

Measuring Rural Women Empowerment through Index Construction in Mohmand District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Muhammad Israr^{1,*}, Fazlur Rahman¹, Nafees Ahmad², Urooba Pervaiz³

¹Department of Rural Development, AMKC, Mardan The University of Agriculture, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

²Department of Economics, University of Malakand, Dir Lower Pakistan

³Department of Agriculture Extension Education and Communication, The University of Agriculture, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

*Corresponding author: misrar@aup.edu.pk

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Abstract Sustainable Development (SD) is not possible without empowering women as they make up half of the world population. The aim of the present study was to calculate the index of socio-economic empowerment of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) for women empowerment in the two selected villages i.e. Baro Kheel and Yousaf Kheel, tribal Mohmand district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. A sample size of 150 BISP registered/beneficiary women was randomly selected and interviewed through survey method with the help of pre-designed structure questionnaire. Data was analyzed by constructing/calculating an index having value between 0 (no empowerment) and 1 (complete empowerment). In this study the index of empowerment was divided in to Likert scale of no empowerment (0-0.20), less empowerment (0.21-0.40), empowerment (0.41-0.60), moderate empowerment (0.61-0.80) and highly empowerment (0.81-1.0). Findings of the study pointed that women in Baro Kheel were moderately empowered (0.65) in economic dimension as compared to Yousaf Kheel where the index of economic empowerment was high (0.70). The index of social empowerment indicating women were highly empowered in Yousaf Kheel (0.79) comparable to Baro Kheel (0.73). The legal status of women was moderately empowered in both villages Baro Kheel (0.62) and Yousaf Kheel (0.68). Women in Baro Kheel and Yousaf Kheel were moderately empowered (0.59 and 0.54) in physiological dimension of empowerment respectively. The value of index in the decision making empowerment dimension indicate that women were less empowered (0.55) in the study area. The overall value of the dimensions in the area were moderate for social (0.76) and economic (0.67) dimension followed by legal (0.65) dimension. The physiological (0.56) and decision making (0.55) fall in the just empowerment. The study as a whole conclude that as a results of the BISP interventions women empowerment in different dimensions were different, but as a whole the BISP makes women empowered in the different socio-economic dimensions of life. The study recommends a more compressive and sustainable strategies of the income generations with women participation by self-reliance activities to make them empower for future sustainable development.

Keywords: dimensions of empowerment, BISP program, Mohmand district, women empowerment

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1. Introduction

Sustainable economic growth requires the talents, creativity, and entrepreneurial dynamism of an entire population including men and women. As women comprise more than 50 percent of the global workforce, make up one third of formal business owners, and are responsible for as much as 80 percent of consumer spending and hence their participation in economic activities increased women's labour force participation and their earnings are associated with reduced poverty and

faster growth. When women cannot participate equally, economies pay a cost in terms of growth and development [1].

Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process, comprised of economic, civil, political, social and cultural dimensions [2]. Economic authorization is one of the dimensions of empowerment and is typically around amplified access of women to monetary resources, revenue making accomplishments, reserves, increased financial decision-making power and more economic independence [3]. It is the capability of women to contribute and benefit from development procedures in means which distinguish the value of their assistances,

admiration their self-respect and make it conceivable to sell a fairer delivery of the assistances of development [4]. Also it increases women's access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property skills development and other productive assets [5]. Different organizations like World Bank [6]; UN [7] highlighted that women's empowerment is about more than financial gain by enabling women to live lives of well-being and dignity, based on equality, rights and justice. Women social empowerment is a more reasonable communal status for women in society because the primary responsibility of any human society is to ensure human dignity to all members. It is often argued that facilitating women's access to money is not an effective means for achieving women's empowerment unless it is linked to other kinds of activities like training on awareness, concept of self-esteem and meaning and benefits of empowering women [8]. Political empowerment is a process that enables women to increase their mobility and break their isolation, to develop their self confidence and self-image and to establish their public presence whereby they participate in decision making in an expanding frame work of awareness and critical analysis to control and influence the direction of development [9].

Women's empowerment has been a characteristic of development aid since the 1990s and global support for women's empowerment quickly waned after the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing [4,10]. The international community has shown renewed interest in women's empowerment. In 2011, UN Women was created to lead on gender equality and women's empowerment [11]. Also bilateral agencies appear to be reviving their commitment to support gender related agendas across a range of development issues. In such cases the international community social and economic programs i.e. education, health, social protection and microcredit on which most development assistance is focused, such as empowerment has tended to be interpreted in a more individualistic and instrumental fashion and there emphasis is on improving access to assets and opportunities for individual women to enable her to make informed choices about their own needs and interests and to improve their personal circumstances [4]. The development effects of putting more money in the hands of women are also significant because women tend to spend a greater portion of their incomes on their families. Increasing women's income and their control over family spending can lead to improvements in child nutrition, health, education and work to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty [12]. Empowerment of women having seven dimensions including; rights awareness, living standard improvement, acquisition of equal productive resources, healthier health care, greater knowledge level and schooling, enlarged innovativeness in financial and gainful areas and accomplishment of self-sufficiency and self self-assurance [13]. In addition, services, education, contact with external world, behavior growth, economic self-government, official and permissible holdup, endorsement of women extensions and forward looking are the basics for the empowerment [14].

Looking in to the international commitment and local needs the government of Pakistan initiated different women empowerment programmers including the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP). It was launched in July, 2008 with objectives to enhance economic capability of deprived individuals and their reliant on family associates; frame and device all-inclusive strategies and embattled packages to improve the disadvantaged and susceptible people; lessen destitution and endorse unbiased circulation of wealth, particularly women, through the provision of cash transfers of Rs. 1,000/month to eligible families [15]. Its long term objectives included meeting the targets set by Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and SDGs to eliminate life-threatening and prolonged poverty and authorize females [16]. The program has four closely associated and complementary components, i.e. Waseela-e-Rozgar (Technical and Vocational Training), Waseela-e-Haq (Microfinance), Waseela-e-Sehat (Life and Health Insurance) and Waseela-e-Taleem (Primary Education). Waseela-e-Haq is aiming to break the vicious cycle of poverty through provision of interest free financial assistance. These steps are fundamentally planned to endorse self-employment among women recipients or their contenders to progress their maintenance.

To empower the women, the federal government of Pakistan initiated the BISP all over Pakistan and the findings of current research is expected to be important for various reasons which would reveal different dimensions related to women empowerment, especially in economic, social, legal, physiological and decision making of women in Mohmand district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to provide information on sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction. This study was design with the following objectives.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

1. To calculate the women empowerment index in different socioeconomic dimensions.
2. To study the impact of BISP on overall women empowerment.

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Study Area Description

Tribal district Mohmand of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan was the research area for the study (Figure 1). District Mohmand is the most under developed area in Pakistan with 60% of its population living below the national poverty line [16]. Topographically it is sub-divided into Upper and Lower Mohmand, the lower division being the most fertile. The broadest part of the domain in the Mohmand district lies in the glens and valley that begin at the Tartarra Mountain, south of the Kabul River, and the Ilazai Mountain, north of the Kabul River [16]. It was very hard to include all the villages in the sample study. So for the ease of the data collection as per the objectives, the study was confined to Baro Kheel and Yousaf Kheel villages from tehsil Halim Zai as a sample of the study. There were a total of 500 women

beneficiary in Tehsil Halim Zai (BISP Ghalani, 2016). On the basis of simple random sampling technique, the study included 150 women (@ 30%) beneficiaries of BISP as a sample for the data collection (Table 1). The unit of analysis of this research was the selected sample beneficiary women of the BISP.

Table 1. Sample size distribution of the selected beneficiaries

Village Name	Women Beneficiary	@ 30%
Baro Kheel	300	90
Yousaf Kheel	200	60
Total	500	150

Source: BISP Office Ghalani, Mohmand district and own calculations.

In the literature to study the empowerment of women, gender development index, gender empowerment measure, surveys, ethnographic investigations, focus group discussions and case studies are used. Certain key procedures of empowerment i.e. decision-making, self-confidence and self-esteem are very difficult keys as well as resources, agency, achievements and not just access, as ways to measure empowerment [17]. This study uses survey methods for the collection of data due to easy way of measurement and availability of data from the respondents. This study used survey research with face to face interview which was administered by design questionnaire that is used to collect data from the women beneficiary on the different aspects of BISP and socioeconomic characteristics.

The socioeconomic empowerment of the BISP beneficiary was measured based on different economic, social, legal, physiological and decision making dimensions and its indicators. This method of empowerment calculations has been used in economic dimension by [18,19] in various parts of the world. This research extended the above index in to five more dimensions and its sub-indicators besides the economic one. The index has a value between 0 and 1, which implies no empowerment and complete empowerment respectively. For further measurement of the empowerment this index was divided in to likert scale of no empowerment (0-0.20), less empowerment (0.21-0.40), empowerment (0.41-0.60), moderate empowerment (0.61-0.80) and highly empowerment (0.81-1.0). The following specific methodology was used for calculating the aforementioned different empowerment measures.

2.2. Index Calculation of Women Economic Empowerment

Six indicators were used for this dimension and were measured by the following formula.

$$WEEI = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5 + X_6}{6} = \left(\sum_{i=1}^6 X_i \right)^6$$

Where;

W_{EEI} = Women economic empowerment index

X_1 = Overall right of freedom in economic decision makings enhanced after BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)

X_2 = Change the other income activities obtained as a result of BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)

X_3 = Economic benefits received as a result of BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)

X_4 = Women's economic status improved as a result of BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)

X_5 = Right of freedom in decision makings in house related work outside enhanced as a result of BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)

X_6 = Stronger impact towards improving economic situation of women observed after BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 otherwise)

2.3. Index Calculation of Women Social Empowerment

This dimension was calculated by taking the following 9 indicators.

$$WSEI = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5 + X_6 + X_7 + X_8 + X_9}{9} = \left(\sum_{i=1}^9 X_i \right)^9$$

Where;

W_{SEI} = Women social empowerment index

X_1 = Visit the doctor regularly after BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_2 = Improved the infant health after BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_3 = Number of school going children increased (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_4 = Number of room in the house increased (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_5 = Provide access to safe drinking water (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_6 = Provide access to sanitation (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_7 = All of your children go to school (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_8 = Provide you an opportunity to send your children to school (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_9 = Stronger impact on gender equality, particularly on empowering women (1 if yes, 0 if no)

2.4. Index Calculation of Women Legal Empowerment

A total of 7 indicators were used to calculate this index by the following formula

$$WLEI = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5 + X_6 + X_7}{7} = \left(\sum_{i=1}^7 X_i \right)^7$$

Where;

W_{LEI} = Women legal empowerment index

X_1 = Raised awareness about the right and privileges (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_2 = Enhanced trust of women on government offices (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_3 = Enhanced trust on the service providers (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_4 = Family members having trust on you when you go to receive the BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_5 = Women have own land or got it in inheritance after BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_6 = Having trust on the ways women selected for BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_7 = Targeting of the beneficiary is fair (1 if yes, 0 if no)

2.5. Index Calculation of Women Physiological Empowerment

This dimension was calculated by taking the four indicators.

$$WPEI = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4}{4} = \left(\sum_{i=1}^4 X_i \right)^4$$

Where;

W_{PEI} = Women physiological empowerment index

X_1 = Women undertake different tasks as a result of the BISP (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_2 = Household's second activities changed because of the BISP (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_3 = Household have conflict finished as a result of BISP (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_4 = Women better manage household's activities after BISP (1 if yes, 0 if no)

2.6. Index Calculation of Women Decision Making Empowerment

Women decision making empowerment was calculated by the following formula using five indicators

$$WDEI = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5}{5} = \left(\sum_{i=1}^5 X_i \right)^5$$

Where;

W_{DEI} = Women decision making empowerment index

X_1 = Own assets and property outside the house after BISP cash (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_2 = Make decisions about use and sale of assets or property after BISP (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_3 = Decision making process changed due to BISP (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_4 = Enhanced assets and property ownership in household after BISP (1 if yes, 0 if no)

X_5 = Decision making enhanced saving behavior (1 if yes, 0 if no)

2.7. Overall Calculation of Women Empowerment Index

$$WEI = \frac{WEEI + WSEI + WLEI + WPEI + WDEI}{5}$$

Where;

W_{EEI} = Economic empowerment index

W_{SEI} = Social empowerment index

W_{LEI} = Legal empowerment index

W_{PEI} = Physiological empowerment index

W_{DEI} = Decision making empowerment index.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results of Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment of women has continuing impacts on rural women's livelihood. The indicators of this dimension includes the overall rights in decision making, enhancement of more income activities, receiving of income benefits, improvement in the economic status, right of freedom outside work and economic skills improvements. The Figure 1 revealed that women in Baro Kheel were moderately empowered in economic situation as compared to Yousaf Kheel where the index of economic empowerment was high (0.70). Among the different indicators, women were highly empowered in overall rights in decision making (0.83) and other income activities enhanced (0.80) in Yousaf Kheel. The indicator regarding right of freedom to work outside home was less in Baro Kheel (0.47) and Yousaf Kheel (0.45) (Figure 2). This implies that right of freedom working outside home is an important indicator contributing severely lowering women in economic empowerment.

3.2. Results of Social Empowerment

Women health care, infant health, children education, drinking water, sanitation and gender equality is the main efforts to socially empower them in the society. The data in Figure 3, based on value 0-1 shows the extent of social empowerment indicating women were highly empowered in Yousaf Kheel (0.79) comparable to Baro Kheel (0.73). The values of various indicators ranged as sending children to school (0.90), access to safe drinking water (0.88), strong impact on gender equality (0.85), infant health improved (0.79), access to sanitation (0.78), visiting doctor regularly (0.70), number of school going children increased (0.65), all children go to school (0.65) and number of rooms increased in the house (0.62). The figure revealed that sending children to school (0.90) and access to safe drinking water (0.88) were the highly empowered indicators due to BISP cash. The increase in number of rooms in their house (0.62) was the small sign of social empowerment in both the villages. The data indicates that majority (0.76) of the women were socially empowered due to BISP cash.

3.3. Results of Legal Empowerment

Legal empowerment of women has abiding collisions on rural women's living. The indicators of this dimension includes awareness about their rights, trust on government offices, trust on service providers, family trust on women, own or inherited land and selection of women for assistance. The Figure 4, revealed that women were moderately empowered in both villages Baro Kheel (0.62) and Yousaf Kheel (0.68). Among the different indicators, women highly trusted on government offices (0.74), highly aware about their rights (0.73) and also stated for fair targeting of the beneficiaries (0.73). The indicator regarding own or inherited land was less in Baro Kheel (0.40) and Yousaf Kheel (0.38). This implies that land ownership is an important indicator contributing rigorously subordinating women in legal empowerment.

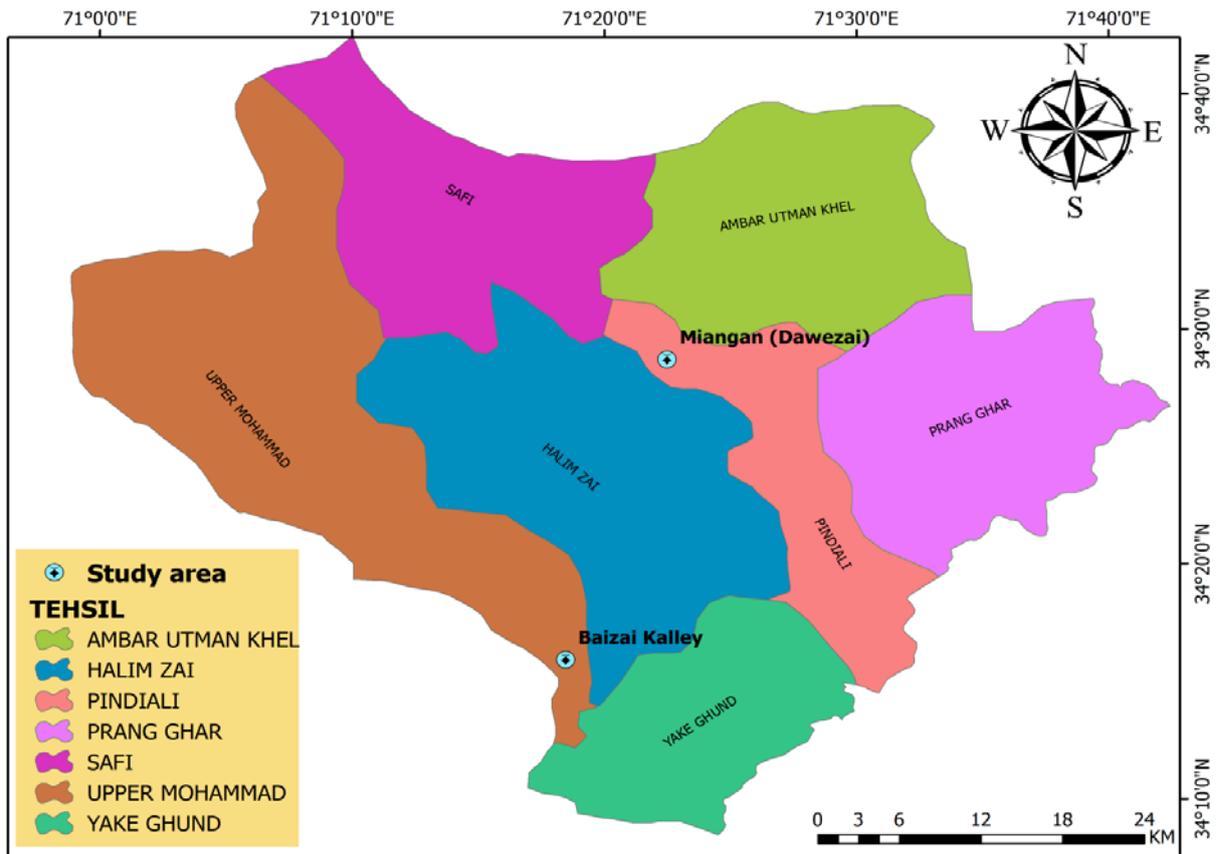


Figure 1. Map of Mohmand district showing the selected area of research

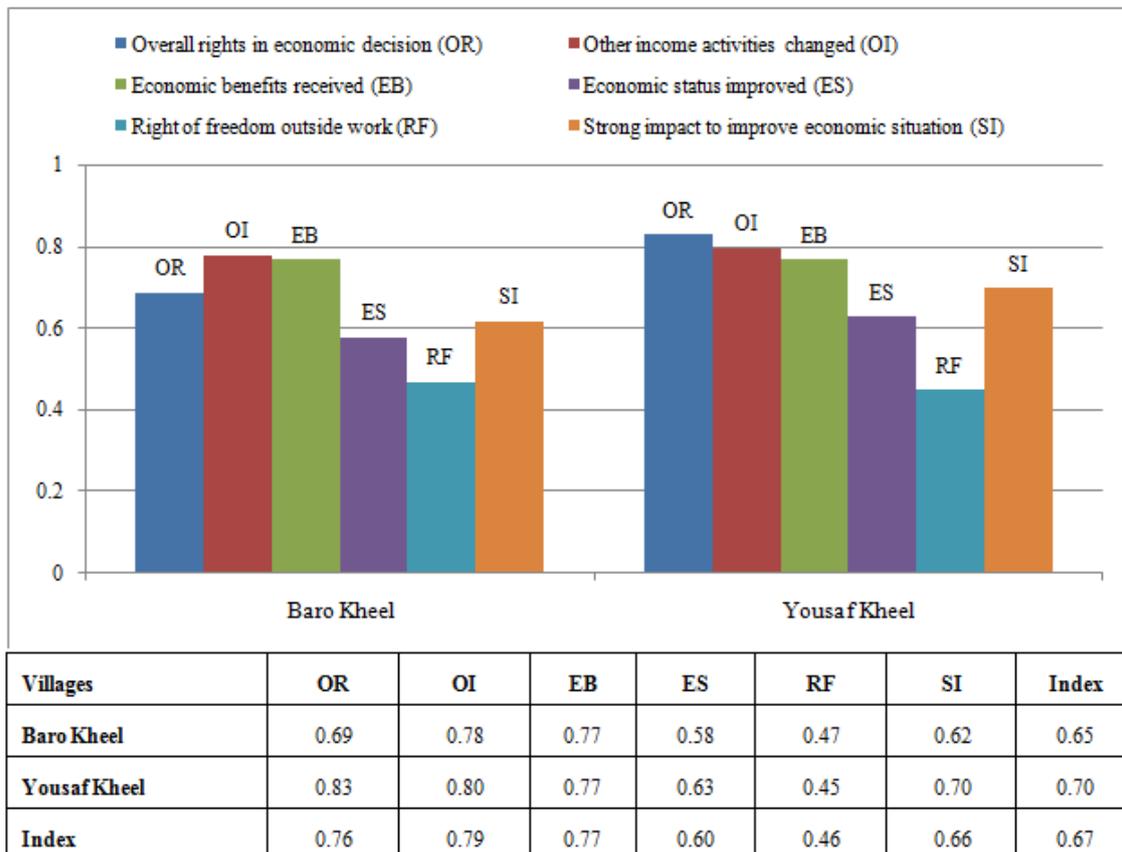


Figure 2. Calculation of women empowerment index by economic empowerment

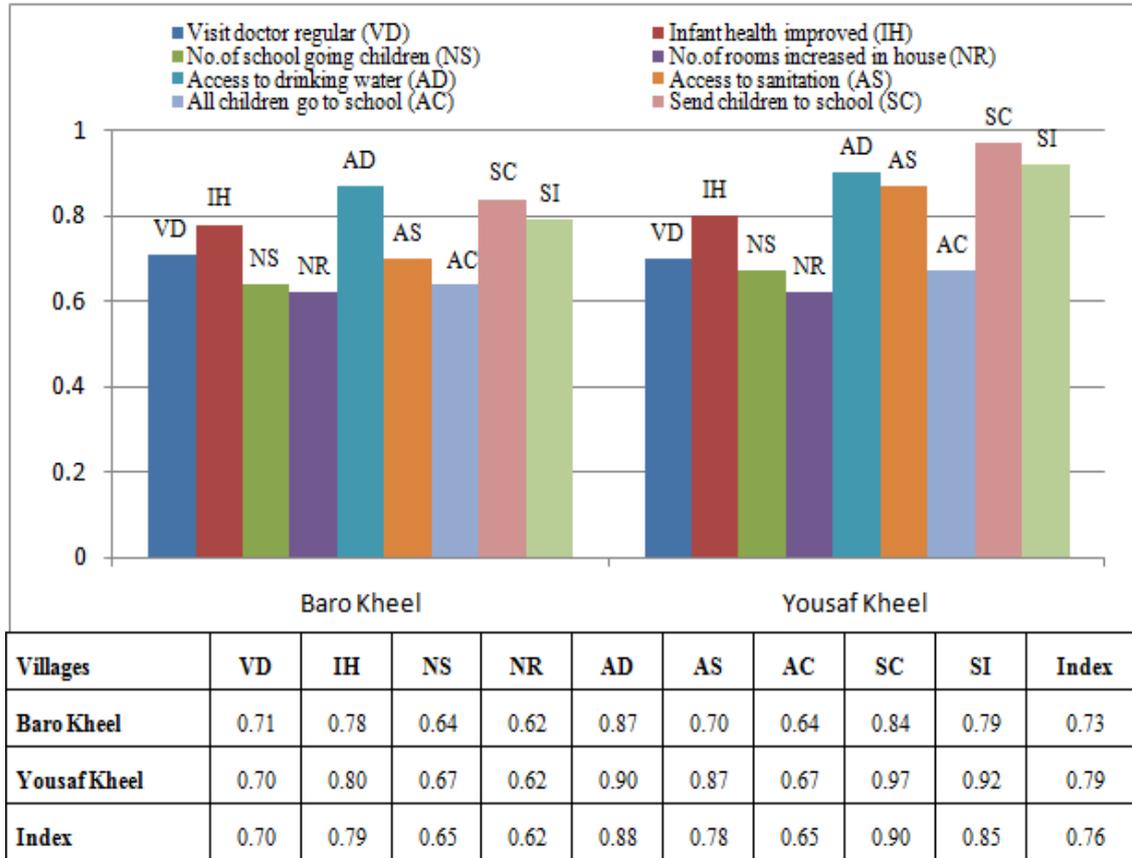


Figure 3. Calculation of women empowerment index by social empowerment

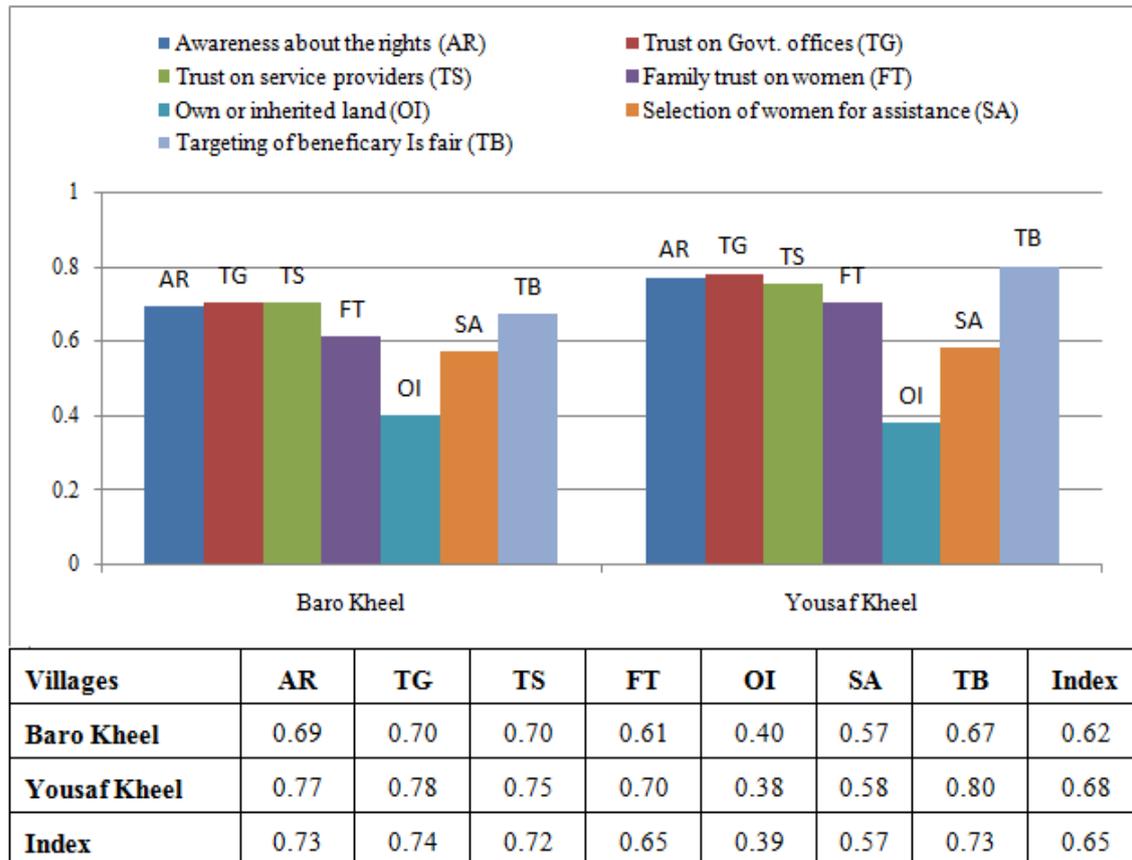


Figure 4. Calculation of women empowerment index by legal empowerment

3.4. Results of Physiological Empowerment

Access to BISP cash for women can increase their self-worth and physically empower them. It is believed that working women is more empowered than non-working women. The value regarding physiological empowerment of women presented in Figure 5, based on value 0-1 indicates that women were highly empowered (0.85) in household's other activities. Women have no conflict (0.9) with other family members. The indicator women taken different tasks (0.58) as a result of BISP showed moderate impact on women empowerment. Women were highly empowered (0.76) to manage their household's activities. The higher empowerment dimension (0.87) in Baro Kheel indicates improvement in women other household's activities. As a whole the results implies that women were moderately empowered in substantial sanctions in their lives.

3.5. Results of Decision Making Empowerment

Decision making is a managerial indicator to empower women to expend more on women's favored goods; family members eat additional non-grain food items. It is also an energetic multidimensional procedure which empower women to understand their individuality and influences in all compasses of life, comprising improved independence in decision making. The data in Figure 6, based on value 0-1 shows the extent of decision making empowerment indicating women were moderately empowered (0.55) in the study area. The values of various indicators ranged as decision making changed (0.74), saving index improved (0.72), assets and property in the

house enhanced (0.55), decision make about the use and sale of properties (0.55) and assets and property outside the house (0.19). The figure revealed that change in decision making process was the highly empowered indicator due to BISP cash, while assets and property outside the house was severely less empowering dimension in decision making index. The data indicates that majority (0.74) of the women have decision making control due to BISP cash.

3.6. Results of Overall Empowerment

The explanatory elements of women empowerment are economic, social, legal, physiological and decision making. The understandable factors of women's empowerment are family organization, marital profit, financial sovereignty, freedom of mobility, and existence sympathetic of work participation in the contemporary sector. Attempts were made to summarize what women recognize or do not recognize about what leads to women's empowerment. The empirical result on this aspect is shown in Figure 7, based on value 0-1 shows the extent of overall women empowerment indicating women were moderately empowered (0.64) in the study area. The values of various elements ranged as social empowerment (0.76), economic empowerment (0.67), legal empowerment (0.65), physiological empowerment (0.56) and decision making empowerment (0.55). The figure revealed that majority of women in Baro Kheel (0.73) and Yousaf Kheel (0.79) were socially empowered, followed by giving economic power to women in Yousaf Kheel (0.70). The overall empowerment results indicate that most of women (0.64) were made powerful as a result of BISP assistance in the study area.

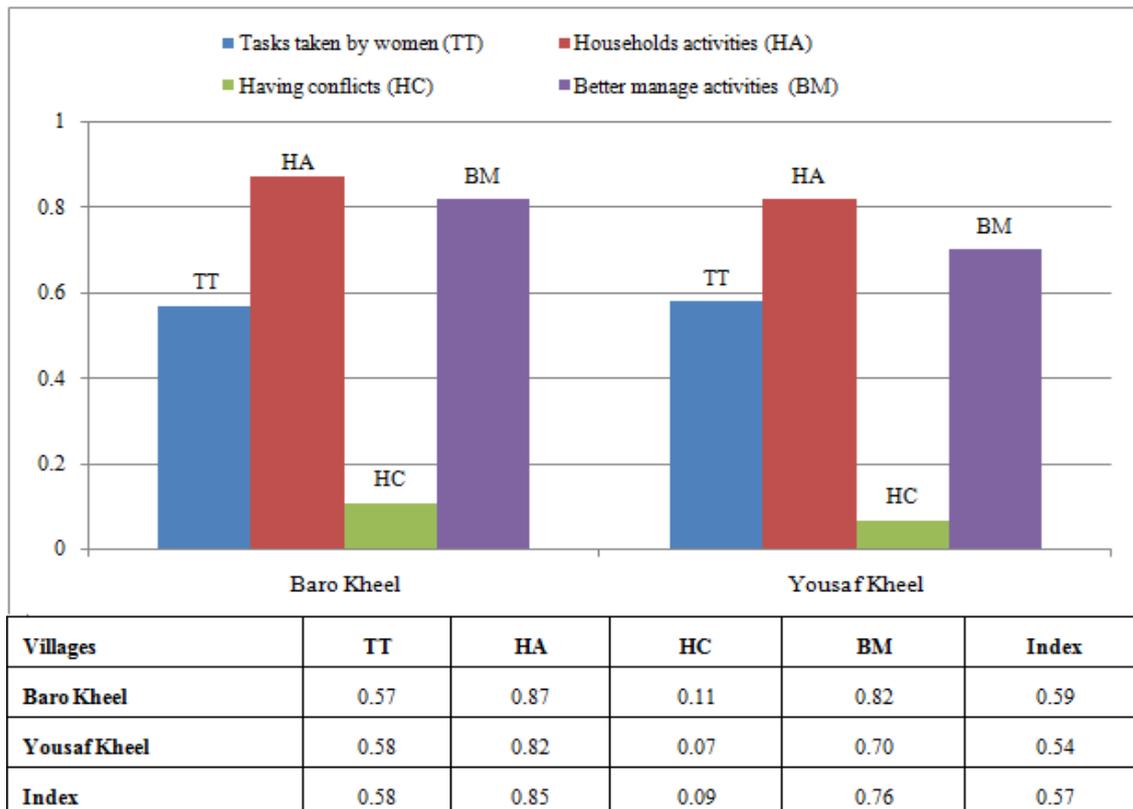


Figure 5. Calculation of women empowerment index by physiological empowerment

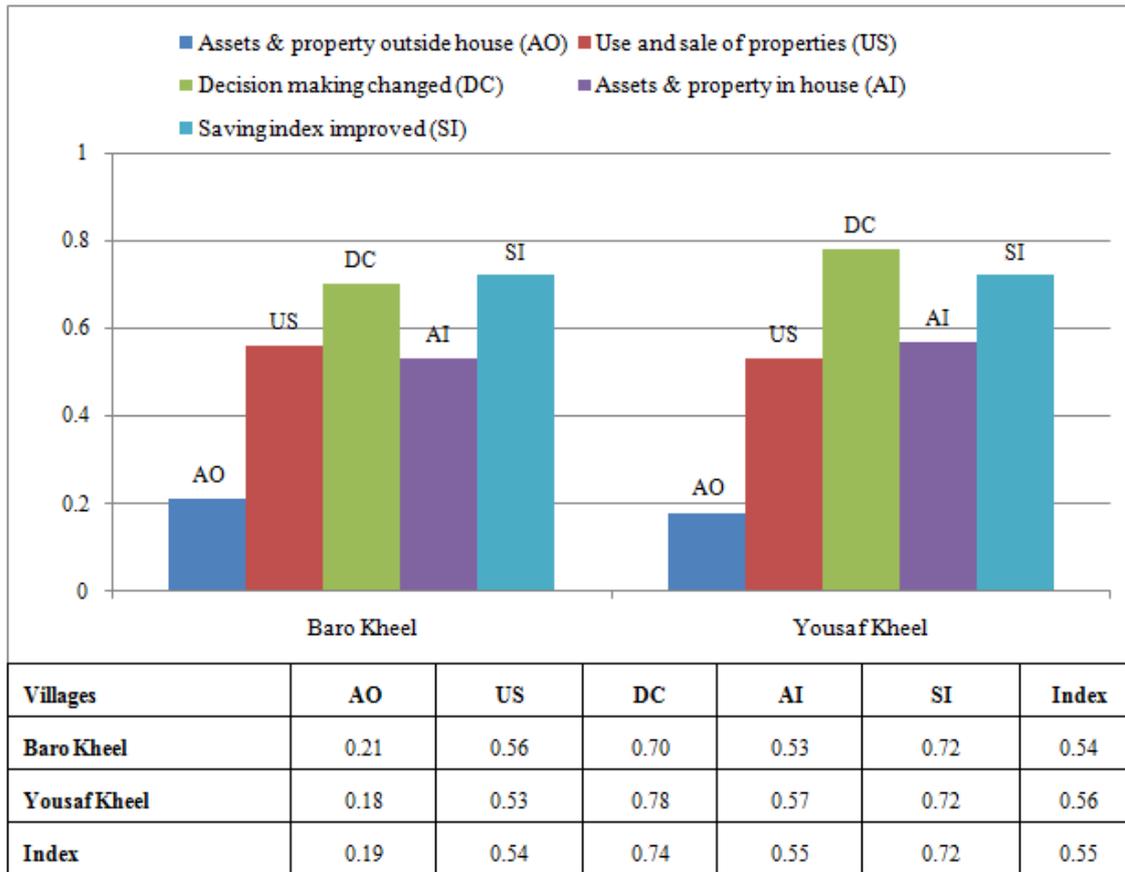


Figure 6. Calculation of women empowerment index by decision making empowerment

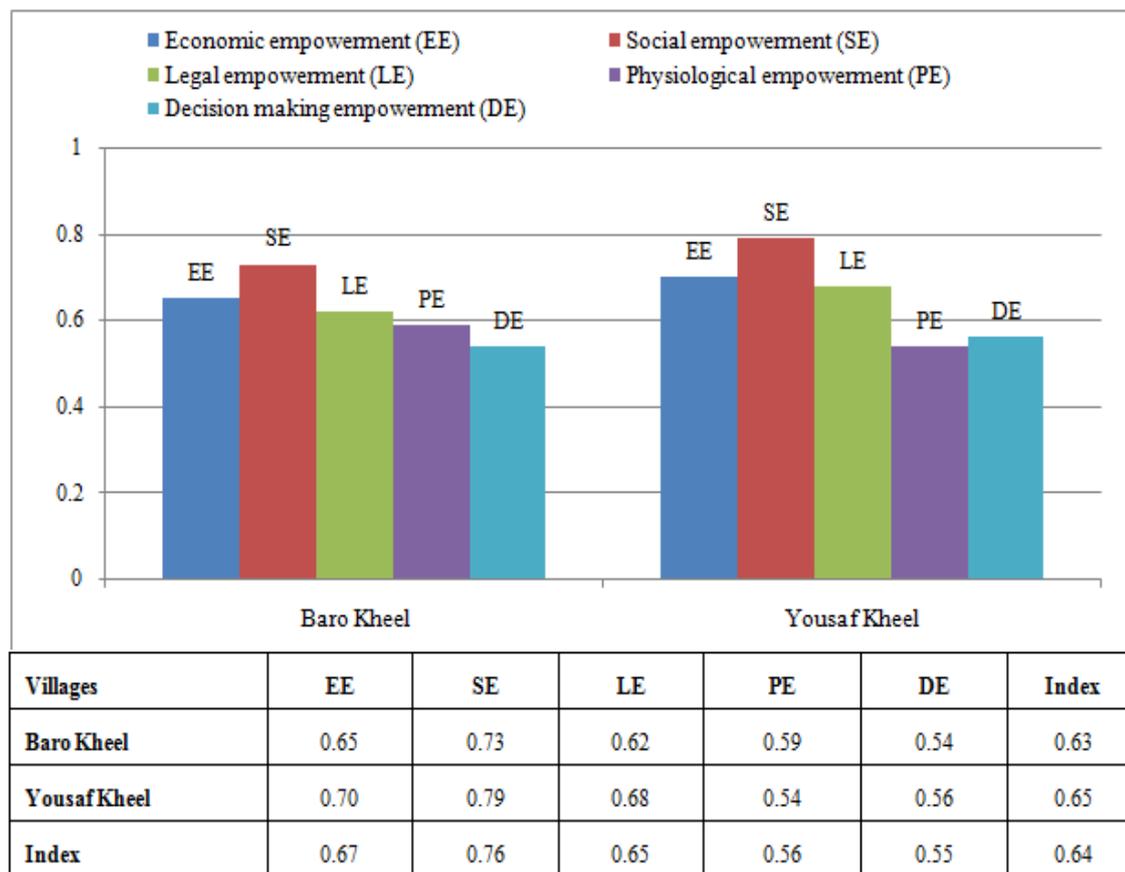


Figure 7. Calculation of overall women empowerment index

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the calculated index of empowerment it was concluded that women in Baro Kheel were moderately empowered (0.65) in economic dimension as compared to Yousaf Kheel where the degree of economic empowerment was high (0.70). The extent of social empowerment indicating women were highly empowered in Yousaf Kheel (0.79) comparable to Baro Kheel (0.73). The legal status of women was moderately empowered in both villages Baro Kheel (0.62) and Yousaf Kheel (0.68). Women in Baro Kheel and Yousaf Kheel were moderately empowered (0.59 and 0.54) in physiological control, respectively. The extent of decision making empowerment indicating women were moderately empowered (0.55) in the study area. The overall empowerment index values pointed that women were empowered economic (0.67), social (0.76), legal (0.65), physiological (0.57), decision making (0.55) and overall empowerment index (0.64). It implies that women were moderately empowered in their household's related activities in the study area. The study as a concluded that BISP support with women's leads a way to economic self-reliance and confidence in the building of sustainable societies and thus can contribute to the achieving the one goals of sustainable development.

Keeping in view the main findings of the study, it is recommended that a small portion of women received income benefits from the BISP, which moderately empowered them, BISP should increase their expediency to women to make more powerful in their decision making activities. Also the BISP should extend their awareness program about the rights and decision making of women to raise knowledge about their legal, social and political rights.

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