

MEASURING THE WOMEN VOTER'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT IN PUNJAB

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Abstract

This study aims to measure the women voters' political empowerment in Punjab, Pakistan. Political right is the most spirited right to humans among all others which provide a social standing to people in society. Globally, this right has been effectively enacted in democratic patterns. Pakistan has also been promoting the democratic environment since its existence and striving to improve the political status of its people following the sustainable development goal to improve the institutional efficiency for policy development and governance and reducing the gender inequalities in its national action agenda.

This study is conducted through quantitative research paradigm. It is a cross sectional survey design study using the multistage sampling to survey from 1200 targeted women voter population. This study followed Sara H. Longwe's women empowerment framework to conduct this study. This framework aims to study the political empowerment of women voters through measuring the political interest, political welfare, political awareness, political participation, political access and political control of women voters.

The analysis shows the demographics of the respondents and provide the means of women voters for their political interest, political welfare, political awareness, political participation, political access and political control of women voters. The analysis shows that the women voters scores different for these components which comprises the political empowerment of women. Which also directs that these all components are connected to the political empowerment and plays an important role in its development.

INTRODUCTION

This study proposes to measure the women voters' political empowerment in Punjab, Pakistan. Political right has been of an immense importance for people to stance their say at any forum. Pakistan has also been striving to improve the political status of its people following the sustainable development goal to improve the institutional efficiency for policy development and governance and reducing the gender inequalities in its national action agenda.

Political harmony has been an important cord to promote any society which consequently adding to reform social policies for the betterment of society.

It also aims to deliver an operational frame to the government to engage and distribute the institutions of a country and its administration to foster and promote the stability and development in a society. The political right has been of great importance as it includes the say of people in any state as it is said to be the basic and core right among the others (Imran & Shahzad, 2019).

In global ranking Pakistan has been lying low to achieve a standing towards the political empowerment of women which is also influenced by the gender parity index which has raised to the lowest ranking at global front. In recent reports

provided by the United Nations, Pakistan ranked 148th in global gender gap (Sharma et.al., 2021). The UN adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, it had eight goals including eradication of hunger and poverty, illiteracy, environmental degradation, violence against children and women and discrimination. Implementation and evaluation of MDGs showed increased number of women MPs from 1995 to 2015 (United Nation, 2015).

Currently, countries are striving to achieve United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for securing women participation in politics and representative bodies (United Nation, 2015). SDG includes goals about women empowerment, promotion of gender equality and equity, equal participation, active and effective representation and leadership in political, public and economic sphere (Desa, 2016). These initiatives have increased awareness about women empowerment and its importance in global, national, regional and societal growth. Governmental and non-governmental organizations have realized the need of genuine efforts for empowering women. This became a global issue because of the realization of role in domain of politics and benefits derived from maximum participation of women in socio economic spheres (Imran & Shahzad, 2019).

To reach the minimal gender parity, Singh (2011) has provided a notion that there is a dire need to close the gender gap window and enhance the gender equality and gender empowerment notion which has also been stressed by sustainable development goal number 5.

Problem Statement

In Pakistan, there has been continuous struggles since the constitutional efforts are made to raise the political representation of women through different strategies of women participation in assemblies. Although there is an improvement in political representation of women in politics but there has been no such claim in existing literature which can provide the prospects for political empowerment of women in some factual form (Azam et.al, 2024).

According to world economic forum (2025), Pakistan has been placed at 148th position in

global gender parity index. Where the political empowerment is claimed to be decrease to 11% this year from 12.2% in recent years on the basis of the ministerial position in the parliament.

On the other hand, there has been an increase in political participation and vote casting ratio of women in previous years which are also evident from the recent general elections in Pakistan but yet there are no pertinent records which can empirically provide an information for women interest, access, control and empowerment in political stance in Pakistani society. So, there is a dire need to measure and note the women empowerment level and ratios with respect to their political interest, political welfare, political awareness, political participation, political access and political control and ultimately the political empowerment of women in Pakistan. Which can provide a prominent way out to craft a suitable policy to engage the women's right for the betterment of society.

Significance

This study proposes to know the political empowerment of women in Punjab, Pakistan. Owing to the significance of this study, it will draw attention towards the status of women voters in our political system. Women have been a prominent part of Pakistani population and so to the government forming institutions of Pakistan (Azam et al., 2024). This study focuses on political empowerment of women in Punjab.

Conversing the political empowerment, this study is based on women empowerment framework which subdivided the political empowerment to political interest, political welfare, political participation, political access, political conscientisation, and political control. This study will provide an important base stance to know the political figures to understand vibrant scenario for the political reality for women in Punjab which can be then possibly address to esteem real benefits of political right of women in Punjab, Pakistan.

Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study is;

To measure the political empowerment of women voters in Punjab

Literature Review

Political empowerment is the capability of a person to deal with their political belongings in political sphere including the political knowledge, political will and participation. Empowerment is an ideology linked with the societal power and the expertise. It is advocated by a system with experiential. Approach to the societal regulations and evolution. It might be considered as a mechanism through which people achieve the autonomy of their lives and have freedom to participate individually in the growth of their society (Makinen & Makela, 2025). It is also defined as an approach opted by unprivileged men and women to have enhanced Access of resources, knowledge, and, have amplified decision power. These people highlight the significance of their active participation in social engagements. So they can have adequate power in inadequate conventional society (Opoku, 2021).

Later, they were openly welcomed by their fundamentalist society of gender distinctions. They were appreciated to have strong decisive authority and critical observations about their surrounding circumstances and visions they had to pursue in lives. The longing for equality in social, professional and individual lives, had turned into their precious belongings afterwards (Isran & Isran, 2013). They were provided with the opportunities to practice their skills, knowledge. For the financial growth of their society. Access to Legal advocacy of rights and duties, personal services and cooperation had been enhanced for women without any gender discrimination. Women empowerment is the practice through which women get the power of driving their lives, possessing their belongings, and strategies their life choices with no reservation by society (Ali & Akhtar, 2012)

Women Empowerment is the improvement of social, financial and political intellect of women to make sure gender impartiality and just society. Empowerment is defined as the societal praxis of fostering the involvement of people, corporations, and societies to have self-autonomy in the gender-

based partial societies. Under this idea, empowerment doesn't mean to have authority over others, but a power practice with others to affect the unconventional change in the society (Ashraf et al., 2021).

Empowerment is a psychological phenomenon. It is the foundation to construct an environment when emotions can be properly vented out, intellectual enhancement can be done, and justice, humanity and tolerance are appreciated. Women empowerment cannot be defined in precise words because of its vast implications and perception (Henderson, 2024).

Women empowerment is not merely a political ideology, but it is a process in which women are given self-autonomy over economic, social and individual spheres of life. It is essential in the empowerment praxis. More aptly, political empowerment is actually rooted from the financial empowerment (Bari & Khattak, 2001).

According to Keneck-Massil et al., (2024) The Idea 'Power' is the essential ideology in the notion empowerment. Power can be observed as working in different manners and performing at various stages, including household, organizations and people. In the midst of people, power can be affiliated with the capabilities of individuals to act with self-reliance. That's why, empowerment is dynamic process, implicating upon dual sided identity of people and societies. This power collaborations are practiced through different arenas of life such as through economic, political, social and individual one. Different stages for its implications include social corporations, personal, political circles and marketplaces (Opoku, 2021).

The perspective of Women power is defined as the phenomenon of recognizing the instinctive strength, and looking for opportunities and identifying the unconventional roles within themselves to create their own fortune to be transformed (Keneck-Massil et al., 2024). Many explanations for women empowerment significantly include psychological stance other than the existing socio-economic factors.

According to Malhotra et al., (2002) Empowerment is required because of inadequate power correspondences. It includes the process through which unprivileged people gain the

capabilities to recognize their autonomy, and practice their agency of life. Feminism is the cognizance of patriarchal exploitation experienced by women in terms of sexuality, fertility, existence, cognition under the oppression of men. The places which are the platform of patriarchal oppressions include home, professional places, in the crux the whole society was the world of women exploitation by the hands of patriarchs. Feminism informs about the conscious and rational action for women and men to revolutionize the present crisis of gender partiality. Vanquishing the patriarchal oppressions over women is called eve empowerment (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2006).

Empowerment is the enabling force behind self-determination in people and it challenges the prerequisite assumptions of patriarchal society about how the social gears are driven and regulated. It also refers to self-autonomy over resources and lives and self-determination of women about their circumstances and the decisive strategies to drive the destiny (Larreguy & Marshall, 2013). Women empowerment in East Asia, is implicated by the means of government involvement and institutions to address the practical evolvement of purposes that are quite connected to the conventional roles of women along with their traditional tasks in patriarchy. The prescribed levels are to prescribe the empowerment comprising from start to the least point where entire welfare ideology is implicated (Morris, 2004).

The access to have empowerment in politics is the massive achievement for women. However, parallel to these efforts, women should aware that the politics itself is the gendered engagement under the cultural influences. This gendered culture is more vividly observed through critical lens of analysis. Women politicians are rarely given departments of science and technology. The women themselves are so cultural oriented under conventional gender roles and duties, that they could not become the extemporaneous entities in those fields (Spence & Buckner, 2000).

Opoku (2021) identified that these political factors include their capabilities to evolve themselves and be ready for social change. Collective action is the essential component to

achieve the goal of attaining social change. Women have faced the disadvantages in history on political platform of Pakistan. However there are not any constitutional restriction or bar for women to get into politics and either elect or vote. There are several articles in Pakistan constitution which guarantee gender equality and active involvement in political life (Sinha, 2000). The article twenty five of constitution guarantees that there shouldn't be any discernment on the grounds of sexual distinctions. There should be no discriminative attitude in the access of public places towards women and men. Article thirty four concludes all the rights of women with the obligation of providing women full participation in their lives.

Singh (2011) suggested in the bigger lens, it is vivid that political women empowerment comprises some issues including their representation in regional and national governments. The voting asset which representing their interests on the platform as the collective interests groups and collaborations. Still, there is no authentic understanding of women's political empowerment. One root cause behind observing the women empowerment in politics is that motivating the other women of society that they could also achieve more in life and actively participate in politics and show their decision making sense. This shows that the attitude of voters is also optimistically changing after seeing the women politicians and workers in the rural areas councils. They give positive feedback which indicated the amiable welcome to accept the women empowerment and reduce the conventional gender stereotypes (Ali, 2015).

The minimum ration of women's participation in the political arena is rooted by the discriminative micro finance institutions, and global funding agencies power dynamics in society. Women are also percept as the unproductive entities of society who do not need any appreciation or encouragement. This pathetic societal norms has been deep under endorsed in the women that they, themselves do not raise Voice to get appreciation and credit if their accomplishments (Ali & Akhtar, 2012). It is done because of their deprivation from social engagement, business and

they are made skilled regarding the various practical engagements of life.

Kazmi & Quran, (2005) made it clear that the concept of empowerment is a process of development, in which less advantaged individuals and groups are given the power to take charge of their lives and the ability to make informed decisions about their lives (Azam et al., 2024). When the political arena is overtaken by men introducing legislative actions that influence how society at large looks, the decision-making process does not weigh the issues of both men and women as a whole, equal representation of females in decision-making and power structures is one of the requirements that define female engagement in a country's politics, as clearly expressed in the Millennium Development Goals, and is central to achieving gender equality and empowering women. Women should also engage in developing development agendas. The experiences are showing that participation by women in the economy alone cannot bring about the necessary change on an individual, person-to-person, and group level, and may not lead to the desired changes (Kazmi & Quran, 2005).

Women empowerment framework aims to provide the empowerment levels for women in social spheres, its pattern and successive status to understand the equality and practice of women to resources in terms of their welfare, access, conscience, participation and control in accordance to the men (March et.al., 1999). As much the level of equality in welfare, access, conscientisation, participation and control increase or decrease between men and women the empowerment level will also be changed. This framework aims to examine the empowerment of women by measuring the level of equality between men and women through the given five components of women empowerment framework which are in a hierarchy from high to low level with equality measures between men and women (March et.al., 1999). The level of equality in Political welfare, political access, political conscientisation, political participation and political control over political decisions will provide the lead towards the specific political empowerment of women. It also fills the gap of its suitability to this study as it is developed

exclusively for women and also applied by the developing organizations specifically to the projects and interventions for women.

This notion was also supported by Sinha (2000), who argued that women in India are less involved in politics because they are socialized to play the role of a wife rather than a politician. They are only supplied with the means of participating in politics by voting. The researcher was made aware that, usually, women are not knowledgeable about rural politics. It is also composed of structural or societal realities that do not allow women to be educated or informed about political matters.

Human capital enhances the quality of life, which relies on numerous physical and social factors frequently linked to diverse welfare functions carried out by a state, including the delivery of health care services and education in general (Verma et al., 2006). Consequently, it could be anticipated that as women attain political power, the aforementioned priorities of women may be more accurately represented in policy (Verma et al., 2006).

It has also been observed previously that a minor percentage of women are involved in day-to-day life and politics (Sathar & Kazi, 2000). They also stated that in cases where women are asked whether they are politically conscious, when inquiring about their level of consciousness, they found that women in rural regions have very low or almost no knowledge of politics. The women are even unfamiliar with the very word politics. They lack knowledge about its pros and cons. They are only accepted and used for domestic chores.

As observed by the United Nations Development Program's 2005 Global Gender Gap Report, in 2008 alone, the global female representation was found to be around 17.7% of activity worldwide, and only 12 countries had female representation in parliament and similarly in national legislatures (Bari, 2009). Paxton et al., (2007) wrote that Rwanda, Argentina, Sweden and some other countries made remarkable achievements for securing women empowerment (Paxton et.al., 2007).

A fundamental necessity for establishing a balanced and harmonious society is an equal involvement of men and women in decision-

making. Men and women's interests might not always be reflected in the decision-making process when men dominate politics and enact laws impacting society overall.

In Pakistan, different factors affect ladies in their lives are dominated with the aid of customs and traditions. From a younger age, their dad and mom manipulate all large choices for them, even as after marriage, husbands and in-laws take over and make alternatives for them (Sathar & Kazi, 2000). The above cited literature provides a comprehensive overview of political empowerment of women in different studies. Which are constituted to understand and concern a detailed assessment of political empowerment of women in Punjab. for which purpose the lead is adapted from these studies and proposed and implicated a study to know and measure the women voter's political empowerment in Punjab, Pakistan.

Methodology

The positivistic approach, grounded in empirical evidence and aligned with formal verification processes, contrasts with the interpretivist approach, which fosters compelling narratives, credible stories, and trustworthy historical accounts (Groves et al., 2011). Additionally, academicians had witnessed this reality through their knowledge and experiences, and it was believed that reality already existed (Mohajan, 2020). The current study's philosophical underpinnings lies with the positivist paradigm. This study is conducted through quantitative research paradigm. As according to Muijs (2004), the non-experimental research design provides an opportunity to investigate the information empirically to better know the standing of the population with respect to the certain information.

Cross-sectional designs were used in the data collecting process since they made it easier to gather data from multiple cases at one time. It is a cross sectional survey design study using the multistage sampling technique in which the research site and research respondents are chosen through different steps which enables the researcher to reach to the research site to survey from 1200 targeted women voter population. The

Sara H. Longwe's women empowerment framework is followed to conduct this study. This framework aims to study the political empowerment of women voters which furthers measure the political interest, political welfare, political awareness, political participation, political access and political control of women voters. The data collection tool has been applied in this study is developed on the framework's lead through carefully following the steps of tool piloting, tool reliability and validity.

The research site and the targeted population are chosen through the multistage process. The research site is chosen according to the registered number of voters. The high number of voter registration constituency, the medium number of registered voter constituency and the lowest voter registered constituency were chosen by driving the data from election commission of Pakistan portal. On next step constituencies are narrowed downed to randomly chosen union councils and their polling wards /villages which are included and surveyed through cluster sampling technique. Three district which are Lahore, Rahim yar khan and wazirabad are chosen. The respective union councils are Halloki, chak no Ninty four MP, and Mansur wali respectively were chosen and the randomly chosen areas or the polling wards are Halloki, Moza Kotla daya and Gunianwala are choosen for data collection respectively.

The next step is based on calculating the sample population which is used to sample out the specific number of population from which data is to be recorded. For this purpose, Taro Yamane (1967) formulae for calculating the sample size is used. This formulae is derived to get the suitable number of respondents to conduct a quantitative data collection for any study. It also provides a probability of .05% of standard possible error for social sciences to seek and manage the discrepancies occur during data collection process (Umar & Wachiko, 2021). The formulae is $n = N / K + N(e)^2$. The total no of population is 1200 according to the calculated population through the formulae to be surveyed. The total number of 718 surveys are selected for data analysis after careful data cleaning and analyzing the completely filled surveys in all aspects.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria explains the terms on which the study unit could be or not a part of the study sampling population. Following are some terms for any study unit to be part of this study;

The study population for this study are all the women voters who have their identity cards and are 18 year old in Punjab's political constituencies.

- Respondents must have participated in previous general elections and casted their vote instead of the history of their political practices.
- The completely filled survey responses will be included for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Table 4.1: Age

Age	<i>f</i>	%
18-33	234	32.6
34-48	146	20.3
49-63	183	25.5
63 & above	155	21.6
Total	718	100.0

The above table illustrate the age group of the study respondents, there are 32.6% of the respondents belongs to the age group of 18-33 and 25.5% from the age group of 49-63 and 21.6%

This section of the study includes the analysis of surveyed data. This part includes the descriptive analysis aiming the objective of the study.

Descriptive Section

This section discusses the descriptive analysis of the study including frequencies, means and the ratio for the demographic information about respondents and the data collection items.

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile includes the data regarding age, education, marital status, family type, family size, family headship, locality, job status, personal income and the districts of respondents.

from the age range of 63 & above, and only 20.3% respondents are from the age group of 34-48. This tables shows that the respondents belong to different age categories.

Table 4.2: Education

Education	<i>f</i>	%
Uneducated	57	7.9
Primary	109	15.2
Matric	149	20.8
Intermediate	134	18.7
Graduation	204	28.4
Masters & above	65	9.1
Total	718	100.0

This table shows that the education of the respondents varies through different categories. The education of the respondents are from uneducated to master & above level. The total of 9.1% have masters & above level, 28.4% in this study refers to Graduation, 20.8% women have study background of Matric and 18.7% did

Intermediate, 15.2% are from primary level and only 7.9% are uneducated. This tables shows that the respondents has their different educational backgrounds.

Table 4.3: Marital Status

Marital Status	<i>f</i>	%
Unmarried	203	28.3
Married	440	61.3
Divorce/Widow	75	10.4
Total	718	100.0

The above table also indicate the marital status of the research respondents among which 28.3% women are unmarried, 61.3% are married and 10.4% are Divorced or Widow.

Table 4.4: Family Type

Family Type	<i>f</i>	%
Single	253	35.2
Joint	287	40.0
Extended	178	24.8
Total	718	100.0

The above table depicts the information about the family type of the women in which they are living. 40.0% are living in Joint family system, 35.2% are living in single or nuclear family system, and 24.8% are living in extended family system.

Table 4.5: Family Size

Family Size	<i>f</i>	%
2-6	239	33.3
7-11	253	35.2
12-16	195	27.2
17 & above	31	4.3
Total	718	100.0

The above table illustrated the Family size (number of family members) of the respondents, 33.3% have 2-6 family members, 35.2% have family size of 7-11 members, 27.2% have the family size of 12-16 and the remaining 4.3% have family members about 17 & above.

Table 4.6: Family Head

Family Head	<i>f</i>	%
Man	655	91.2
Woman	63	8.8
Total	718	100.0

The above table showed the family headship statistics of the women who participated in this study and 91.2% of their family system are headed by Man and 8.8% are headed by women.

Table 4.7: Residence

Residence	<i>F</i>	%
Rural	435	60.6
Urban	283	39.4
Total	718	100.0

The above table revealed the information about the residential area of the respondents. The residential area is categorized into rural and urban areas. 60.6% of the respondents are living in rural areas whereas 39.4% are living in urban.

Table 4.8: Job Status

Job Status	<i>f</i>	%
Unemployed	447	62.3
Employed	271	37.7
Total	718	100.0

The above table showed the employment status of the respondents. 62.3% of the women are unemployed and 37.7% are employed.

Table 4.9: Personal Income

Personal Income	<i>F</i>	%
0-25000	519	72.3
25001-50000	116	16.2
50001-75000	55	7.7
75001 & above	28	3.9
Total	718	100.0

The above table demonstrated that 72.3% of the respondents have personal income range of 0-25000 which include both who are doing no job or those who have their income between the 0-25000 bracket, whereas 16.2% have income range from 25001-50000, 7.7% have 50001-75000 income range and the remaining 3.9% have the income range from 75001 & above.

Table 4.10: Household Income

Household Income	<i>F</i>	%
0-50000	139	19.4
50001-100000	241	33.6
100001-150000	253	35.2
150001 & above	85	11.8
Total	718	100.0

Moreover, the table indicate the household income as well about 35.2% of the women have their household income range from 100001-150000, then 33.6% have 50001-100000, 19.4% have 0-50000 and only 11.8% have total household income from 150001 & above.

Table 4.11: District

District	<i>F</i>	%
Lahore	307	42.8
Rahim Yar Khan	227	31.6
Wazirabad	184	25.6
Total	718	100.0

The above table also depicts the districts of the study respondents which includes Lahore, Rahim Yar Khan, Wazirabad. About 44.2% are from Lahore, 31.6% are from Rahim Yar Khan, and 25.6% are from Wazirabad.

Table of Descriptive Data for Political Interest of Women

Items	SDA		DA		N		A		SA		TTL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	
I have interest in politics	22	3.1	229	31.9	120	16.7	273	38.02	74	10.5	718	100
I keep myself informed of political activities	74	10.3	245	34.1	43	5.9	305	42.5	51	7.1	718	100
I stay connected to political matters in my area	81	11.3	340	47.4	105	14.6	180	25.06	12	1.7	718	100
I usually discuss political matters with my family	77	10.7	289	40.25	122	17	174	24.23	56	7.8	718	100
I keep myself informed of the political situation of my country	97	13.50	310	43.17	104	14.48	184	25.62	23	3.20	718	100
I volunteer for political campaigns in my area	72	10	371	51.67	99	13.78	153	21.30	23	3.20	718	100
I want to contest a political election	125	17.4	297	41.36	165	22.98	104	14.5	27	3.76	718	100

The table shows the trend over the political interest of women in Punjab. This table reveals that 38.02% women have an interest in politics and 10.5% women show great interest in politics whereas 3.1% shows absolute no interest in politics and 31.9% show less interest in politics but 16.7% respondent showed a normal response over their interest in politics. 7.1% women shows a trend of strong political information whereas 42.5% shown their interest to keep themselves informed of political activities whereas 34.1% shown no interest to be informed of the political activities and 3.1% shown absolute denial to be informed of the activities although 5.9% shown a nominal response over it.

47.4% women revealed that they are not connected to their area politics whereas 11.3

shown rare connection to political activities in their area. On the other hand, about 27% women shown a great connectivity to the political matters of their area in any form whereas 14.6% are in normal connectivity to political matters of their area. When we discuss about the discussion of political matters with the family about 51% women shown disagreement to it whereas only 32% women has responded that they may have political discussion with their family. When it comes to the country politics, about 56.67% women do not take interest in country's political situations but about 28.82% women do know the country's political situation and they keep themselves aware of it although 14.48% shown no specific response over it.

The interest in political volunteer activities is inquired only 24.50% women agreed to volunteer for political campaigns in their area whereas 61.67% women denied and disagreed to take part in any campaign whereas the response of mere involvement to political campaign is about 13.78%.

When it comes to contest an election, 58.76% disagreed to the notion whereas only 18.26% women agreed to the stance that they want to contest an election whereas 22.98 person women responded neutral.

Table for Political Welfare of Women

Items	SDA		DA		N		A		SA		TTL	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
The government develops welfare policies for women	15	2.1	197	27.4	122	16.99	273	38.02	111	15.45	718	100
The government take care of women's educational welfare policies	27	3.76	120	16.7	144	20.05	391	54.5	36	5.01	718	100
Government take care of women's health welfare policies	86	12	307	42.75	105	14.62	188	26.18	32	4.45	718	100
The government takes care of policies regarding women's economic right	118	16.43	297	41.36	111	15.45	180	25.06	12	1.7	718	100
The government covers women's social security benefits	166	23.1	273	38.02	89	12.39	181	25.20	9	1.25	718	100
I am satisfied with the welfare policies of the government	165	23	362	50.41	75	10.44	104	14.48	12	1.7	718	100
I support a political party based on its public welfare policies	156	21.72	257	35.79	105	14.62	181	25.20	19	2.64	718	100

The above table showed that the data collected is to measure the response of women about the welfare policies which are developed by the government. 38.02% women agreed that government develop welfare policies for women. Meanwhile, 27.4% disagreed stating that government does not form welfare policies for women. On the other hand, 16.99% women are neutral in response to the

government role in the development of welfare policies. However, 15.45% women strongly agreed that government formulate policies for women welfare. But a little chunk of women about 2.1% strongly disagreed believing that government does not develop welfare policies for women.

Respondents provided their response over the concern and looking after the women's

educational welfare policies about 54.5% women agreed. Additionally, 20.05% remained neutral in contrast 16.7% disagreed that government does not take care of educational policies for women. Meanwhile, 3.76% women strongly disagreed about government role in supporting women's educational policies. However, only 5.01% women strongly agreed that government adequately addresses women's educational policies or welfare.

Women are asked whether the government take care of women's health welfare policies. 42.75% women disagreed stating that government does not take care of women's health welfare policies. On the other hand, 26.18% women agreed that government has adequate role in supporting women welfare policies with regard to their health. However, 14.62% women are neutral stating that they have no stance on it. Meanwhile, 12% women strongly disagreed saying that government does not take care of women health welfare policies. However, only 4.45% women strongly agreed supporting government role in maintaining women's health welfare policies.

With regard to government concern in addressing policies for women's economic rights 41.36% women strongly disagreed that government does not take care of women's economic rights policies. At the same time 25.06% women agreed stating that government support policies with regard to women economic rights. In contrast 16.43% women strongly disagreed with the statement that government does not support or take care of policies safeguarding women economic rights. However, only

1.7% strongly agreed that government support the women economic rights policies.

Respondents are asked government role in providing women's social security benefits. A total of 38.0% respondents strongly disagreed with the statement in contrast 25.20% agreed stating that government covers women's social security. Meanwhile, 23.1% strongly disagreed and 12.39% are neutral expressing no clear stance on government role in supporting women's social security benefits and only 1.25% women agreed saying that government covers women's social security benefits.

When we asked about individual's satisfaction with the welfare policies of the government almost half of the respondents 50.41% disagreed that they are not satisfied with the welfare policies developed by the government. Similarly, 23% strongly disagreed and have clear stance on government role in mapping welfare policies. On the other hand, only 14.48% agreed that they are satisfied and only 10.44% of the women are neutral in this regard.

Most of the women about 35.79% disagreed while stating that they did not support any political party base on their public welfare policies however, 25.20% women agreed that they support political parties in the base of their public welfare policy initiatives, however 21.72% women strongly disagreed that they are not supporting political parties only on the base of their public welfare policies. A further, 14.62% women are neutral while only 2.64% women strongly agreed that they support political parties on the base of their policy development and commitment for public welfare.

Table for the Political Conscience of Women

Items	SDA		DA		N		A		SA		TTL	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
I am aware of my political rights	11	1.5	89	12.39	146	20.33	350	48.74	122	17	718	100
I know the political responsibility of elected representatives in my area	27	3.76	197	27.43	168	23.39	254	35.37	72	10	718	100
I know the political	89	12.39	297	41.36	99	13.78	197	27.43	36	5.01	718	100

manifestos of the political parties														
I know the political leaders in my country	15	2.1	86	12	107	14.90	302	42.06	208	28.96	718	100		
I know the election procedures in my country	61	8.5	310	43.17	73	10.16	188	26.18	86	12	718	100		
I follow updates on political legislation proposed by the government	89	12.39	273	38.02	117	16.29	135	18.80	104	14.48	718	100		
I am satisfied with my awareness	81	11.3	208	28.96	198	27.57	175	24.37	56	7.8	718	100		

The above table illustrated the political conscience of women with regard to women awareness on their political rights 48.7% women agreed while 12.39% disagreed stating that they have no awareness about their political rights. On the other hand, 17% women stated that they strongly agreed about the statement of having awareness about their political rights. Meanwhile, 20.33% women are neutral and have no clear idea. However, 1.5% women strongly disagreed stating that they have no awareness about their political rights.

Approximately 35.37% of the respondents expressed the clear stance about the responsibilities and role of the political representative in their area. In contrast 27.3% are unaware (disagreed) about the role of political representative or leader. At the same time 23.3% women are neutral and having no viewpoint about the duties of political elected officials. Furthermore, 10% women strongly agreed about having awareness in this regard and 3.76% strongly disagreed think that they have no awareness about the role of selected representative from the government in their localities.

This table also revealed that in addition to the findings of the awareness of political representative in any locality, 41.36% women disagreed while stating that they have no idea about the political manifesto by any political party.

Almost half of the population 27.35% agreed that they know about the political manifesto of different political bodies. However, 13.78% women are neutral about this phenomenon that they do agree or not so they are not clear about their stance. Meanwhile, 12.3% respondents are strongly disagreed that they don't have any idea about the political declaration of political parties. A further only 5.10% women strongly agreed that they have clear knowledge about the political agenda of political parties.

When the respondents are asked about their knowledge on political leaders of their country 42.06% women agreed stating that they have clear knowledge about the leaders of their country. Similarly, 28.96% women strongly agreed about having information on the political leaders of their country. However, 14.09% respondents are neutral. 12% disagreed as they have no understanding about the presence of political representatives in their country at the same time 2.1% strongly disagreed noting that they have never been aware of political representation in their country.

According to the data 38.02% women disagreed about following updates on the political legislation proposed by the government. In contrast 18.80% agreed noting that they follow such updates regularly. Additionally, 16.29% women are

neutral having no clear stance. However, 14.8% strongly agreed and 12.39% strongly disagreed. In the case of political conscience 28.96% women disagreed about their political awareness with regard to their satisfaction. However, 27.57% are

neutral. Additionally, 24.37% respondents of this study stated that they are agreed (aware) with their level of political satisfaction. Conversely, 11.3% strongly disagreed and only 7/8% strongly agreed.

Table for Political Participation of Women

Items	SDA		DA		N		A		SA		TTL	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I cast my vote in political elections	3	.4	13	1.8	81	11.28	490	68.2	131	18.24	718	100
I take part in political campaigns	78	10.9	351	48.88	111	15.45	122	17	56	7.8	718	100
I use to participate in politics by my own choice	145	20.2	365	50.8	74	10.3	98	13.64	36	5.01	718	100
I used to join the political protest	74	10.3	409	57	81	11.3	97	13.5	57	7.1	718	100
I participate in political meetings and sittings in my area	51	7.1	370	51.53	188	26.2	94	13.09	15	2.1	718	100
I am satisfied with my participation in politics	60	8.4	401	55.8	110	15.32	88	12.25	59	8.21	718	100
I participate in political activities through social media	43	5.98	305	42.5	86	12	206	28.69	78	10.9	718	100

The table depicting women's political participation in Pakistan, reveals that 68.2% women believe that they casted their votes in political elections. Additionally, 18.2% stated that they strongly agreed upon their participation in casting vote to elect their representative. However, 11.8% women have no clear stance about their presence at the polls. Therefore, 1.8% women disagreed and only .4% women strongly agreed stating that they did not cast their vote in political elections.

According to the findings of the study 48.88% women disagreed that they are not able to take part in political campaigns indicating they feel capable of involvement. Meanwhile, 15.45% women are neutral about their participation in

political campaigns. However, 17% agreed about their participation in political movements. 10.9% strongly disagreed and only 7.8% strongly agreed. Table reveal that 50.8% women disagreed that they have no choice for their political participation. Similarly, 20.2% strongly disagreed about having no choice in political participation. 13.64% agreed that they have their consent and interest in political participation, 10.3% women are neutral and 5.01 % women strongly agreed that they participate in politics by their own interest.

When respondents are asked about their presence at political protest the findings reveal polarized perspective among women regarding their political participation. A proportion of 57% are disagreed

about their participation in protest. However, 13.5% indicating that many women have strong political interest and they are aware of their rights and duties in political scenarios. 11.3% women are neutral and 10.3% are strongly disagreed stating that they are not aware of their rights in politics and they are not able to join political protests.

Collected data showed that 51.53% women disagreed with regards to their participation in the political meetings and sittings in their areas moreover, 26.2% are neutral. 13.09% agreed stating that they have privilege to participate and attend political meetings in their localities. However, 7.1% women strongly disagreed with this phenomenon.

55.8% women are not satisfied with their political participation. 8.4% are strongly disagreed

indicating the women motivation towards political participation. However, 15.32% women have no clear idea on this. Meanwhile, 12.25% women agreed that they are satisfied with their political participation and 8.2% strongly agreed having clear stance on their political presence that make them satisfied.

Additionally, 42.5% women disagreed about their participated in political activities through social media, 28.69% agreed, while 12% women are neutral, and 10.9% strongly agreed by participating in political activities through social media. Conversely, 5.98% women strongly disagreed with regard to their political participation through social media.

Table for Political Access of women

Items	SDA		DA		N		A		SA		TTL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I have a stake in politics	67	9.33	149	20.8	91	12.67	358	49.9	53	7.38	718	100
I have access to political activities by my own choice	27	3.76	392	54.6	170	23.7	91	12.67	38	5.3	718	100
I have access to political offices in my area	51	7.1	340	47.35	186	26.12	199	27.71	42	5.84	718	100
I have access to communicate with our elected representatives	56	7.8	353	49.16	86	11.97	187	26.04	36	5.01	718	100
I have access to speak for my political rights	68	9.47	392	54.59	104	14.48	103	14.34	51	7.1	718	100
I am satisfied to my access in politics	61	8.5	386	53.76	83	11.55	161	22.42	27	3.76	718	100

The above table revealed that 49.9% women agreed on having political stake in Pakistan.

On the other hand, 20.8% disagreed having no electoral stake. While, 12.67% are neutral having no clear position about their political interest. However, 9.33% strongly disagreed stating asserting they have no stake in government. Meanwhile, 7.38% women strongly agreed noting their political influence in Pakistan.

Table showed that 54.6% women strongly disagreed stating that they have no access to political activities by their own choice. 23.7%

women are neutral. In contrast, 12.67% women agreed on having self-direct involvement in political affairs. Similarly, 5.84% women strongly agreed with this statement. However, 3.76% women strongly disagreed noting they lack personal choice in participate in political engagement.

When respondents are asked about their access to political offices in their areas 47.35% women disagreed stating that they have no access to any political offices. In contrast, 27.71% women agreed noting that they have reachability to political offices in their locality. 12% women are

neutral in this matter. At the same time 7.1% women strongly disagreed said they have no access to local political bodies. However, only 5.4% women strongly agreed having access to connect to political institutions nearby.

The table further showed that 49.16% women disagreed stating that they have no access to communicate with their elected representatives. 26.04% women agreed saying that they have access to express their concerns with the political representatives. 11.97% respondents are neutral. 7.8% women strongly disagreed showed that they have no means to reach out to their elected representatives. Only, 5.01% women strongly agreed on having opportunity to connect with their nominated representatives.

Respondents are asked about having access to speak for their political rights. 54.59% women

disagreed and 14.48% women are neutral. In contrast, 14.34% agreed stating that they have freedom to speak for their political concerns. 9.47% women strongly disagreed noting that they no right to participate in political discourse. However, 7.1% strongly agreed stating that they have freedom to voice their political concerns. Finally, 53.76% women disagreed with the statement, showing that they are not satisfied with their political accessibility. 22.42% women agreed. 11.55% women are neutral in this regard. 8.5% women are strongly disagreed stating that they have no satisfaction with the political participation or access. On the other hand, 3.76% women strongly agreed noting that they have means to stand up for their political entitlements.

Table for Political Control of women

Items	SDA		DA		N		A		SA		TTL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I have control over my political decisions	29	4	376	52.4	83	11.55	198	27.57	32	4.45	718	100
I have my political ideology	93	13	340	47.35	51	7.1	160	22.28	74	10.5	718	100
No one influence me to cast my vote	99	13.78	310	43.17	105	14.62	166	23.11	38	5.3	718	100
I can contest in an election	111	15.45	297	41.36	73	10.16	181	25.20	56	7.8	718	100
My family will support me if I contest an election	86	11.97	353	49.16	94	13.09	149	20.75	36	5.01	718	100
My decision influences the representative's position in my area	24	3.3	383	53.3	69	9.6	201	27.99	41	5.71	718	100
I am satisfied with my control over my political rights	61	9.3	337	46.93	89	12.39	182	25.34	49	6.82	718	100

The table illustrated women political control in Pakistan. The collected as shown in the table stated that 52.4% women disagreed stating that they have no control over their political decisions. On the other hand, 27.57% women agreed stating that they have control over their political

decisions. 11.5% women are neutral having no clear idea about their political control. While 4.45% women strongly agreed expressing that they have authority over their political affairs. Conversely, 4% women disagreed noting that they

are not able to make independent political decisions.

When political ideology is the concern most of the women about 47.35% disagreed showing that most of women in Pakistan having no political ideology of their own. However, 22.57% women agreed stating that they have clear about their political ideology. But 13% women strongly disagreed showed that they don't have their political ideology. Despite this 10.5% women stated they strongly agreed with the stance of having their firm political ideology. Meanwhile, 7.1% women are neutral expressing no clear idea in this matter.

Table showed that 43.17% women stated that their surroundings have influenced on their vote which they cast. However, 23.11% women stated that they can cast their vote without external pressure. 14.6% women are neutral they have no clear viewpoint. While, 13.78% women strongly disagreed stating that no one can influence their political decision and choice. Conversely, 5.3% women strongly agreed they did not take their voting decisions independently.

When respondents are asked about their political participation in elections, 41.36% women disagreed stated that they are not allowed to contest in elections. However, 25.20% women agreed showing their political independence that they can contested in elections. On the other hand, 15.45% women strongly disagreed stating that they cannot participate in electoral process as representative. Only, 7.8% strongly agreed showing their electoral choices without any external influence.

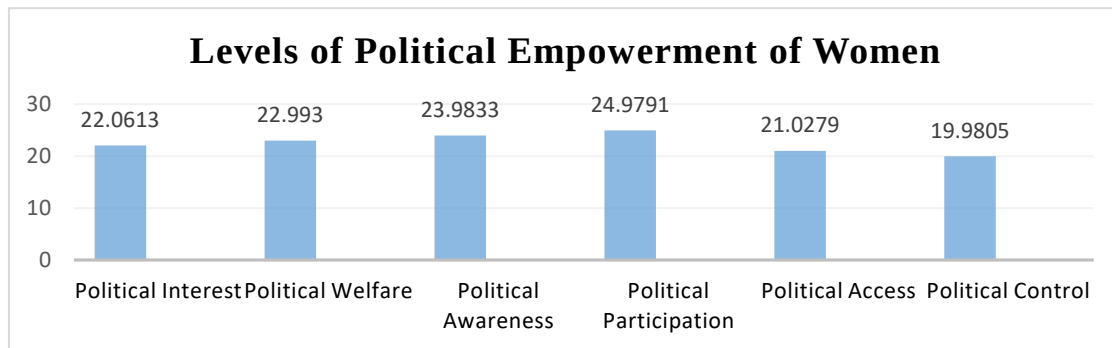
49.16% women disagreed stated that their family will not support them when they contest in elections. In contrast 20.75% women agreed noting that their family stands behind them during election campaigns. 13.09% women are neutral. Meanwhile, 11.97% women strongly disagreed stating that don't have support of their family while contesting elections. Only 5.01% women strongly agreed expressing that their family members encourage them in their political candidacy.

About 53.3% women disagreed stating that their decision has no influence on the representative's position in their area. However, 27.99% women agreed that their decisions influenced the position of the political elected official of their locality. 9.6% women are neutral in this matter. Furthermore, 5.71% women strongly agreed stating that their political choice has influenced on the selection of political representative of their locality. But only 3.3% women strongly disagreed with the statement, considering that their political choice or decisions have no impact on the selection or role of the political representative in their area.

Furthermore, table revealed that 46.93% women disagreed stating that they have no control over their political rights. While 25.34% women agreed that they are satisfied with their authority on their political rights. 12.39% women are neutral in this matter. 9.3% women strongly disagreed noting that they are not satisfied with their independence on political rights. But, 6.82% women strongly agreed stated that they have control over their political decisions and they are satisfied.

Table 4.18: Measuring the Difference between Levels of Political Empowerment of Women

Group Name	M	S.D
Political Interest	22.0613	2.578
Political Welfare	22.9930	2.582
Political Awareness	23.9833	2.587
Political Participation	24.9791	2.598
Political Access	21.0279	2.615
Political Control	19.9805	2.570
Political Empowerment	135.005	2.588



The above given table shows the measure of the difference between the components of political empowerment which are advised by the women empowerment framework. In this table the mean values of each component with its standard deviation value is given which provides a descriptive data to deduce the results. The above given analysis is based upon the notion that there is difference in the levels of the political empowerment of women in Punjab (with respect to their political interest, political welfare, political access, political conscientisation, political participation and political control). From the given table, the data for political interest is $M = 22.0613$, $S.D = 2.580$, for political welfare $M = 22.994$, $S.D = 2.59$, for political awareness $M = 23.983$, $S.D = 2.587$, for political participation $M = 24.980$, $S.D = 2.60$, for political access $M = 21.027$, $S.D = 2.615$, for political control $M = 19.981$, $S.D = 2.57$ and for political empowerment $M = 135.005$, $S.D = 2.588$. Which empirically provide the information that the mean score of all these components is different which eventually create a difference in the political empowerment of respondents. And also support the notion that the levels of the interest, welfare, awareness, participation, access and control over political choice differs and also provide the mean score of all these components which consequently complete the political empowerment of women voters. If any of the component is better the other may be weak which means that it is not necessary that if the political participation is better the whole empowerment is better. The empowerment would only be better if the scores and levels of all these components would be better and improving.

The above analyzed data provided a comprehensive measure of women voters' political empowerment inclusive of their political interest, political welfare and opportunities, political awareness or conscience, political participation, political access and political control of women to their political right. The above data also shows a clear different pattern of women voters in their in political interest, political welfare, political access, political conscientisation, political participation and political control of women in Punjab. Which also provides the strength to the stance aimed this study that there are different levels in political empowerment based on these relative components which are provided by the Longwe (1995) framework.

This mean difference in the components also claimed that these all components play an important role in political empowerment of women voters which negates the stance to only promote the political participation in terms of their political right. But the other factors are also as important to be addressed as the inclusion of women to participate in politics through casting their vote. So, there is a dire need to also improve and promote other factors of women political empowerment to make a practical change in the political empowerment of women in real meanings. It also claims the strength and acceptance of this women empowerment framework in political sphere in Punjab, Pakistan and welcomes the readers, researchers and policy makers to work on it in future for further addition to the real knowledge on the political empowerment in Punjab.

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