their circumstances. Female skill development and women's empowerment to make their own decisions are vital and contribute to economic development and growth (UN, 1995). Empowerment is explained by how much people participate in the decisions and actions of their lives (Oxfam, 1995).

Women Empowerment

Males do not make allowances for the rights of their spouses when it comes to the rights of other women. Men want other women to have their rights because they care about their daughters and because women's rights encourage investments in children's education. (Doepke, M., & Tertilt, M., 2008). Wrong values and beliefs about oppression don't get much attention in a society where women are more powerful. It creates a gender-neutral environment, encouraging both sexes to offer their talents to invite the community. (Akhtar 1992). Women's empowerment can be enhanced through education. Women who go to school learn skills, knowledge, and confidence to help them get jobs in the economy. Fee concessions and need-based scholarships for female students have made significant contributions to educated women.

Women will benefit from vocational training programs to improve their abilities and get good jobs (Tornqvist, A. & C. Schmitz, 2009). Women's empowerment aims to ensure that the sexes are treated equally. Women and men should have equal economic, social, legal, and political opportunities. To achieve empowerment for women, they must have a positive sense of self-worth, self-confidence, and an understanding of their potential, as well as an appreciation and valuation of their knowledge and abilities. Women's empowerment should result in an equal distribution of power and participation in decision-making at home, in society, in the economy, and politics for both men and women (Ghosh, Mithun Kumar, et al. 2021). Empowering women lowers maternal mortality and fertility. Women's well-being is jeopardized by violence against them. A woman's empowerment can be measured by how well she knows how to get what she needs and how well she can make decisions. Desai, M., (2010) talks about women's empowerment and how to improve their education, health, and economic and political participation. In functional and critical decisions, women must have authority, influence, and preference..

Women in the middle class strive for their rights and want social and political change (Moghadam, V. M., 2003). Poverty can be decreased if differences in rights, resources, opportunities, and political power between men and women are addressed. Men and women are not equal in every way globally that isn't the United States. There is more of a difference in gender between poor people and rich people. Inequality between men and women hinders progress and is a danger to people's health and happiness (World Bank, 2001). To achieve gender equality, women's education is essential. Women have to deal with many problems when they want to get an education and start a job. Women in the workforce are optimistic about the future and control their destiny. Women's self-

determination can be attained by enhancing their access to resources, decision-making abilities, and enhancing their sense of worth and dignity (Kabeer, N., 2012). Women have limited land, water, other natural resources, and legal rights to own property. Due to inadequate education and ineffective enforcement, women have less power to advocate for their rights (Quisumbing, A. & L. Pandolfelli, 2009). When it comes to starting a business, women in developing nations face several unique challenges that males do not have to contend with (World Bank, FAO & IFAD, 2009).

Women's Economic Empowerment

It is imperative that the financial sector caters to the requirements of women entrepreneurs and employees and provides them with job security during economic downturns to enable more women to succeed in the workforce. Suppose you want to give more opportunities to women in the economy. As a result, you require better jobs, a business climate that assists them in running their firms, access to an economically viable banking system, and job security during times of economic hardship. The advancement of women's rights and the lessening of poverty, well-being, and health, wealth, and education disparities can all be attributed to the empowering of women. National economies suffer as a result of discrimination against women. Businesses benefit from women who have the skills and opportunities to succeed. Women who are financially independent make greater contributions to their households, communities, and countries. Women should be empowered with skills, resources, and equal economic access. Women can gain economic resources and possibilities through economic empowerment (DAC Network on Gender Equality, 2011). Compared to other resources that will lead to women's progress in society, education is a resource that women may quickly

obtain. Because they rely on men in developing countries, uneducated women face harsh conditions (Isiugo-Abanihe I.M, 1996). Economic progress is hampered by gender disparities in education. Without investing in women's advancement, societies incur lower-income and stagnant growth (Dollar, D., & Gatti, R., 1999). Economic progress is facilitated by the inclusion of more women in decision-making positions. Women must take responsibility for their own lives.

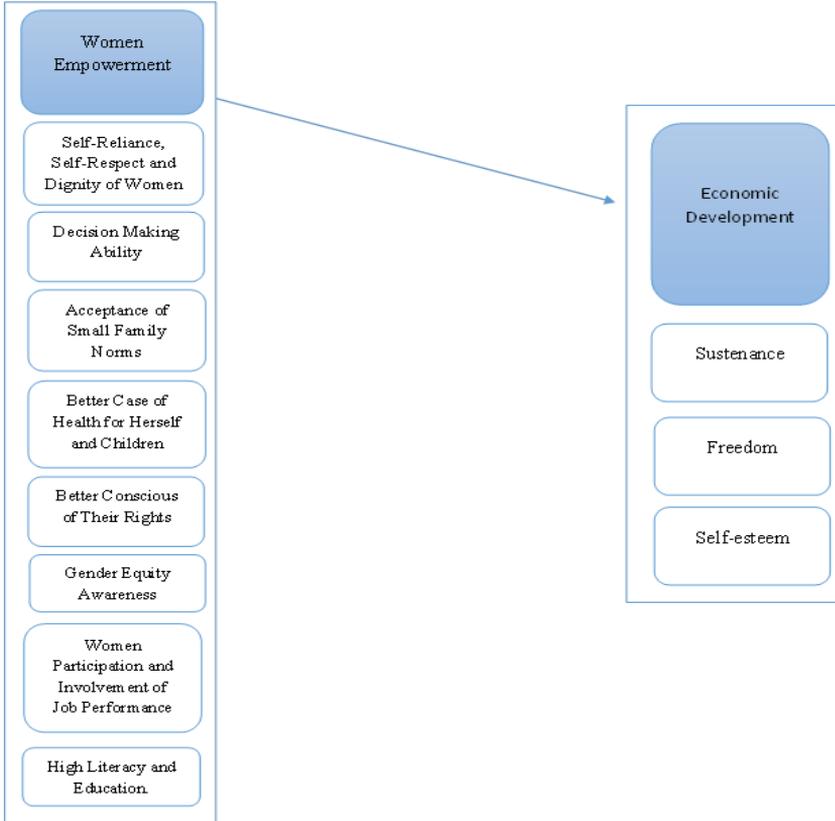
NGOs in developing countries advocate for women's rights, reproductive freedom, political participation, and access to microcredit (Oxaal, Z., & Baden, S., 1997). Female dependence on males existed before this. Nonetheless, women's empowerment through employment options has released them from this situation, and they are now productive members of society. More female wages and bargaining power support long-term economic growth by increasing investment in children's education, health, and nutrition and more overall solid economic growth. There has been a steady rise in the number of working-age women since 1997. In 2007, 46 percent of women were working. When the ratio of female to male workers increases by 10%, the GDP of India will grow by 8%, according to the World Bank. The amount of food produced in Africa could go up by 20% if women have the same access to farming tools as men do. About 38 percent of all low-level corporate firms globally are owned and operated by women.

When it comes to economic development and women's empowerment, there are two distinct directions in which they are linked. Women's empowerment may lead to even more development. This is because men and women have different needs. To achieve gender parity, government action is a necessity. As a result, a positive feedback loop will be established (Duflo, E., 2011).

To expand the number of women working in factories, factory owners must encourage more excellent health, education, and public safety. Women employees' productivity can be boosted by providing them with equal rights, skills, safety, and respect (Hossain, N., 2012). Economic progress is facilitated by gender equality. Women's access to jobs and education helps alleviate poverty in their families. Women's participation in economic progress necessitates granting them access to financial resources. Gender-segregated labor markets reveal that women are underrepresented in the workforce. Economic progress is often attributed to greater gender equality in the workplace and education. Although rational and important, the notion that economic progress leads to gender equality in health, prosperity, and rights is less persuasive. While development in some aspects of gender equality will be beneficial to growth, progress in other areas of gender equity is doubtful (Kabeer, N., & Natali, L., 2013). Women's rights are being promoted on television and by non-governmental organizations to raise awareness of the legal safeguards accessible to them. Professional skills training is provided by some NGOs (Kabeer, N. et al., 2011). About 38% of all businesses globally that aren't very big or very important are owned and operated by women.

Theoretical Framework

Women's economic empowerment and development is the subject of the following study model, which has been developed in light of the literature reviewed in the preceding chapter.



Variables and Items		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Sr. No.	Items	Total Responses (%)				
I. Sustenance						
1	The educational opportunities available to my child are, in my opinion, the best available.	91 0.17	89 0.16	121 0.22	150 0.27	99 0.18
2	It is my firm belief that my loved ones are receiving the most excellent medical care possible.	79 0.14	89 0.16	89 0.16	140 0.25	153 0.28
3	According to my observations, the well-being of my children has risen significantly.	121 0.22	67 0.12	89 0.16	121 0.22	152 0.28
4	According to my estimation, our household possesses all of life's necessities.	98 0.18	84 0.15	68 0.12	166 0.30	134 0.24
II. Freedom						
5	I think I am good at socializing with other people.	82 0.15	80 0.15	109 0.20	123 0.22	156 0.28
6	By speaking out against child violence, I can make a difference.	79 0.14	88 0.16	142 0.26	121 0.22	120 0.22
7	At home, I believe I am secure.	134 0.24	51 0.09	76 0.14	122 0.22	167 0.30
8	In my current position, I believe I am safe.	167 0.30	53 0.10	89 0.16	121 0.22	120 0.22
9	I think that women's participation in political activities is on the rise.	103 0.19	80 0.15	94 0.17	116 0.21	157 0.29
10	I am part of a committee that makes decisions about policies and procedures in the workplace.	99 0.18	66 0.12	32 0.06	143 0.26	210 0.38
III. Self-Esteem						
11	At home, I believe I have a say.	79 0.14	39 0.07	78 0.14	182 0.33	172 0.31
12	At home, I am well-liked.	89 0.16	67 0.12	49 0.09	171 0.31	174 0.32
13	I am happy with the way I live.	69 0.13	89 0.16	63 0.11	149 0.27	180 0.33
14	I am treated well at work, and I am grateful for that.	67 0.12	61 0.11	89 0.16	154 0.28	179 0.33
15	I do not have to worry about using my right to choose at home.	78 0.14	70 0.13	98 0.18	142 0.26	162 0.29
16	It is valued that I am able to make my own decisions in the workplace.	132 0.24	60 0.11	44 0.08	191 0.35	123 0.22
17	My personal and professional lives are successfully balanced.	98 0.18	67 0.12	20 0.04	214 0.39	151 0.27

Hypothesized Model

According to the data, there is a connection between women's economic empowerment and advancement. According to the research hypotheses H1 through H9, women empowerment may be enhanced by the inclusion of such characteristics.

Women's economic empowerment can have an impact on sustenance, independence, and self-esteem, all of which are indications of economic progress in their respective countries. "Women empowerment" is the independent variable in this set of hypotheses (H1–H9). They think there is a strong connection between this variable and the dependent variable "economic development."

Target Population and Sampling

All female instructors and administrators at Punjab universities were studied. Due to a scarcity of resources, the south Punjab's institutions were seized.

The respondent is chosen using a three-stage Stratified Random Sampling approach. To sum it all up: Pakistan's Ministry of Education and Higher Education Commission have taken a giant stride toward expanding access to higher education at the national and global levels.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique:

The research sample size and sampling methods are vital. The sample for this study is drawn randomly from the communities of universities in the South Punjab Cities. Both probability sampling and non-probability sampling are ways to calculating sample size.

Frequency Analysis of Statements Filled by Respondents

This section of the study's questionnaire explains each item's frequency and proportion.

5. Economic Development

When you do a Frequency Analysis, this part of the report will show how often and how much each part of the questionnaire was used in the information on economic development. The questionnaire consists of three economic growth constructs and 19 questions. Data was gathered from 540 female university administrators and professors in Punjab, Pakistan.

Table 5.1. Frequency Distribution Analysis of Economic Development

Empirical Analysis

An empirical analysis is performed following the completion of descriptive statistics. Data screening, reliability analysis, and other things need to be done before you can do regression analysis. A preliminary screening process is carried out to ensure that the data is suitable for analysis. After that, reliability and correlation analyses are carried out. Regression analysis is done at the end of the study, and then the tested hypotheses are either accepted or rejected.

Normality Distribution Test:

The term "normal distribution" refers to how data is distributed in general from the center of gravity. According to table number 6.2, all the collected data is usually spread out and is essential at that point (.000).

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Compute WE	.071	540	0.00	.978	540	0.00
Compute SSDW	.053	540	0.00	.985	540	0.00
Compute DMA	.077	540	0.00	.983	540	0.00
Compute ASN	.98	540	0.00	.965	540	0.00
Compute BHHC	.078	540	0.00	.988	540	0.00
Compute BCR	.057	540	0.00	.982	540	0.00
Compute GEA	.080	540	0.00	.991	540	0.00
Compute WJP	.101	540	0.00	.987	540	0.00

Compute HLE	.114	540	0.00	.976	540	0.00
Compute ED	.088	540	0.00	.921	540	0.00
Compute S	.073	540	0.00	.976	540	0.00
Compute F	.066	540	0.00	.988	540	0.00
Compute SE	.079	540	0.00	.992	540	0.00

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table: Normality Test

Reliability Analysis:

Reliability analysis is used to assess the internal consistency of all constructs. As Nunnally recommended, a significance level of 0.70 is usually considered reliable for variables (1978). The independent variable Women Empowerment has a reliability value of 0.843. For Self-Reliance, Self-Respect, and Women's Dignity, the aspects of women empowerment are reliable. Ability to Make Decisions is .663, The reliability value of Small Family Norms Acceptance is .742, Reliability is a better case of health for her and her children .602, It is more reliable when people are more aware of their rights .802, Gender Equity Awareness reliability is .778, Women's Job Performance Participation and Involvement .593, High Literacy and Education reliability is .793. Economic Development has a reliability of .779 and is the dependent variable. Dimensions of economic development have the credibility of; Sustenance .691, Freedom .632, and Self-esteem .738.

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	No.of items
Women Empowerment	0.833	40
Economic Development	0.779	18
Acceptance of Small Family Norms	0.742	3
Self-Reliance, Self-Respect, and Dignity of Women	0.778	5
Women Participation and Involvement of Job Performance	0.593	8
Better Case of Health for Herself and Children	0.602	5
Better Conscious of Their Rights	0.802	5
Decision-Making Ability	0.673	7
Self-esteem	0.738	8
Freedom	0.632	5
High Literacy and Education.	0.793	6
Gender Equity Awareness	0.778	3
Sustenance	0.691	3

Table: Variables' and their Dimension's Reliability

Correlation:

Correlation is a statistical technique used to determine if two variables are quantitatively connected. According to the study results, the correlation coefficient increases by 1. (Amar 2014). For example, a coefficient of -1 suggests a significant negative link between two variables, while a coefficient of +1 indicates an opposite relationship. A two-tailed test analysis/Pearson correlation, was used in this study.

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		Com pute WE	Com pute SSD W	Com pute DMA	Com pute ASN	Com pute BHH C	Com pute BCR	Com pute GEA	Com pute WJP	Com pute HLE	Com pute ED	Com pute S	Com pute F	Com pute SE
Pearson	1	0.803**	.720*	.703*	.669*	.709*	.528*	.689*	.886*	.745*	.875*	.798*	.779*	
	Correlation													
Compute WE	fig. (2-tail)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	↓	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Pearson	Correlation	0.803**	.751*	.743*	.715*	.721*	.568*	.698*	.895*	.756*	.885*	.810*	.798*	.798*
	Correlation													
Compute	fig. (2-tail)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	↓	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Pearson	Correlation	.720*	.751*	.735*	.788*	.678*	.712*	.835*	.789*	.756*	.885*	.823*	.843*	.843*
	Correlation													
Compute ASN	fig. (2-tail)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	↓	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Pearson	Correlation	.703*	.743*	.781*	.751*	.678*	.734*	.746*	.768*	.812*	.768*	.783*	.798*	.798*
	Correlation													
Compute BCR	fig. (2-tail)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	↓	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Pearson	Correlation	.709*	.721*	.788*	.712*	.867*	.898*	.786*	.789*	.634*	.656*	.789*	.789*	.789*
	Correlation													
Compute GEA	fig. (2-tail)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	↓	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Pearson	Correlation	.528*	.568*	.678*	.734*	.821*	.867*	.712*	.745*	.812*	.745*	.765*	.867*	.867*
	Correlation													
Compute WJP	fig. (2-tail)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	↓	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Pearson	Correlation	.689*	.698*	.712*	.746*	.812*	.898*	.712*	1	.789*	.878*	.834*	.856*	.753*
	Correlation													
Compute	fig. (2-tail)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	↓	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Pearson	Correlation	.886*	.895*	.835*	.768*	.834*	.786*	.745*	.789*	1	.643*	.743*	.789*	.856*
	Correlation													

Compute ED	sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Compute S	sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Compute F	sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
Compute SE	sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540	540

** Correlation is significant at the level (2-tailed).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study says that the more empowered women are, the better the economy. In other words, when women have greater self-confidence, self-respect, and dignity, as well as the ability to make decisions, acceptance of small-family norms, better health for themselves and their children, a greater awareness of their rights, and a greater understanding of gender equity, they have a more

significant impact on economic development in the country. As a result, the total empowerment of women contributes to economic growth in Pakistan.

Beta is 0.820, showing a relationship between the variables being looked at. This means that there is a connection between the variables being looked into. According to the study's findings, there is a positive relationship between eight qualities of women's empowerment and three dimensions of economic development.

An important part of women empowerment was self-reliance and respect for women's dignity. This was linked to economic development in a positive way that helps keep people fed, accessible, and self-esteem, which was 0.850, 0.678, and 0.775 at a significance level of 0.00, which means that there is a link between the variables under study.

Women's empowerment was examined in relation to economic development sustainability, independence, and self-esteem in a research examining the relationship between women's empowerment and decision-making ability, the researchers discovered that the relationships were 0.810, 0.668, and 0.765 at the level of significance of 0.00. The findings show that women's empowerment is good and substantial in decision-making ability, economic development sustainability, freedom, and self-esteem.

At a 0.00 level of significance, aspects of sustainable economic growth and norm acceptability in small families in connection to women's empowerment, independence, and self-esteem has a beta value of 0.779, 0.611, and 0.805. The findings show a positive and significant association between the dimension of women's

empowerment and the dimensions of economic development sustenance, independence, and self-esteem.

Women who are more empowered have better health for themselves and their children, as well as better economic development sustenance, freedom, and self-esteem. Beta values for these relationships were found to be 0.82, 0.78, and 0.85, respectively, indicating a positive correlation.

At a 0.00 level of significance, there was a positive and significant relationship between women's empowerment dimensions of increased awareness of their rights and the economic development dimensions of sustenance, freedom, and self-esteem. The coefficients of the relationship between women's empowerment dimensions of increased awareness of their rights and the economic development dimensions of sustenance, freedom, and self-esteem were 0.830, 0.698, and 0.673.

At the 0.00 level, there is a favourable and considerable correlation between women empowerment, economic progress, independence and self-esteem. At the 0.00 level of significance, the beta values for the association between women empowerment and economic growth sustenance, freedom, and self-esteem were determined to be 0.698, 0.878, and 0.771, respectively.

According to the research, there is an association between women's economic security, freedom, self-esteem, and the empowerment dimension of women's work performance (i.e., participation and involvement) at a significance level of 0.00, and the correlation coefficients of these three variables (0.746, 0.728, and 0.848) were found to be statistically significant at that level.

Having a lot of literacy and having a lot of education are two ways that women can be more empowered. They were linked to aspects of economic development sustenance, independence, and self-esteem with beta values of 0.727, 0.78, and 0.63 at a 0.00 significance level. Results show that women who have a lot of literacy and education are more likely to be able to make their own money, be independent, and have a good sense of self-worth in the economy.

7. Research Limitations and Future Directions

Owing to the fact that only female academics and administrators from universities in Pakistan's Punjab province were included in this study, the findings cannot be generalised due to disparities in low educational attainment and large gender differential in other parts of the country. Second, due to time constraints and a limited financial budget, this report was unable to be completed.

Research into the relationship between women's empowerment and economic development could be conducted in the future by examining variables such as personality traits, family history, and societal influence factors. Research can be done in the future to see if Pakistani law rules and regulations to protect women's rights can be used to mediate or "moderate" the link between women's empowerment and economic growth.