

**Women Economic Empowerment and Employment Discrimination  
(Quality education a factor to boost women's economic empowerment and to reduce  
employment discrimination)**

Authors

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**Abstract**

Quality education for deciding women economic empowerment is an idea which is need of the day particularly considering the circumstance of under developed nations like Pakistan. Taking women as fundamental human recourse they can perform much better in the development of the nation. In Pakistan, women constitute a bigger segment of population, which can be taken up as a crucial component in its development. Current study aims to evaluate women economic empowerment and employment discrimination. The study focuses on quality education as a factor to boost women's economic empowerment and to reduce employment discrimination. In contemporary world women's empowerment has been a very important issue. Women empowerment comprises of knowing their rights, able to have a significant control over resources and lives both at inside and outside of their homes as well as the ability to bring an impactful change in the society. Women economic empowerment also includes giving woman her rights in the economy, equal opportunity to access education, health etc. life's basic facilities, equal opportunity for recreation and entertainment and equal opportunity to take decision. The current study showed that there is a significant negative correlation between women economic empowerment and employment discrimination and there is also significant negative correlation between quality education and employment discrimination while there is a significant positive correlation between quality education and women's economic empowerment.

**Keywords:** Women Economic Empowerment, Quality Education, Employment Discrimination, Gender Discrimination.

## Introduction

In contemporary world women's empowerment has been a very important issue. Women empowerment comprises of knowing their rights, able to have a significant control over resources and lives both at inside and outside of their homes as well as the ability to bring an impactful change in the society. There are various components of empowerment which are related with each other for instance economic empowerment, social, political and individual empowerment. Economic empowerment refers to give women their rights in the economy. These rights incorporate equivalent access to education, wellbeing and life's fundamental facilities, and also provide equal chances for employment. Women economic empowerment likewise incorporates equal position in public life as political and decision making (Golla *et al.*, 2011).

The issue of women empowerment has turned out to be well known over the most recent decades. Making women empower directs to the acknowledgment of their essential rights and also increasing their confidence, their contribution towards basic leadership, enhancing their ways of life (Khan *et al.*, 2010). To attain equal opportunities and status education plays an important role. It is also crucial for the development of human personality, and furthermore to achieve their goals, and objectives.

Empowerment of education has denied women from gaining knowledge, accomplishing equal opportunities for work, status, basic leadership capacities, and knowing self as to be a gainful resource for the economic development (Mayoux, 2000). Women education is considered as one of the principle components that is additionally correlative to income creating activities. Post-primary schooling has the best result for female's empowerment. The nature of education isn't less essential as to acquiring education. Lack of quality education as given to male; females cannot compete in job market. Equal admittance to education and equivalent chances in picking up the abilities are vital for every woman in the society to contend in the job market. Women with quality and high-level education can capable and also easily compete males in their respective work place. Also, the high gains in female's education prompt additions in their productivity. This thus can play as a catalyst to lessens discrimination against them. Being economically empowered women can easily access to all the economic resources that she needs and also can get equal opportunities like getting a job, financial resources, inheritance rights and all other assets that are productive, also gaining of skills and other market information (Eyben, *et.al*, 2008). To strengthen women's rights to make them able of making choices of their lives and provide their input in the society their empowerment and participation in economic activities is the basics. (Swedish ministry for foreign affairs, 2010 To achieve sustainable development in the society, inclusive growth and all other goals that are prerequisite for development of nation, women economic empowerment is the key (MDGs, 2010). Also, to achieve the highest level of development in the nation, the investment in gender equality is needed which has the highest returns of all considering it as a catalyst to multiply the development efforts (Malhotra & Schuler, 2005). Over the last decades, it has been seen that poverty among women in Asia has been expanded. The same level of opportunities and resources are never enjoyed by women as like men get a chance to enjoy.

In our society discriminatory practices are common and hence results in dispersion of poverty. Pakistan is a patriarchal society where gender roles are being specified that women do not need to work and man is the head of household and breadwinner. That's why women in Pakistan are suffering the more from poverty of opportunities and status regarding women poverty

is also not known. Out of total world's population women constitute 50% of it. An extensive number of women around the globe are jobless. A huge number of women all around the world are not doing any job. Due to unequal opportunities at work places for women the global economy has to endure a lot. The overall improvement of general public is the fundamental principle of women empowerment. Considering education as the key to improve lives by making them able to control over the resources. (Kandpal et. al, 2012).

### **Women Economic Empowerment**

Women empowerment implies the establishment of the environment for females in which they have complete freedom of taking decisions of her life and have equal rights in the society and should not be any discrimination while giving jobs and other trainings. They should have safe working area with appropriate protection. Women population constitutes around half of the total world's population. A large number of women around the globe are jobless. The world economy endures a great deal due to unequal opportunities for women at work places. The primary favorable position of women empowerment is that there will be a general improvement in the society (Khan & Bibi, 2011). A study from Punjab showed that the positive speculations more empowered women make in their children bringing about enhanced infant survival amid outset and also improved probability of them going to school and women's empowerment is also a substantial element for the health outcomes which considering the absolute empowerment as a vital factor of their wellbeing. (Durrant & Sathar, 2000). Karuppusamy, R. & Indira S. (2017), studied the socio-economic factors on empowerment of women entrepreneurs in Pondicherry region to analyze their socio-economic factors and to identify the reasons for which the women involve in entrepreneur activities. Demographic or socio-economic factors like community, nature of the family, educational qualifications, location of the business and building premises coordinate with women empowerment have impact on them. Due to unequal economic opportunities for women they comprise 70 pc of the world's poor (OECD 2008) In such manner, to protect women from poverty and spending a poor life there is a much need to value their work and provide equal opportunities and resources so they can be able to contribute their role for the growth of country. It is also important to consider that economic empowerment of women not only contribute towards economic growth of country but also to support other factors for sustainable development. It is also important for females to make them actively participate in decision making of the country. Studies showed that women who are economically not empowered have no time to participate in political activities of the nation and women who are empowered and have access to resources have time and take active part in politics of the country (Shah et. al., 2015) So, it is worth mentioning here that women economic empowerment has many other advantages.

### **Quality Education**

Quality education is considered as one of the key sources for women's empowerment. Quality education also plays a vital role in political empowerment of women as women with high level of education can better understand her political rights and also able to actively engaged in political activities so to equally participate in decision making processes of the country. (Moghadam et. al, 2003). The results of various studies exhibited that female's education and maternal mortality has negative relation while exhibiting the direct relation among their education, life expectancy, and family health. These studies also highlighted that higher level of female education has significant effect on their health. (Eckert et al. 2007). Education enables women to spend their life with prosperity, also make them able live their lives by their own choices. It is also helpful to enhance

their status and to take control of income. Education has intergenerational effects through empowering women. Studies highlighted that it has been observed globally that mother's education has direct impact on her kids' level of schooling. The studies also demonstrated that the mother's education is more impactful as of father's education on their daughter education as compare to son. The daughters of mothers having higher level of schooling tend to achieve more in their lives. (Lewis et al. 2008). Quality schooling is additionally an intense way to upgrading women' economic opportunity. The equal opportunities concern the nature of women' socio economic circumstances, past their insignificant nearness as laborers compensation, upper portability, portrayal in administrative and logical occupations and so forth. For females to compete better in labour market there is a need to equal admittance to education and also require equal opportunities to gain skills. Education makes a woman to willing and better compete male counterpart in job market. To reduce discrimination there is a need of high level of school for females so to improve their productivity (ILO 2004.; England et al. 2004). Effects of females' economic contribution is also determined by the level of their education through determining the probability of their involvement and keenness in job market. One of the main determinants for females' empowerment for getting equal opportunities of employment is their attainment of secondary as well as higher levels of education (Govinda, 2008). Appropriate trainings to enhance skills and also secondary education for females is required for job hunt in labour market so to be more competitive. It is very crucial to have secondary or higher-level education for females to get white collar jobs with handsome salary package. These days being just literate to just having basic education is not good enough to increase productivity (Gupta et. al,2006). For developing countries, it is really a policy concern that they have lower returns for female primary education. Results of various studies presented that in OECD countries and many other developed countries females with higher level of education and university degree holders can able to earn more wages per hour (Leary et al. 2004). Quality education has direct impact on active participation of females in economic activities and also getting equal opportunities on the basis of their skills. Students with low level of education or just basic education cannot be able to contribute towards the development with their full potential. Also, the vocational trainings have significant impact on females' access to job market and contribute its fullest to the outcomes in labour market (Rihani et al. 2006).

### **Employment Discriminations**

Issues related to women's empowerment and also that are related to gender equality across the world are considered as the most essential in their agendas because these issues are found in almost all the nations in the world. Gender inequality is more common issue in developing countries as compare to developed countries. (Ahmed et al., 2001). UN Women (2014) precisely highlighted that to create a world that is just and also sustainable there is requirement of gender equality. Gender equality is also pre requisite to improve women's role within their families and also within their communities. In other way, the nations with gender inequality will never flourish and unable to compete the rest of the world. A study conducted in Canada showed that there is wage discrimination in job market as well as women received less promotions (Javdani & McGee, 2015). Women in top executive position in USA earned about 45 pc less than men, data also showed that women faced discrimination in wages and job promotions (Bertrand, & Hallock, 2001). Women

are always underrepresented in high ranked positions, they do not get equal opportunities, faced discrimination in job opportunities and as well as in wages (Tomei, M. 2006). Some women try to choose mother friendly jobs and trade off higher wages (England, P. 2005). Women empowerment should be encouraged and also should be allowed to contribute equally and to get benefit equally in the economy for sustainable development.

## Materials and Methods

For a successful accomplishment of research work there is always a need of well define methodology. To reach at some logical findings an appropriate technique has been used for a rational research. In this study, to determine whether quality education is a factor to boost women economic empowerment and employment discrimination a proper procedure is carried out. The following way to conduct this research has been chosen which is based on previous work done and also with the help of reasonable understanding. This study is a cross sectional survey-based research, using quantitative research design. Data was collected through survey method (structured questionnaire). Here non probability random sampling has been used because of the probability of being equally selected of every member of the population. Also, the convenient sampling technique has been used due to the reason that elements selected were convenient for this study and also perfect to meet the research objectives. The population of the current study was all females chosen include married or unmarried. The sample of the current study consisted of 200 females. In study primary data was used with help questionnaire of 5-point Likert scale with 1. Strongly Disagree and 5. Strongly Agree tin order to collect data of females chosen includes married or unmarried of the age group of 20- 40 years. Estimation has been carried out using reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis and regression analysis techniques.

H1: There will be a significant negative relationship women economic empowerment and employment discrimination.

H2: There will be a significant negative relationship quality education and women's economic empowerment.

H3: There will be significant negative relationship between women economic empowerment quality education and employment discrimination.

## Results and Discussion

This chapter is based on the findings based on the empirical analysis and it gives an overview of the research findings.

### Reliability Analysis

Here in this research reliability analysis is used as one of the analysis techniques. Reliability analysis is used to measure the reliability and consistency in the data

Table 4.1 Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
WE	.704	6
QE	.686	8
ED	.680	6

Source: Author's own work

Table 4.1 shows reliability of all the variables of the current study. Quality Education and Employment Discrimination has reliability of .686 and .6807 which shows data is reliable while Women Empowerment has reliability of .704 which shows data is highly reliable. These values also show the high level of internal consistency in the data.

### Descriptive Statistics

The benefit of descriptive statistics is that it explains the detailed description of qualitative variables. As in the current research such measure is useful for analyzing the variables. Here in this research descriptive statistics is used to describe the mean values and standard deviation of the variables.

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation
WE	4.1760	.52879
QE	4.1036	.51177
ED	4.0760	.56517

Source: Author's own work

Table 4.2 shows the relation among dependent and independent variable of the study. The mean value for women empowerment is 4.1760. The standard deviation is .52879. The mean value for quality education is 4.1036 and the standard deviation value is 0.51177. The mean value for employment discrimination is 4.0760 and its standard deviation is .56517. A higher standard deviation value indicates the greater spread in the data. All the three variables have lower standard deviation value which indicates the lesser spread in the data.

### Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is the statistical tool which is used to study the closeness of the relationship between two or more variables. The correlated variables move in one direction.

Table 4.3 Correlations

		ED	WE	QE
ED	Pearson Correlation	1		
WE	Pearson Correlation	-.424(**)	1	
QE	Pearson Correlation	-.350(**)	.488(**)	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author's own work

Table 4.3 shows that the correlation between Employment Discrimination and Women Empowerment is -.424 which shows both variables have significant negative relationship with each other. It also shows if Women Empowerment increases then Employment Discrimination will decrease; hence there is a noteworthy negative association amongst women economic

empowerment and employment discrimination. This study also supports the findings of Mayoux,(2000), Tucker and Boonabaana (2012), Triventi, (2011). Empowered women can contribute more in family budget and hence can bitterly able to up bring their kids and also able to participate more in work force and compete males in job market.

Table 4.3 shows correlation between Employment Discrimination and Quality Education is  $-.350$  which indicates that both variables have significant negative relationship with each other. It shows if Quality Education increases then Employment Discrimination decreases with it; hence there is a significant negative relationship between quality education and employment discrimination.

Ashraf, et al., 2010 found that female education is important determinant for job hunt. Educated female can easily compete male counterpart in job market. Present study also supports the findings of Peter, G. and David, (2010), Shihadeh, and Edward, S. (1991).

Table 4.3 shows correlation between Quality Education and Women Empowerment is  $.278$  which reflects that both variables have significant positive relationship with each other. It shows if Quality Education increases then Women Empowerment also increases with it; hence there is a significant positive relationship between quality education and women's economic empowerment. Present study also supports the findings of Monazza, A. (2013), Sanjukta, (2002).

Educational attainment is an important determinant of women economic empowerment. Education is a great instrument to improve women's economic empowerment (Tucker and Boonabaana, 2012).

### Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is used to observe the association amongst two or more variables. Here in this study we used regression analysis to investigate the relationship among quality education, women economic empowerment (independent variables) and employment discrimination (dependent variable).

Table 4.4 Regression

		Coefficients(a)				
Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
		Coefficients	Std. Error	Coefficients		
		B		Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.742	.333		5.233	.000
	WE	.355	.078	.332	4.569	.000
	QE	.207	.080	.188	2.584	.000

a Dependent Variable: ED

**R: .454, R Square: .207, F: 25.635**

Source: Author's own work

Table 4.4 shows values of R and R Square. The R value is .454 or 45.4% shows level of correlation between variables used in the current study. The R Square is .207 or 20.7 % shows level of dependent variable explained by the independent variable of the study is less than 50%. The above table shows F value which is 25.635 that's more than 2 and it is also significant.

The t value for Women Empowerment is 4.569 which is a bigger value than 1.96 and the significance value is .000 which is less than 0.05. Its beta value is .355 which shows that one-unit change in Women Empowerment will change in Employment Discrimination by .355 in units.

The t value for Quality Education is 2.584 which is greater than 1.96 and the significance value is .000 which is less than 0.05. Its beta value is .207 which shows that one-unit change in Quality Education will change in Employment Discrimination by .207 units.

The correlation analysis showed following results:

**H1: There will be a significant negative relationship WE (women economic empowerment) and ED (employment discrimination).**

The correlation between Employment Discrimination and Women Empowerment is -.424 which shows both variables have significant negative relationship with each other. It also shows if Women Empowerment increases then Employment Discrimination will decrease, so there is a significant negative relationship between women economic empowerment and employment discrimination. Hence H1 is accepted as there is a significant negative relationship women economic empowerment and employment discrimination.

**H2: There will be significant negative relationship between quality education and employment discrimination.**

The correlation between Employment Discrimination and Quality Education is -.350 which indicates that both variables have significant negative relationship with each other. It shows if Quality Education increases then Employment Discrimination decreases with it. Hence H2 is accepted as there is a significant negative relationship between quality education and employment discrimination.

**H3: There will be a significant positive relationship quality education and women's economic empowerment.**

The correlation between Quality Education and Women Empowerment is 0.278 which reflects that both variables have significant positive relationship with each other. It shows if Quality Education increases then Women Empowerment also increases with it. Hence H3 is accepted as there is a significant positive relationship quality education and women's economic empowerment.

### **Conclusion and Policy Recommendations**

The current study showed that there is a significant negative correlation between women economic empowerment and employment discrimination. Also, there is a significant negative correlation among women economic empowerment, quality education and employment discrimination while there is a significant positive correlation between quality education and women's economic empowerment. So, it is also concluded that quality education is a key factor to boost women economic empowerment and to reduce employment discrimination.

In current scenario of Pakistan, some of the policies implications are recommended, particularly for the economic empowerment of women in Pakistan, are as follow.



- There is much more need to conduct further research in extent of women economic empowerment and also ought to be stimulated so that probable variables of women economic empowerment are identified.
- There is need to focus on time poverty which is one of the main constraints for women economic empowerment.
- The current study's focus was on Women Economic Empowerment, Quality education and Employment Discrimination. So, there is strong need for future studies to focus on more factors such as family support etc
- No one can deny the role of Pakistani Government for making women economically empower nationwide by increasing opportunities for females.

## Summary

Quality education for deciding women economic empowerment is an idea which is need of the day particularly considering the circumstance of under developed nations like Pakistan. Women economic participation and their empowerment are recognized worldwide as vital for the progress of a nation and growth of its economy and also incorporate in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Quality education and Women economic empowerment have shown positive relationship with each other. Since women are giving less attention or given less focus on education, but in reality, educated women can contribute to a nation in a better way as compare to men.

Quality education and employment discrimination have shown negative relationship with each other as educated women are facing less discrimination on regarding employment as compare to uneducated women.

Education is considered as a ground-breaking way to upgrading women's economic empowerment. Economic opportunities always apprehensions the nature of economic involvement of women ahead of being workers. Equal admittance to get education and equivalent economic opportunity that in picking up abilities are essential for females to contend in different work showcase. The better a quality of education a woman is, the abler and also eager she is to rival males in the work showcase. If there is women's education gains that also moves towards prompt increments in productivity. Hence, results reduction of gender discrimination against women.

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