



CHALLENGES OF FEMALE EMPOWERMENT: THE ROLE OF NGOS IN BALOCHISTAN

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Abstract

Present study was focused on the challenges of women empowerment and the role of NGOs in Balochistan. Kalat, Nasirabad and Zhob divisions were purposively selected. Mixed methods were used. Site was selected by using multistage sampling technique. Purposive and random sampling techniques were applied to select the respondents at 0.05 error rate. Sample of five hundred ten (510) respondent's form the three divisions of the Balochistan province including 60 NGOs staff (BRSP, WESS and SPO staff) were selected. The raw information was analyzed by using SPSS. ANOVA (DMRT) test was applied to pairwise comparisons based on ($p < 0.05$). So as to accept or reject the null hypotheses based on perceptual variations. Results show that (60.4%) of the respondents belonged to 36 to 45 age categories. More than half (53.3%) of the respondents were uneducated. Null hypotheses were also tested. Significant variations were found in one out of eleven statements regarding bottlenecks of gender issues. Gender-based violations are



imperative and key restrictions and limiting factors for females. Therefore, it was recommended that unique legal policy measures should be promoted at the provincial level in order to protect the female human rights and ideological spectrum against anti-women practices in male dominated landscaping society. NGOs such as BRSP, WESS and SPO management should be delivering the more reliable educational, social, community development and health amenities for females in three zones of the province so as to improve the socio-economic conditions of the rural masses and make the rural women more self-reliant.

Keywords: *women empowerment, gender, NGOs, Balochistan*

1.1 Overview

As a radical root, the women empowerment and efforts for their rights and advocacies (Kabeer, 2005; Mosedale, 2005; Golla et al., 2001; Taylor and Perezniето, 2014) is the mainstream global concern (Copelton, 2007; Tripathi, 2011; Elisabeth, 2013; Cornwall, 2016). Gender empowerment or female socio-economic strengthening tools are procedures whereby the ability of a person as a collective form (any groups) in decision-making process is improved. Educational, political and social empowerment enable the individuals to have freedom of decision and freelance activity in the social order. However, in this regard, present trends of gender empowerment reflect the impacts in qualitative dynamics and more readily influence the lives of people and the judgment which influence them. In addition, present trends also increase the essential inner force of a person. On the other hand, empowerment dynamics either have qualitative or quantitative aspects, strengthening the livelihood options and illusionary appearance within social order such as educational features, capacity building, community development features, economics aspects and so forth (Page and Czuba, 1999; Mbeki, 2004; World Bank, 2008).

Keeping in view the rapid globalization process, empowerment of female and gender equality remains an indispensable instrument and imperative tool so as to achieve the sustainable development goals regarding the female empowerment in social orders. It is indispensable to promote female participation and encourage female empowerment in socio-political circles and economic domains (United Nations, 2004). The problem of gender equality, in terms of female empowerment, is the utmost schemata across the world. Nevertheless, in this context, the gender disparities prevail in all cultures and every social order. However, in the most least developed nations, the gender inequality dynamics is extremely widespread as compared to the advanced nations (Ahmed *et al.*, 2001).



Gender-based inequalities prevail extensively in less developed countries, however, the public administration or various government organization are working aggressively to solve these problems but unfortunately these initiatives have not bore any fruit yet. As a result, the gender gap is widening extremely and obstructing female empowerment within terms of the development process at different levels (EPA, 2012).

Likewise, the women face the untold hurdles and could be associated with many more social, political, educational, religious, and economic issues within the male-dominated and patriarchal societies (Bhat & Lakshmi, 2002; and Sinclair, 2012).

Keeping in view the importance of the women empowerment, worldwide , the leaders of different nations made some efforts to overcome the gender disparities and mainstream the female empowerment in the numerous areas of social life. In this connection, the miscellaneous gender initiatives about decision-making have been settled and executed in order to reinforce the female social status around the world like financial lineups, basic educational facilities and better health care amenities. Basically the gender empowerment framework has been established so as to address the gender inequity aspects at a greater extent (United Nations, n.d; and UN, 2016).

1.2 Female Educational Empowerment

Female educational empowerment is the significant factor not only in local level but also in national level as a whole. Nevertheless, female educational empowerment has the imperative indicators for human development that reflects positive effects largely on social-economic growth. Female educational empowerment is getting a desirable change of female social-economic condition such as better health services, higher literacy rates, improved nutritional status, superior financial development and also eradicating poverty at grass root level and improving the weaker sections of the societies as a whole. Moreover, the educational services have served as a better inference of employment chances because the literate females mostly contribute to earn higher incomes and improved social-economic statuses within community as compared to illiterate females. Due to the higher level of educational achievement and educational possession the female in this connection has a tiny fertility rate, better children nourishment and value-added nutrition for her children. (Vos, 1996).

In numerous nations, the gender indiscrimination and gender gap regarding the access of educational equality, participation of the female in educational dynamics and lack of economic assets for females existed at government level. However, in this prospect, the females in every sector either the educational level or the social participations or the



economic affairs were faced with handicaps. It is worthwhile to mention that around the world sixty-two (62 million) of females did not enroll even in primary level schooling. While one to three females (ratio) will have faced gender-based indiscrimination in her lifetime worldwide. Further, the female constituted 40% of agricultural manpower, in this regard just about three-to-twenty % of female remains and possesses the landholder's status. On the other hand, the female consisted less than twenty % of the world's lawmakers, notwithstanding representative of the half worldwide demographic population. The educational dynamics can bring about desirable changes in perceptive ability of females to a greater extent. Increased the ability and capacity of females. Prime divers of socio-economic dimension for females. It is also claimed that the educational ability increased the livelihood options and gained access to knowledge for females at considerable scale (Jejeebhoy, 1995).

1.3 Significant of the Study

Misinterpretations and false impressions regarding women empowerment and innovative approaches stick it out in our society and were regarded as the common phenomenon in our rigid society. Before, the same endeavors and research studies have also been carried out in order to identify the difficulties faced by women in various areas within a particular environment. But the condition of females still remains depressed. For that reason, present study was an effort so as to measure the perceptions and views of the respondents about gender empowerment dynamics and female empowerment dimension and to know what role are NGOs Playing in this connection. On the other hand, the current research was noteworthy for the future policy-making process about female dynamics, control of assets, freedom of geographical mobility and decision-making process independently at provincial level. Therefore, present study was not only beneficial and fruitful for the government agencies and other stakeholders but also very useful for the future policy implications and future research about female empowerment. It also helps NGOs to know what future measure they can take to improve their efforts for improving the plight of the marginalized section of the society.

1.4 Problem Statement

Female empowerment, special rights and privileges of females did not cause steady issues and regional problems for every society. Various research studies in this context reported that socio-political, socio-economic entrepreneurial and innovative factors were extremely limited for females not only at the provincial level but also in country level (Abu-Saifan, 2012; Manzoor and Jalil, 2014). However, in this regard the innovative approaches for the female remain very limited at the provincial level that impacts a grave degree of female



empowerment dynamics as a result restricted socio-economic development directions and limited socio-political opportunities. However, the existing picture further reveals that female empowerment dynamics directly and indirectly affects the female empowerment opportunity and creates the multi-dimensional spectrum handicaps and collective bottlenecks within terms of personnel, socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-political. However, females in province level still have faced the grave and disturbing bottlenecks such as the extreme poverty, social restriction aspects, honor killing issues, low educational level status and sexual abuse in nucleus of every society at family level. Various NGOs working for the betterment of females and empowered the women socio-economic conditions as some greater aspects. Three NGOs such as Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP), the Water, Environment and Sanitation Society (WESS) and the Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) who work for the betterment of rural masses at three Divisional Zones of the Balochistan province. But regrettably the fruits of these efforts of the NGOs were not harvested as yet, as a result livelihood options for female status are restricted. Therefore, present research was aimed at assessing the female empowerment challenges and limited changing aspects within neutral perspective so as to address the gender disparity and NGOs activities in Balochistan province in the specified three Divisional Zones of the province such as (Kalat, Nasirabad and Zhob).

1.5 Objectives of study

Study was conducted based on following specific objectives:

- To investigate the comprehensive socio-demographic information of respondents in the study area.
- To explore the barriers and limiting factors regarding female empowerment spheres so that solving the women problems at grassroots level a true sense within society.
- To determine the source of general information.
- To develop need-based strategies and viable recommendations so as to address the real issue and initiating appropriate measures of female empowerment for future policy implications in the light of the results drawn from the current study effort.

1.6 Hypotheses testing

The present research operationalized following null hypotheses:

H₀₁. There is no major variance in the observation of respondents about general empowerment dynamics as perceived by respondents.



Ho2. There is no major variance in the observation of respondents about major sources of information as perceived by respondents.

1.7 Methodology

Present study used a sequential transformative mixed method so as to test the null hypotheses (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992). However, in this regard, the transformative mixed methods were a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches to determine the null hypotheses (Creswell & Clark, 2007; Creswell, 2010; and Mertens, 2010). The rationale behind this logic, the triangulation as mixed methods was applied in order to understand the nature of research concepts about female empowerment dynamics and their expected relationships between and among variables. However, an effective research design also measures the area of research and generalizes the predictable results (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992). Multistage random sampling technique was run in current research for site selection so as to collect the big data from the larger sample size within less-cost and limited time. Five hundred (510) sample sizes indemnify the sample error that not goes above ten percent (10%) of the (S.D) or the standard deviation, about ninety-eight percent (98%) interval (Roscoe, 1975). In the current research the purposive and random sampling techniques were applied to select the respondents. The purposive and random sampling method was successive result and application (Kemper *et al.*, 2003).

In present research three divisions from the Balochistan province (Kalat, Nasirabad and Zhob) were chosen purposely for selection of sample size. However, in this regard, from each Divisional Zone three districts were selected randomly. In each district 2 Tehsils and 2 UCs were selected by applying the multistage sampling method. Therefore, this made the four hundred fifty (450) respondents from each Divisional Zones of the Balochistan province. However, in this regard, three NGOs (BRSP, WESS and SPO staff) were also selected. Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP), the Water, Environment and Sanitation Society (WESS) and the Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) (staff) who were working for the female empowerment betterment. In each NGO twenty (20) staff was further selected by using the purposive sampling technique. Thus finally 510 respondents were selected who were beneficiaries of the NGOs. List of the beneficiaries in the respective divisional zone were acquired by the Social Welfare Department, and Revenue Department (Government of Balochistan). Total (510) target population were selected by root of statistically formula developed for this purpose based on statistically error (± 5 percent) through the "Sample Size Calculator" (<https://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>). Research populations were determined by using the table "simple size from given population" (as used by (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970; and Fitzgibbon *et al.*, 1987), at 0.05 error rate. Keeping in view the significance of



interview and direct communication with human beings was worthwhile and quite essential to developing and measuring the self-measured report or research instrument in social sciences studies. Therefore, a questionnaire was developed. Cronbach's Alpha (α) test checked the reliability of the research instrument regarding the female empowerment dynamics, the role of NGOs and other diverse variables. In this regard the values greater than .80 that indicated the reliability of the questionnaires were good (Sekaran, 2003). The ANOVA (Duncan's Multiple Range Test) test was used for comparing aspects of the sample sizes that consisted more than variables by using the F value distribution or utilizing the F appropriation. Analysis of variance was also used to test the null hypothesis against the alternative hypothesis by using SPSS a statistical software (Weiss and Hassett, 1991).

1.8 Results and Discussion

The general objective of present research was to measure the perceived perceptions of the respondents regarding female empowerment. In order to accomplish the current cross-cutting component present study was carried out in the three divisional zones of the Balochistan province.

1.9 Socio-economic Characteristic of NGOs Respondents

Socio-economic status and characteristics (SES) were the imperative aspect of the current study. Socio-economic profiles were usually inflecting the motivational aspect of the respondents and behavior structure of the human (Hassan et al., 2002). In this regard, information about socio-economic attribution are depicted as under:

Table-1: Demographic information about age (N=450)

Demo: info	Statements	Frequency	%age
Age	Up to 20	23	5.1
	21 to 35	54	12.0
	36 to 45	272	60.4
	46 to 55	64	14.2
	Above 56	37	8.2
Total		450	100.0

The age variables were categorized into five phases. The information of table-1 shows that (60.4%) of the respondents belonged to the 36 to 45 age categories. Only 14.2% and 12% of the respondents fell into the 46 to 55 and 21 to 35-year age categories respectively.



Present outcomes of the current research are in accordance with those of Ashraf (2001); Farooque (2004); Samad (2005); Fawole (2006); and Omobolanle (2008) who observed that vast majority of the respondents were fall into the 35 to 50-year age categories.

Table-2: Demographic information about educational level (N=450)

Demo: info	Statements	Frequency	%age
Educational status	Illiterate or Uneducated	240	53.3
	1st-10th grade	84	18.7
	11th-12th grade	19	4.2
	Islamic education	48	10.7
	Technical education	19	4.2
	13th-14th grade	14	3.1
	16th grade	10	2.2
	Other (please specify)	16	3.6
Total		450	100.0

The information about educational status was revealed in table-2. More than half (53.3%) of the respondents were uneducated or illiterate followed by 18.7% of the respondents of the three divisional zones who were achieved 1st-10th grade schooling or matriculation. Most (10.7%) of the respondents were received the Islamic education. Only 4.2% and 2.2% were acquired the technical education, 12th grade schooling and 16th grading education level respectively. These findings are in accordance with those of Iftikhar (2010) and Riaz (2012) who reported that vast majority (51.2%, and 54.0%) respondents were illiterate or uneducated respectively.

Table-3: Distribution of sample regarding general empowerment dynamics (N=450)

Statements	Divisions						F-value	Sig*
	KALAT		NASIRABAD		ZHOB			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Social empowerment	2.99 ^a	1.313	3.55 ^b	.959	3.66 ^b	1.040	15.691	.000**
Economic empowerment	3.16 ^a	1.290	3.94 ^b	.653	3.82 ^b	.714	30.842	.000**
Political empowerment	2.35 ^a	1.024	2.86 ^c	1.173	3.67 ^c	1.328	47.531	.000**
Educational empowerment	3.00 ^a	1.560	3.00 ^a	1.052	2.88 ^a	1.132	.448	.639 ^{NA}
Psychological empowerment	3.30 ^c	1.339	2.68 ^b	1.520	1.92 ^a	.979	42.416	.000**

*, **: Significant at 0.05 and 0.01, respectively, NS: Non significant

*, **: Significant at 0.05 and 0.01, respectively, NS: Non significant



The DMRT test was used in present research. Beside that DMRT test, the hypotheses were also tested in order to find out the compassion among respondents as group-wise as shown in table-3.

1.10 Testing of first null hypothesis

Null hypothesis 1: There is no major variance in the observation of respondents about general empowerment dynamics as perceived by respondents.

To test the first null hypothesis, “there is no major variance in the observation of respondents about general empowerment dynamics as perceived by respondents”, the statistically significant diversities among the groups were found regarding empowerment dynamics. Therefore, the H⁰1 was rejected in four out of five statements.

Table-4: Distribution of sample regarding sources of information (N=450)

Statement s	Divisions						F- value	Sig*
	KALAT		NASIRABAD		ZHOB			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Relatives	2.29 a	.952	3.21 b	1.42 1	2.47 a	1.18 5	24.6 8	.000**
Friends	3.25 c	1.36 1	2.30 a	.910	2.64 b	1.41 5	22.41 0	.000* *
Neighbor	2.43 a	1.17 2	2.94 b	1.36 2	2.81 b	1.45 8	5.84 1	.003*
Parents	2.94 b	1.24 9	2.44 a	1.21 7	2.59 a	1.56 3	5.381	.005*
NGOs staff	3.79 b	1.21 1	3.87 b	.978	3.54 a	1.02 7	3.91 6	.021*
Financial banks	3.96 b	.958	2.17 a	1.52 7	2.37 a	1.31 3	87.34 1	.000* *
Electronic media	3.81 a	1.08 3	3.91 a	.911	4.14 b	.736	5.171	.006*
Printed media	3.26 b	1.26 7	3.15 a	1.29 9	3.47 b	1.25 6	2.43 1	.089 ^{NS}
Any other (please specify)	2.30 a	1.04 8	2.19 a	1.24 0	2.72 b	.997	9.51 5	.000* *

*, **: Significant at 0.05 and 0.01, respectively, NS: Non significant

*, **: Significant at 0.05 and 0.01, respectively, NS: Non significant



The vital aspects of the present study were the sources of empowerment information as delivered by the NGOs staff. In this regard hypothesis was used and tested as shown in table-4.

Null hypothesis 2: There is no major variance in the observation of respondents about major sources of information as perceived by respondents.

To test the third null hypothesis, “there is no major variance in the observation of respondents about major sources of information as perceived by respondents” based on 0.05 level. Significance differences were detected based on the group's perceptions about major sources of information. Therefore, the H₀₃ was rejected and an alternate hypothesis was accepted in 8 out of 9 statements.

Table-5: Distribution of NGOs sample regarding major bottlenecks of gender-based violence (N=60)

Statements	Divisions						F-value	Sig*
	KALAT		NASIRABAD		ZHOB			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Honor killing	3.25 ^a	.910	2.95 ^a	.887	3.10 ^a	.852	.576	.565 ^{NS}
Lustful glance against female	4.05 ^a	.998	3.75 ^a	1.069	3.80 ^a	.833	.546	.582 ^{NS}
Eye-teasing	4.05 ^a	.887	3.75 ^a	.966	3.80 ^a	.695	.703	.499 ^{NS}
Rape	3.95 ^a	1.145	3.65 ^a	1.136	3.70 ^a	1.031	.423	.657 ^{NS}
Physical touch against female	4.05 ^a	.998	3.75 ^a	1.118	3.90 ^a	.911	.438	.647 ^{NS}
Pulled hair	4.25 ^a	1.208	3.80 ^a	1.361	3.95 ^a	1.099	.697	.502 ^{NS}
Slapped/pushed/twisted arm	4.15 ^a	1.182	3.75 ^a	1.446	4.05 ^a	1.050	.566	.571 ^{NS}
Spoken rudely against female	3.95 ^a	1.145	3.65 ^a	1.268	3.95 ^a	.998	.459	.634 ^{NS}
Fight against female	3.85 ^a	1.039	3.60 ^a	.9947	3.95 ^a	.759	.737	.483 ^{NS}
Teased by whistled against female	4.00 ^a	.973	3.75 ^a	.910	4.05 ^a	.686	.690	.506 ^{NS}
Any other (please specify)	3.50 ^a	1.701	1.55 ^a	1.056	2.70 ^b	1.866	7.706	.001 ^{**}

*, **: Significant at 0.05 and 0.01, respectively, NS: Non significant

*, **: Significant at 0.05 and 0.01, respectively, NS: Non significant

Major bottlenecks of gender-based violence were the main aspects of the current research. However, in this regard bottlenecks of gender-based violence were regarded as one of the



prime instruments and prime tools. Responses and feedback of the three divisional zones were recorded at field level based on a questionnaire developed for that purpose (table-5). Based on mean scores of each constructs and means for groups in homogeneous subset were: honor killing (MS= 3.25; “Kalat”, MS= 2.95; “Nasirabad”, MS= 3.10, “Zhob”, P.05); lustful glance against female (MS= 4.05; “Kalat”, MS= 3.75; “Nasirabad”, MS= 3.80, “Zhob”, P.05); eye-teasing (MS= 4.05; “Kalat”, MS= 3.75; “Nasirabad”, MS= 3.80, “Zhob”, P.05); rape (MS= 3.95; “Kalat”, MS= 3.65; “Nasirabad”, MS= 3.70, “Zhob”, P.05); physical touch against female (MS= 4.05; “Kalat”, MS= 3.75; “Nasirabad”, MS= 3.90, “Zhob”, P.05); pulled hair (MS= 4.25; “Kalat”, MS= 3.80; “Nasirabad”, MS= 3.95, “Zhob”, P.05); slapped/pushed/twisted arm (MS= 4.15; “Kalat”, MS= 3.75; “Nasirabad”, MS= 4.05, “Zhob”, P.05); spoken rudely against female (MS= 3.95; “Kalat”, MS= 3.65; “Nasirabad”, MS= 3.95, “Zhob”, P.05); fight against female (MS= 3.85; “Kalat”, MS= 3.60; “Nasirabad”, MS= 3.95, “Zhob”, P.05); teased by whistled against female (MS= 4.00; “Kalat”, MS= 3.75; “Nasirabad”, MS= 4.05, “Zhob”, P.05); and others (MS= 3.50; “Kalat”, MS= 1.55; “Nasirabad”, MS= 2.70, “Zhob”, P.05). Significant variations were found in one out of eleven statements regarding the bottlenecks of gender-based violence. The major causes of domestic violence were depicted in table-5. In this regard, the NGOs staff were asked to give their feedback regarding major causes of domestic violence at household level.

1.11 Conclusions and Recommendations

Females play an imperative role in various dynamics of life. Females are the ignored objects of our social structure. Low educational status, deprived healthcare facilities, anti-female practices, low societal value are some major bottlenecks faced by females all over the national and international level. Females still in this regard are vital players toward the continuous productive activities within terms of household management, farming and domestic animals rearing. However, in this connection female roles in the development sector or community development are distinguished. Furthermore, there is dire need to develop socio-economic conditions and empower females in every sphere of their life. There are diverse NGOs that have been working to improve the female livelihood options betterment but fruits of these productive efforts have not been harvested at the provincial level. Based on study conclusions, following main recommendations considered for policy implications and put forwarded so as to improve the female empowerment dynamics. Loan and credit facilities should be provided by the provincial government with minimized level of interest rate so as to rooted-out the rural poverty at grass root level. The government of Balochistan should be promoting the small industries in rural areas so as to empower the female. Gender equality plays a key role in promoting the female social, political and economic empowerments. Therefore, it should be recommended that to pay particular



attention so as to strengthen the under-represented groups of rural female and women movement within socio-political lines. Gender-based violations are imperative and key restrictions and limiting factors for females. Therefore, it recommended that unique legal policy measures should be promoted at the provincial level in order to protect the female human rights and ideological spectrum against anti-women practices in male dominated landscaping society. Educational dynamics triggers the concept of egalitarianism in an effective manner. All three NGOs such as PRSP, WESS and SPO management should be delivering the more reliable educational, social, community development and health amenities for females in three zones of the province so as to improve the socio-economic conditions of the rural masses and make the rural female more self-reliant. NGOs staff should arrange skill development, capacity building programs and need-based training for females at grass root level in order to enhance the rural female crop production enhancement, livestock and poultry achievement and human health initiatives.



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