





## Public Views About Media Role in Women Empowerment

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### Abstract

*The focus of this study is to measure public view regarding the role of media in women empowerment. The deductive approach was employed to assess views of female and male members of society regarding the issue. The survey method was used to collect data from sample sites. One hundred thirteen samples were collected from cities, small towns and remote areas of KhairpurMirs district. The views of respondents were measured by using t-test. Results reveal that social media, TV and newspapers have a significant role to help women empowerment while radio, magazines and books were identified having insignificant role to improve women empowerment. The overall results showed that, electronic media is more participative as compared to the print media to help women empowerment in the society*


**Keywords:** ,women empowerment, feminism, media, positive discrimination, Pakistani society, culture

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## INTRODUCTION

The empowerment of women is a big debate in developing societies and the major issue of the current century. There are so many reasons, but lack of literacy is a huge barrier for women empowerment. Therefore, women of developing societies, most often depend on their male members of their family to fulfill their financial as well as personal and other needs too. Such kind of social and financial dependency leads this segment of the society to follow patriarchy rules in making any decisions about their own life. Due to tough patriarchy rule, women don't make decisions independently and their own wills. In developing societies, even educated women are dependent and need permission of male members of the family to make any decision even in their domestic matters.

The empowerment defines the power of authority to make any decision at one's own will do to something (Akhater&Naheed, 2014). In other words, spend their life on their desire and make independent decisions for betterment of their own and family life. There are so many social indicators that need to be enhanced for women empowerment in developing societies, such as quality of education, equal employment opportunities, proper health, and gender equality and so on (Raj,2014). In this regard, awareness of women's basic rights is very empowerment among masses. Without access to basic rights, women empowerment is almost impossible. The women empowerment is not only first step of families but it is a road map for the social development in the societies. Therefore, women empowerment is one of the basic need for social development and a path through which, positive changes can be carried out within under developed societies.

The media is not only a powerful tool to make people aware about their rights but it is a major pillar of advocacy among the masses as well (Sharda,2014). The media has significant role to raise the voice of marginalized segment of society to promote awareness among masses about their universal, constitutional and social rights. It is an accurate tool for transfer of well-defined knowledge to masses within the limited time and an invisible instrument well to bring change in the mindset and attitudes of masses. It is also powerful, quick, suitable and invisible source of educating masses to change the behavior of people regarding the issue (Rahman et al.,2018). The media has multitasked role in the society and not the only source of change but it is a mean of education, information and entertainment of people (Akhter & Naheed,2014). Rights-based organizations and government institutions use media to aware people regarding different issues prevailing in the society. The media advocacy silently changes the behavior of the people regarding different social and societal issues.

The media is a suitable channel to express public views regarding societal issues. There are two major types of media such as print and electronic media, which commonly educate the masses in different ways. The radio, television and internet are considered part of electronic media while newspapers, magazines, books and different journals are reflected as print media. Public most of time watch television listen to the radio and read different newspapers, journals and books to obtain essential information for enhancing their knowledge regarding issues or general

matters. The media is a very powerful tool to transfer basic information, norms and social values to the public at large. This is an easy source of getting informal about education and increase information related social environment. The writers and anchorpersons of media through writing and talking on the shows and even through entertainment programs can aware the masses about their problems, reasons, causes of the issues and suggest solid solutions of problems as well. Lack of women empowerment is a major cause of different social and societal issues in developing societies. Media can be well and suitable source for promoting women empowerment issue and aware the public regarding women empowerment. Both types of media can play a major role to aware masses about women empowerment and make a major contribution to the social development of the society,

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Empowerment is not an issue of women of developing societies is facing but women of the developed societies do tackle this problem in their decision-making. There are so many factors that affect the lack of empowerment of women, such as tribal mindset, low literacy rate, patriarchy and so on (Awan, 2012). These factors decrease directly and indirectly women authority to make the different decisions independently. Such kind of social and financial dependency leads this segment of population of any society to follow patriarchy rules in any decisions of their own and family life. Media is considered the best suitable tool to raise women's issues among public and aware the people about the reality of the issue. The current research was an attempt to assess public views regarding role of media in women empowerment. It has evaluated the difference between male and female views regarding role of print and electronic media in women empowerment. It has figured out the difference of views of male and female about the issue and made some suggestions in the light of empirical results.

### Objectives of the study

- Assess the difference between male and female views about the role of electronic media in women empowerment
- Assess the difference between male and female views about the role of print media in women empowerment
- Develop solid Suggestions to improve the role of media for women empowerment in light of empirical results

## HYPOTHESES

**H1** There is a significant difference between male and female views about the role of social media in women empowerment

**H2** There is a significant difference between male and female views about the role of television in women empowerment

**H3** There is a significant difference between male and female views about the role of radio in women empowerment

**H4** There is a significant difference between male and female views about the role of newspapers in women empowerment

**H5** There is a significant difference between male and female views about the role of books and magazines in women empowerment

## SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The current study helps the domain researchers about the views of males and females regarding the role of media in women issues in general. It is very important for masses that media is not only a source of entertainment but it is a suitable tool for advocacy to raise issues of women development in short periods. The current study's outcomes would help to assess role of media in society and advantages and disadvantages of media usage for as campaigns tool to improve the life of women in society. The results of current study may support to development professionals, writers and policy makers, use as policy guide to update policy regarding status of women in society. The current study provides new insights about domain research such as gender, media and women empowerment related literature. This study may support as a guide for domain research for development of women as well as society and concept of gender equality. The current study would helpful for women rights activists to plan a media campaign which promote women rights in society and make social environment safe for women.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Media is one of the best sources to educate and train people about different issues of society. It contains newspapers, TV, magazines, radio and different computer programs and so on. In this regard, previous studies revealed that media can be used for training and teaching purpose (Ray, 2008). That means, it is a common and very easy source for enhancing knowledge to the masses at large amount. This way brings positive changes in attitudes of the people and mode of thinking within a society. The media and its related agencies particularly different television channels and newspapers play a vital role in this regard.

The media is like a mirror (Aram et al., 2004), lead people to watch who they are, what is their action in society and why their actions have results. It easily expresses that, it is representatives of overall masses and nation. Media has a huge reflection in terms of change; therefore, it changes our daily life, living standard and lead us to think according to the social environment. Literature indicated that society, culture and way of talking and even of socialization are dominated by media (Aggarwal, 2002). In addition, the study further pointed out that different TV programs, movies, music, videos and internet are the most powerful and famous forms of media in the current technological age.

In this regard, a previous study indicated that in the existing scenario, media is a very powerful channel of social change in the current era (Uma, 2004). Therefore, its impact on attitudes of people, views of people regarding different issues of society and impact way of communication within people. Different issues of society can

be highlighted by using media trial and can be aware of people about the reality of issues. Women are considered marginalized segment of developing societies in different parts of the world. Media can be used as a source of awareness channel to educate people regarding women rights and empowerment of women. Women empowerment means giving space to women to use their power own will, work independently and participate in different local and national causes.

A study conducted by Asif (2013) revealed that social development can be easily brought if women would be space to participate in social development in society. Media role is very important in women empowerment because media has a huge effect on every part of the social environment.

Previous domain literature revealed that access to the internet at home is very useful for educated women and they can gain different types of benefits from the internet at home (Khan&Moin,2013). Empowering women of the society enables to participate in daily affairs of the state ranging from homework to participate in the social, structural and cultural development of the society. Therefore, all kinds of media have a vital role in women empowerment (Moghadam,2007). Even, in terms of formal and informal education, media is significant to convince masses of the remote areas to educate youth especially girls to participate in the economic development of society. According to Narayan (2002) media has a significant role to raise issues in term of providing basic rights of women across the world. The Gupta and Dayal (1996) revealed that media has participated and presented women empowerment and other different issues, however, media production houses are male-dominated, therefore, in policymaking, and women role is very limited Lack of involvement in media policy making, increases lack of space to produce such kind of programs that aware the masses for women empowerment within society. Previous studies clearly show the picture that there is rare evidence that what is public views regarding the role of media in term of women empowerment, current study purposed male and female difference views about the role of media in women empowerment.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the current domain, literature illustrated that the majority of studies were conducted on the quantitative method (Khan& Moin,2013; Narayan, 2002; Aggarwal,2002). On the bases of previous evidence, the current study also used a quantitative method to assess the different male and female views regarding the role of media in women empowerment by conducting independent sample t-test. Before selecting quantitative technique, it is necessary for the researcher to care about some assumptions, such as sample size, reliability of research instrument and respondents' response rate and so on (Hair et al.,2018).

The sample size is a basic assumption in quantitative research. The sample size must be according to the requirement of a particular statistical test and represent the whole population. There are so many techniques to obtain sample size from the targeted population. The GPower is a software which help the researcher to fix sample size in accordance with predictors and effect size. The current study used

GPower software to obtain an appropriate sample size for the current study. First, out of the total eight Taluka's of district KhairpurMirs, four talukas were selected randomly for sampling namely KhaipurMirs itself, Gambat, KotDiji and Sobhodero. A total number of one hundred thirteen samples were collected from these four Taluka of district KhairpurMirs, Sindh. According to the basic requirement of the study, a research instrument was developed with adapted items and was read on five points Likert scale. During the data screening, missing values were identified in some cases. Missing values were treated properly before proceeding final analysis. After data screening, the reliability of the instrument was assessed by conducting Chronbach's alpha. According to Tabachick&Fidell (2007) and Field (2009),Chronbach's alpha must be above 0.60whereas Chronbach's alpha of the current study was above 0.80. It is a goodreliability.

## DATA ANALYZES

The current study aims to assess male and female views about the role of media in the empowerment of women in society. Due to the basic purpose of the current study, the technique of data analysis was selected very carefully. The current study used t-test to measure views of both male and female regarding the issue. The sample t-test is a suitable technique to check the difference between the two datasets (Hair et al., 2010; Tabachnick& Fidell,2007). Therefore, the researcher selected t-test to test the current study's hypotheses. Before testing the study's hypotheses, frequency and percentage of demographic variables were obtained by using SPSS v.24. The demographic details of respondents given in table No:1. Furthermore, data were collected from four taluka of district KhairpurMirs and sample of the current study consists 113 persons out of which male respondents were 48.67% (n=55) and 51.33%(n=58) were female respondents. The majority of respondents were married and contributed 59.29% (n=67) total sample while 40.71% (n=46) were unmarried. The education of respondents was just read on two categories; uneducated and educated, the table showed that, the majority of respondents were educated 69.06 %(n=79) while just 30.08% (n=34) was reported uneducated. The age categories of respondents were divided into four divisions, a large proportion of was between age 20 to 30 years, contributed 61.06%(n=69) while second large section of age categories was from age 31 to 40 years old and shared 23.82% (n=27) of the total sample. The respondents' age 41 to 50 years old were 9.74% (n=11) and 51 to above 60 years old respondents just contributed 5.31 %( n=6) total sample of age group.

Table 1Demographicdetails of respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>		
<b>Male</b>	55	48.67
<b>Female</b>	58	51.33
<b>Marital status</b>		

<b>Married</b>	67	59.29
<b>Unmarried</b>	46	40.71
<b>Education</b>		
<b>Uneducated</b>	34	30.08
<b>Educated</b>	79	69.91
<b>Age</b>		
<b>20 to30 years</b>	69	61.06
<b>31 to 40 years</b>	27	23.89
<b>41 to 50 yearsold</b>	11	9.74
<b>51 to above 60 years</b>	6	5.31
<b>Total</b>	113	100

### HYPOTHESIS TESTING

For assessing the males and females views about the role of media in empowerment, t-test was conducted to test hypotheses. Results of H1 showed that males (M=4.38) were more agreed than female (M=4.00) that social media has a role in women empowerment with the value of, t (111)

=2.936,  $p < 0.05$ . There are significant differences between males and females' views regarding the role of social media in women empowerment and the mean indicated that both have positive views regarding issues. Therefore, H1 accepted.

Regarding the male and female views about the role of television in H2 revealed that males (M=4.49) were more agreed than female (M=3.71) that television has a role in women empowerment with the value of, t (111) =6.221,  $p < 0.05$ . The mean values of female figured out that women were not much agreed that television programs were promoting women empowerment related issues. Therefore, there are significant difference males and females' views regarding the role of television in women empowerment and H2 accepted.

Results of H3 demonstrated that males (M=1.38) and female (M=1.28) both were not agreed that radio has significant role in women empowerment with the values of, t (111) =1.197,  $p > 0.05$ . There is no significant role of radio programs in women empowerment therefore, H3 rejected.

**Table No: 2 Gender views regarding role of media and women empowerment**

Factors	Gender	N	Mean	t value	df	p-value	Decision
<b>Social media</b>	Male	55	4.38	2.936	111	.004	Accepted
	Female	58	4.00		110.938		
<b>TV</b>	Male	55	4.49	6.221	111	.000	Accepted
	Female	58	3.71		106.314		
<b>Radio</b>	Male	55	1.38	1.197	111	.234	Rejected
	Female	58	1.28		108.953		
<b>Newspapers</b>	Male	55	4.76	2.113	111	.037	Accepted
	Female	58	3.29		65.813		
<b>Magazines &amp; Books</b>	Male	55	3.42	1.570	111	.119	Rejected
	Female	58	2.83		110.996		

Results of H4 revealed that males (M=4.76) were more agreed than female (M=3.29) that newspapers have a significant role in women empowerment with the value of, t (111) =2.113,  $p < 0.05$ . There is a significant difference in males and females' views about the role of newspapers in women empowerment. Therefore, H4 accepted.

Results of H5 indicated that males (M=3.42) were more agreed than female (M=2.83) that magazines and books do not have much role in women empowerment with the value of, t (111) =1.570,  $p > 0.05$ . There is no significant difference between males and females' views about in women empowerment. Therefore, H5 rejected. In sum up, a total of five hypotheses were tested in study, out of which two hypotheses were rejected and the remaining three hypotheses were accepted.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Women are considered the most marginalized segment of developing societies. Due to the conservative mindset, women have very rare authority to make own decision even in their domestic and personal matters in different countries. Therefore, women empowerment is a burning issue and under the debate of social scientists. The empowerment of women is a great step for any society towards social and economic development. Both print and electronic media have sufficient contribution to help improve women status within a society. It has always hugely affected and influenced the minds of people. It is a kind of change agent of behavior of a society. Several studies were conducted to assess the relationship between role of media and women empowerment.

The basic purpose of the current study was to assess views of males and females about the role of media in women empowerment.

In the current research, women empowerment has been defined as, power of authority to make the decision their own wills do to something better for their future, family, nation country or spend their life on their desire and make independent decisions for betterment of life and family. For this purpose, the survey method was applied to obtain male and female views regarding the role of media in women empowerment. After collecting samples from sample sites, data were screened properly before conducting hypothesis testing.

The results of the study showed that views of male respondents regarding the role of media in women empowerment were totally different from the females. This research proved from the current datasets collected from the population of district KhairpurMirs that how much difference males and females' views were regarding the role of print and electronic media in women empowerment. Total number of hypotheses tested in the current study was five. In two hypotheses, views of males and female were not found difference while in three hypotheses views of both genders were identified with a significant difference.

In the current study, views of males and females regarding the first factor such as social media as a promoter of women empowerment was found significantly different. However, both males and females were agreed that social media has sufficient role to raise different women issue in society. Results of the current study were not different from previous studies (Narayana & Ahamad, 2016; Melissa et al., 2015) and revealed that social media had increased women empowerment. The television was used as the second factor to obtain views of respondents to the role of TV as strengthen women empowerment. The outcomes of research support the hypothesis that males and females are totally different regarding the role of TV in women empowerment. In table 2, mean scores indicated that women were not much agreed that TV programs help to improve women empowerment in different social strata while male respondents were agreed about the issue. The current result does not collaborate with the previous study which has been conducted in the Pakistani context (Akhter & Naheed, 2014) and revealed that TV is helping to enhance women empowerment in society. The radio was used as the third factor of the current study to evaluate the role of radio to make help women empowerment in society. Current study results indicated that radio programs are not much helping to raise issues in term of women empowerment and results of the current study are inconsistent with previous studies (Mhagama, 2016; Sharma & Kashyap, 2015; Nirmala, 2015) and found very effective community radio to bring women issues among masses. Gender views also were taken about newspapers about their role in women empowerment. Results of the current study revealed that male's respondents were more agreed than females that newspapers are helping to promote women empowerment. The study found that there was a significant difference between male and female views regarding newspapers as supporters of women empowerment in society. Results of the current study is not different from the previous study (Kian, 2008). Finally, magazines and books were used to analyze gender views about the role of books and magazines to strength women empowerment. The current study revealed that

there is no difference between male and female's views about the role of books and magazines in women empowerment. Both, male and female were not much agreed that in current scenario books and magazines have many roles to enhance women empowerment. The results of the current study do not collaborate with the previous study (Akhter & Naheed, 2014).

In addition, the media has decisive role to increase women empowerment in the society which lead women toward economic and social development of this section of society. The mass media has an excellent contribution to raise women issues and help as a good campaigner tool to spread the idea of gender equality in the society. Therefore, both types of media such as print and electronic media can be used as change agent. The thinking of people can be changed by starting media campaigns regarding women empowerment. In the current study results can be figured out that women were not much satisfied regarding media role to women empowerment as compared to men respondents. The role of both types of media can be defined, such as electronic including radio, television, internet, print media such as books, newspapers. However, still has huge gap to do work out and take serious steps to empower sustainable way to improve life of women in society.

## RECOMMENDATIONS & FUTURE AVENUE

The media houses must encourage their media persons on gender issues and help women to raise their social issues very easily on media.

The television and radio spare time for women issues and start meaningful and innovative campaign, which advocate for women empowerment and create safe social environment for them in the society.

All agencies of media must compliance specific laws regarding gender rights and aware their media professionals about such laws increase dignity and status of women in society. The government must introduce a solid policy and spread awareness regarding women rights and women empowerment through media.

Current study has also figured out several insights for future path in this domain. A future study in this regard in the same domain by collecting large sample across Pakistan may provide different results. This study was conducted among educated and uneducated population of district KhairpurMirs, Sindh. Majority of uneducated women as well as uneducated males were not fully aware of women empowerment notion, therefore at the time of data collection researcher faced so many problems. To understand it better, a future study can be conducted on only educated women of the same district or some larger scale. Current study used quantitative approach by using closed-ended questionnaire; future researches can be conducted by taking interviews from educated women of the district to understand views of female regarding role of media in women empowerment.

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