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Does Income and education of working-women transform societal values: An evidence from Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Women's socio-economic empowerment is instrumental in transforming the societal values particularly in developing countries. However, this transition from traditional to modern social values is linked to women's income and education levels. This paper investigates this phenomenon in the context of working women in Pakistan. To this extent, three hundred and six working-women were interviewed in urban vicinity of Lahore city. By employing Multinomial logit model our study confirms that socio-economic status of working-women plays a significant role in transforming their social values. Both income and education levels of working-women tend to display similar association to values, although differences persist in some important dimensions. Women's empowerment through higher education and rising income leads to more bargaining power in household decision making, increasing political participation, and valuing gender equality. However, modernization as result of increased income levels and education has led to a decline in importance of religion in women from upper classes unlike the lower classes.

Key Words: Relation of Economics with Social Values, Multiple or Simultaneous Equation Models; Multiple Variables: General, Household behavior and family economics.

A13, C30, D19

Introduction

A growing body of evidence indicates that deep-rooted changes in worldviews are taking place (Inglehart *et al.*, (2009), Wezel *et al.*, (2010), Amoranto *et al.*, (2010)). These changes are instrumental in reshaping economic, political, and social values and perceptions in societies around the world, and Pakistan is no exception. While a lot has been written about the economic growth story of Pakistan, there is relatively very little research on the impact of these economic changes on the evolution and emergence of changes in social values. Much of this transformation can be associated with the increase in standard of living, knowledge and women's participation in public life. Consequently, it has resulted in changing roles and status of women in society through their inclusion in social, political and economic spheres of our society.

Birdsall, Graham and Pettinato (2000), suggest that socio-economic structures are instrumental in determining the efficacy of economic and political institutions that eventually leads to higher economic output. Let alone transforming the societal values. Indeed these two developments interact and reinforce each other. The changing societal values can raise the level of incomes in a society through their impact on human capital, saving behaviors, and generating entrepreneurial activities, all of which can prove critical raising income and widening opportunities for everyone (Ray, (2007), Bannerjee, *et al.*, (2007)).

One of the most prominent phenomena of recent times is the active participation of females in paid employment, which has led to a shrinking in the gender gap in income, employment, and education and which has a positive impact on overall economic growth (ILO, 2012). Women's employment results in enhancing the status of women, giving them control over income, resources, and this increases their bargaining power in family decision-making.

However, there also exists conflict in almost all the societies especially in this era of globalization and capitalistic driven economic growth. This conflict leads to a perpetual struggle and tension among those who profit from these forces and those who lose in the process. Consequently, significant differences exist in the beliefs and values not merely at a global level across countries, but also inside one country amongst different income groups.

Gaining unequally from the process of capitalist driven economic growth and development. By way of this process of change, modernization theorists advocate that economic development is positively associated with female labor force participation. As a result the changes in the occupational structure and increase in educational opportunities now available to them, albeit, along with the household duties (Inglehart and Wezel, 2010).

At global level, 865 million women who have the potential to contribute fully to their national economies, out of which 812 million of these women live in developing countries (Aguirre *et al.*, 2012). More recently, Pakistan has witnessed a considerable rise in female labor force participation from 14.6 per cent to 25per cent in 2014 (Pakistan Labor Force Survey, 2014).

A perspective that dates back to Weber (1905) suggesting that the working class is the source of determining economic values that emphasize savings and the accumulation of human capital, thus promoting economic growth. There exists consensus among the social scientists that as societies grow more affluent, their social values contribute towards creating a more equitable and democratic environment. Nonetheless, the development process is a delicate path in which if some classes gain and thrive through increases in their socioeconomic status, at the same time, some fall back in this whole process. These changes, more often than not, may result in the emergence of social values and tensions with adverse consequences for societies (Calva.L, *et al.*, (2012), Welzel and Inglehart (2010), and Kohat, *et al.*, (2009)).

Given these far reaching economic and social changes and the forces that generate them can lead to an inquiry into the role of working women and their socioeconomic status in the determining their social values an important area of research in Pakistan's economic development.

In this backdrop, this paper examines the impact of women's empowerment through education and income, which allows them to actively contribute in evolving and changing traditional social values to more equitable social and economic outcomes.

In this context, there is a dearth of empirical evidence related to Pakistan. Therefore this paper aim to answer the question,

- Does the empowerment of working-women through education and self-earned income transform their social values?

The paper is organized as follows. The second section reviews the existing literature followed by section 3, which presents the methodology. Further, the descriptive and empirical analysis are presented in 4 and 5 respectively. Finally, we conclude the findings in section 6.

Review of Literature

There is a long and rich history of class analysis in sociology and classical political economy, dating back to Aristotle, however, Adam Smith and Weber linked classes to the process of development through inquiring the role of religious beliefs on economic development. The effect of economic and social development in determining societal values are important for any nation for its progress. Skeete, *et al.*, (2009) uses data from the world values survey for 43 countries to examine the importance people place on economic achievement and traditional social norms in relation to their education levels. The findings suggest that people with higher education levels place greater importance to the values related to autonomy and freedom of choice relative to conformity to traditional social norms.

Meyer and Birdsall, (2012) highlights the importance of the economic security for middle class resulting from having an income, or accumulated savings, allowing an individual to withstand a financial shock without having to sell assets, which has an influence on his attitudes and social values.

Over the past decades, many scholars have documented a general liberal shift in attitudes toward the changing roles of adult females around the globe. Carter and Cora, (2005) examine the trends in traditional gender role attitudes of religious and non-religious persons in U.S from 1972-1998. The study assessed the shifts in attitude toward women's participation in politics and the labor force, and found that attitudes appear to be more liberal across time. They further argued that both men and women irrespective of their religious beliefs have started accepting the changing social values particularly about women's active participation in public life.

Female participation in labor force enhances their status, which influences women's effectiveness in their bargaining power in other realms of society, and in politics. The

differences in female labor force participation across countries can also reflect underlying societal values and beliefs, which are transmitted to children from parents in general and from mothers in particular (Chafetz, 1990). Consequently, the values and perceptions of children are largely influenced by their parents. For example, Knowles and Postlewait (2005) observe that the high saving tendencies in the parents have been transmitted to their children.

The existing literature stresses the importance of education in determining progressive social and political attitudes in any society. On the same lines, changes in standard of living as proxied by income too predict the societal norms and values, where, people with higher and stable income levels, tend to conform to liberal social values (Solimano et al., 2013). Banerjee and Dufflo (2008) advocate that people with higher permanent income are less vulnerable to economic shocks; therefore, invest more in health, training, and other rent generating activities.

Hall and Zoega, (2014) have found that Nordic countries place a strong value to the right of women to participate in the labor force than continental Europe. The social policies and institutions in these countries facilitate women to participate more in the labor force. In addition, the study suggests that the views and values on women's labor force participation have religious origins. All five Nordic countries predominantly belong to Protestant church revealed more positive attitude towards women participation in the labor force in contrast to other European countries.

Using data from the World Values Survey for 80 countries, Amoranto, Chun and Deolalikar (2010) examine the relationship of class status with values that may be associated with higher economic growth and greater accountability in public services. People from middle-income group are found to have values, which are more likely to contribute in economic wellbeing than the lower class. However, they have less liberal values and attitudes than the upper class in terms of market competition, gender equality, upward mobility, and trust.

Developing countries aspire to grow economically and modernize as developed countries, but at the same time stick to their traditional values. Modernization comes in different shapes and affects various areas of society, which includes political, economic and social. However, modernization when seen from a gender perspective, results in the processes biased towards men rather than to women. Nilsson (2004) examines the effects of modernity on Indian working

class with relation to women. The results suggesting that modernity translated into higher income, urbanization, changes in family, social system or increased female participation in the workforce, appear not to have possessed all those effects on Indian working class as may have been predicted by theory and development.

Luis F. *et al.*, (2012) investigate the relation between class, values and political orientations using world values survey for six Latin American countries. The study finds a significant association in income class and values; values gradually shift with income and the values of middle income groups lay between those of upper and poorer ones. In addition, the values vary across countries, due to the pre-existing social structures and within the bounds dictated by society. Similarly, Hatori, *et al.*, (2003) carried out a comprehensive comparison among several Asian countries, determining the fact that industrialization activates social mobility, and change in status and hierarchical structure. The authors suggest that the characteristics of the working-class vary from one segment of the society to another, reflecting the different ways societies have built up. The government policies and preexisting social structures such as (post-colonial era) have greater influence not only on social values but also on political attitudes of the working class.

In context of Pakistan, the empirical evidence of socio-economic status of working women in determining their social values is scarce. Only Ferdoos, (2006) investigates the gender roles and status of working-women in urban and rural regions of Pakistan. Her findings suggest that there is a positive shift in attitudes of society in general and urban middle class in particular towards the role of women outside the home. However, important dimensions of political freedom, religious values, and decision making both at household and societal level is largely ignored.

This paper seeks to fulfill this gap through empirically investigate the effects of socio-economic status of working-women in transforming these broader dimensions of social values.

Methods

Data and Sampling

To investigate the effects of socio-economic status of working-women on values, we use standardized questionnaire and gathered data from four hundred working-women in urban

areas of district Lahore, Pakistan. We focus on the sample population of 400 women belongs to different income classes and working primarily in services sector both formal and informal. We adopted snowball-sampling technique for reaching to the sub group, which in the present study are working-women. For the reason that the exact size of the population with relation to their income class and employment is not available. Snowball sampling method based on referrals from initial respondents to the other respondents possessing similar characteristics (Bryman, 2016). The researcher herself administered the survey and initially made contact is with working-women known by her and further ask the respondent to nominate at least three potential respondents. The data has been collected from various areas of Lahore including, Johar Town, Raiwind Road, Cantt, and some parts of Gulberg, the potential respondents from universities, colleges, banks, beauty salons, and sales person are surveyed too.

For survey questionnaire, we used questions from World Values Survey¹ covering numerous variables such as, years of schooling, household income, age, decision making, religious values gender equality and participation of women in public life. The questionnaire is composed of fourteen questions in total including sub categories. During the preliminary testing of the questionnaire, researcher found out that the context of few questions is similar, and a few needed to be rephrased in simple language. It took on average twenty-five minutes to collect information from the middle and lower income groups, however ten to fifteen minutes from the women of upper income group. Originally, the data was collected from four hundred women but only three hundred and six questionnaires were found duly filled, which are recorded to draw to analysis.

We use the multinomial logit model because the dependent variables are in ordinal scale with five options. Multinomial logit models are used to model relationships between a polytomous response variable and a set of repressor variables. It is an extension of binary logistic regression, which allows for more than two categories of the dependent or outcome variable (McFadden & Train, 2000). The scale of dependent variables are in reverse order ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 represents very important, and 5 denotes not at all important.

¹ The World Values Survey (www.worldvaluessurvey.org) is a global network of social scientists studying changing values and their impact on social and political life, led by an international team of scholars, with the WVS association and secretariat headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden.

We bifurcated the income classes in five categories as lower (Less than 15,000), lower middle (15,000-25,000), middle (26,000-50,000), upper middle (51,000-150,000) and upper class (200,000 and more). According to Pakistan Household Integrated survey the average monthly household income in urban areas of Pakistan is 30,000 rupees (HIES, 2014). The two independent variables are Household Income and education levels of working women are used to measure its impact in determining the social values. In this paper, we present the data using middle class as reference category for Household Income and higher secondary for education levels because we want to compare the values of lower and upper class relative to the middle class and secondary education respectively.

Results and Discussion

Aggregating the data (46%) of the total working-women in our sample belongs to lower income class. (24%) from middle-income class, and (30%), are from upper income class. Majority of the women are working in private sector compared to 14% are working in public and formal sector. Further, (12%) women work in informal sector, and more than half (54%) are married. The descriptive analysis further suggest that (70%) of the married women belonging to lower income class contribute significant amount towards household expenditures, unlike the unmarried workingwomen in upper income classes.

Further, the data shows that less than half of the working-women have some say in decision and only (8%) have the complete independence in decision-making. Considering the marital status only (15%), married women have independence in taking decisions as opposed to unmarried.

Additionally, the statistics reveal that more than (90%) of the working-women consider religion important in their lives and believe in inculcating religious values at an early to their children. Whereas, (26%) of women from considers religion important and only (7%) of the women said that religion is somewhat important in their life. Moreover, (54%) of women out of total population believe that teaching religious values to children from early age is very important. While, 39% of women regardless of their income class and education levels considers religious values important. Only (5%) of women said that it is somewhat important to transfer religious values in children. Further, the data shows that religious values prevails more in lower income

class as compared to upper income class. (15%) of women belonging to upper classes do not consider religion an important value in their lives, whereas (85%) of women from lower classes places more value to religion. Majority of the working-women in our sample believe in gender equality for higher education, and only (12%) places more importance to education of male offspring.

1. Women's Contribution to Household and Society

Table 4.1 shows the women's contribution in household income their independence in decision-making process, and their perceptions towards earning Income. Equation (1a) suggest that women from lower income classes contribute more from their salary in overall household expenses as compared to the middle class unlike the women with higher income class contribute less in household expenses relative to the middle class.

Table 4.1 Women's contribution to Household and Society

<i>Dependent Variable: Contribution in household Income</i>		<i>Dependent Variable: Perceptions about earning Income</i>		<i>Dependent Variable: Freedom of Decision Making</i>	
1(a)	1(b)	2(a)	2(b)	3(a)	3(b)
HH Income	Education	HH Income	Education	HH Income	Education
LC .3388*** (2.26)	Primary .91733*** (2.62)	LC .6152*** (3.54)	Primary 1.3977*** (3.61)	LC .2944* (1.59)	Primary 1.057*** (2.01)
LM .3891*** (3.45)	Middle .4298*** (2.36)	LMC 2.607** (-0.94)	Middle -.1794 (-0.74)	LMC .3628*** (3.30)	Middle .1908 (1.19)
MC -	Higher Secondary -	MC .	Higher Secondary -	MC -	Higher Secondary -
UM -.4851*** (-2.09)	Graduate -.4557*** (-2.45)	UM -.5049*** (-3.10)	Graduate -.6025*** (-2.62)	UM -.2517 (-1.29)	Graduate -.1175 (-0.65)
UP -.6152*** (-6.17)	Post Graduate -1.212*** (-9.12)	UC -.6907*** (-2.94)	Post Graduate -1.262*** (-4.59)	UC -.6179 (-0.56)	Post Graduate -.6144*** (5.88)
No of Obs: 306					
Source: Own calculations. ***, ** & * signify significance levels at 1%, 5% & 10%					

Equation (1b) in table 4.1 suggest a tradeoff between the education levels and contribution of women in household. Women with primary and middle level of education contribute more with reference to the higher secondary level. When education levels increases the input of women in household expenses decreases respectively. The present findings are one way or another related

to the theory suggesting that women from lower income groups are pushed to labor force. The lower income strata are more prone to fall into poverty and economic shocks, therefore women work and contribute most of their income in household expenses to sustain their standard of living.

We asked the respondents if they support the idea that married women should earn money despite having a husband who support them financially. Equation (2a), in table 4.1 reports highly significant results showing that women from lower income classes strongly disagree with the idea that women should work out of financial needs relative to the middle class. The findings indicate that women from upper classes consider it important to participate in income generating activities relative to middle class.

In equation (2b) of table 4.1, the positive sign on coefficient indicates a highly significant result suggesting that women having primary education strongly disagree with the idea of women earning income out of financial reasons. Whereas, women having graduate and postgraduate degrees strongly support the participation of women in labor force to earn money despite their needs are being fulfilled. The results in both equations are highly significant and in line with the theory indicating that, a woman either is pushed or pulled in labor force – push factors for the obvious reasons are financial in nature. Women belonging to the lower strata of the society are being pushed in labor force due to rising cost of living, and low levels of spouse's income. Whereas, Pull factors are usually the opportunities, which expand the choices when basic needs are fulfilled and with increase in educational levels. As a result, the women with lower income classes are working only to support the family, and the lack of financial security makes them more vulnerable to plunge into poverty as opposed to the upper classes.

Table 4.1, equation (3a) reports that women belonging to lower income classes have less autonomy relative to middle class in decision-making process even at household level. Whereas, women belonging to upper income class make decisions more independently. Prominent arguments, both in India and elsewhere have suggested that women's decision making power and participation is generally lower either because they have been socialized differently (especially as far as marriage, motherhood, employment, and property ownership are concerned), or because they have fewer resources (Burns *et al.*, 1997).

The present findings are in line with the theory suggesting that the social background and cultural setting of women is significant in their decision-making. Women from lower income classes have less resources thus limited autonomy in decision making as relative to the middle and upper income class.

Equation (3b) indicates that lower education levels leads to less freedom in decision making both at household and public level. Higher education levels on the other hand, broadens the awareness and exposure of women, which leads to more autonomy in decision making whether at household level and deciding for participation in public activities. The participation of women in public life entails the level of autonomy they have inside the household. This fact cannot be undermined that the level of freedom women have in decision-making is linked to their position at the household.

2. Religion

One of the main functions of religion is to provide a sense of certainty in an insecure situation. As Karl Marx said that Religion is the opium for oppressed classes, lower classes where lives are vulnerable, both physical and economic insecurities prevail, then religion fills the void and provide sense of security and wellbeing. It is noteworthy that our findings also suggest that there is significant decline in importance of religion once a certain level of wealth is achieved.

Table 4.2. Religious Values

<i>Dependent Variable: Importance of Religion</i>				<i>Dependent Variable: Religious Values</i>			
(1a)		(1b)		(2a)		(2b)	
HH Income		Education		HH Income		Education	
LC	-.5663*** (-3.05)	Primary	-1.100*** (-2.72)	LC	-.2876*** (3.92)	Primary	-.8317** (1.96)
LMC	-.2858 (-1.45)	Middle	-.9963** (-2.39)	LMC	-.18366*** (3.15)	Middle	-.8860** (1.92)
MC	-	Higher Secondary	-	MC	-	Higher Secondary	-
UM	-.3358 (-0.58)	Graduate	-1.115 (-1.46)	UM	.5747*** (-3.98)	Graduate	1.2152 (-1.16)

UC	13.453*** (13.43)	Post Graduate	14.873 (0.01)	UC	-	Post Graduate	-
No of Obs: 306							
Source: Own calculations. ***, ** & * signify significance levels at 1%, 5% & 10%.							

Table 4.2 equation (1a) reports that women from upper class places less value to religion in their lives, which is statistically highly significant. Whereas, women with lower classes considers religion a very important aspect in their lives relative to the middle class.

Equation (1b) of education levels follows a distinct pattern that importance of religion decrease as education levels increase, but the results are inconclusive. Whereas, the coefficients are highly significant of women with lower education levels indicating that religion has a central role in their lives relative to higher secondary.

Women were also asked the importance to transfer religious values and knowledge to children from early age. In equation (2a), the results significantly show that women belonging to lower classes considers it very important to inculcate religious practices and values in children relative to middle class. While, women from upper classes places less importance to religious values with reference to middle class. Education levels in equation (2b) on the other hand shows that women with lower education levels also emphasize on importance of religious values for their offspring.

Whereas, women with higher level of education consider it less importance to teach religious values and practices to their children relative to higher secondary.

Both the results are in line with the theory suggesting that peace, prosperity, and the welfare produced an unprecedented sense of existential security. The process of human development has significant consequences for religiosity; the growing economic and physical security that usually accompany this process tends to reduce the importance of religious values in people’s lives (Inglehart, 2008). The main reason, we believe, that the need for religious reassurance becomes less important with increased income and education levels.

3. from traditional to modern values

Respondents were asked variety of questions to investigate the transition from traditional to modern values with growing participation of women in labor force. Equation (1a) of table 4.3 suggests that women with lower family income, places higher importance to family relative to the middle class which is highly significant. Whereas, women from upper class shows a similar trend indicating that family is important for them, but the results are insignificant.

In table 4.3 equation (1b) shows that the coefficient are highly significant for primary and middle level of education. The result reports that women despite lower education levels places higher importance to the family. Surprisingly, the women having graduate degrees considers family not very important in their lives.

Table 4.3. Transition towards modern values

<i>Dependent Variable: Importance of Family</i>		<i>Importance of Friends</i>		<i>Importance of Gender Equality</i>	
(1a)	(1b)	(2a)	(2b)	(3a)	(3b)
HH Income	Education	HH Income	Education	HH Income	Education
LC -1.135*** (-3.40)	Primary -1.784*** (-3.21)	LC .3266 (1.59)	Primary 1.2218** (2.82)	LC 1.056*** 5.79	Primary 2.211*** 6.64
LMC -.9112** (-2.74)	Middle -1.762*** (-3.21)	LMC .5470*** (4.76)	Middle .4587** (2.31)	LMC .6133*** 3.79	Middle .6787*** 3.57
MC -	Higher Secondary -	MC -	High Secondary -	MC -	Higher Secondary
UM -1.749 (-1.53)	Graduate 14.658*** (12.83)	UM - 1.010** (-2.52)	Graduate - 8520*** (-3.88)	UM .0676 0.12	Graduate .0261 0.07
		UC -.3325*	Post		

		(-0.88)	Graduate -1.082***		
			(-3.85)		
No of Obs: 306					
Source: Own calculations.					
***, ** & * signify significance levels at 1%, 5% & 10%.					

In table 4.3, the importance of friends has been taken as dependent variable to examine the impact of income and education on women’s view of friendship. The results in equation (2a) show that women from lower income groups consider the role of friends not very important in their lives relative to the middle-income group. Whereas, the negative sign on coefficient of upper middle-income group represents that women places high importance to friends. On the other hand, women with higher family income also considers friends an integral part in their lives.

Education levels in equation (2b) in table 4.3 also follows a same pattern demarcating that women with higher education levels places higher more importance to the friends which is highly significant. The present findings are very much relevant with the theory stating that poor families have scarce resources and uncertainty in their lives. This is the single most significant reason that they places less importance to friends and social networking for leisure. Whereas, women with secure and high family income may take survival for granted and considers friends and social networking as essential part in their lives. The results are perfectly in line with hierarchy of needs theory, suggesting that once the basic needs such as food, shelter are fulfilled only then people develop desire for social needs (Maslow, 1994).

The World Values Survey and European Values Study (referred as the WVS/EVS) provide evidence that the transition from agrarian to industrial society produces one set of changes, and the rise of postindustrial societies produces another set of changes in peoples’ values and motivations. As a result, societal values transit from traditional to secular values. Pakistan is also moving towards agrarian to industrial, society and women are entering more in labor force as they were in the past. Subsequently women are the main drivers of transforming social values from traditional to the modern social values. This intergenerational change in values occurs with higher education levels, which raises productivity of women through labor force participation.

In table 4.3 gender equality is also taken as the dependent variable to examine the importance women place in gender equality of providing equal chances and opportunities to both boy and girl from early years of socialization. In equation (3a), the results are highly significant; representing that woman with lower income class considers it not important to treat girls and boys equally relative to the middle class. Surprisingly, the women from higher income class do not value gender equality either, but the results are inconclusive.

Whereas, equation (3b) shows women with higher education levels places more importance to gender equality relative to higher secondary level, but it is inconclusive. Whereas, women with primary and middle education levels do not consider it important to provide equal life chances to girls and boys.

Several studies suggests that the socialization process and cultural setting during adult years predominantly influence our worldview hence shape the societal values at large. The socialization hypothesis suggests that the relationship between socioeconomic environment and value priorities is not one of immediate adjustment; a substantial time lag is involved for one’s basic values reflect the conditions that prevailed during one’s childhood (Inglehart, 2000). Societies with long histories of agriculture have less equality in gender roles because of more patriarchal values and beliefs about traditional gender roles of women. This increased the male’s bargaining power within the family, which, over generations, translated into norms and behavior that shape society with traditional beliefs about gender inequality (Hansen *et al.*, (2015).

Participation in Public Life:

Throughout history, women have generally been restricted to the roles inside the house. While major changes occurred in recent times in various parts of the world. The norms that restrict women to the home are still prominent in defining the activities, which deemed appropriate for women—excluding political life, which by its very nature takes place in a public forum. The participation of women into political activities depends on multiple factors including women’s household income, their position at the domestic level along with education levels.

<i>Dependent Variable: Importance of Politics</i>	<i>Vote in National Election</i>	<i>Vote in Local Election</i>	<i>Joining in Strikes</i>
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(1a)		(1b)		(2a)		(2b)		(3a)		(3b)		(4a)		(4b)	
HH Income		Education		HH Income		Education		HH Income		Education		HH Income		Education	
LC	.00632 (0.02)	Primary	.3144 (0.62)	LC	-.0794 (-0.46)	Primary	.7295** (2.02)	LC	.0414 (0.12)	Primary	.5821* (1.73)	LC	-.2995 (-0.91)	Primary	.2691 (0.47)
LMC	-.09331 (-0.63)	Middle	.06602 (0.21)	LMC	-.1148 (-0.58)	Middle	.2741 (0.71)	LMC	.0790 (0.22)	Middle	1.0444*** (2.47)	LMC	-.6020* (-2.10)	Middle	-.4079 (-0.83)
MC	-	Higher Seconda ry	-	MC	-	High Seconda ry	-	MC	-	High Seconda ry	-	MC	-	High Seconda ry	-
UM	-.7426** (-4.76)	Graduate	-.4202** (-2.46)	UM	.1081 (0.69)	Graduate	-.1015 (-0.34)	UM	.4639 (1.36)	Graduate	.6706 (1.54)	UM	-.4331* (-2.17)	Graduate	-.6488 (-1.45)
UC	-.6732** (-2.94)	Post Graduate	.8041** (-3.98)	UC	-.6119*** (-3.55)	Post Graduate	.6911** (-2.31)	UC	.2471 (0.77)	Post Graduate	.1233 (0.43)				
No of Obs: 306															
Source: Own calculations.															
***, ** & * signify significance levels at 1%, 5% & 10%.															

Table 4.3. Participation Public Life

The present study investigates various political actions to assess whether women are interested in politics or not. The participation of women in political actions is determined by their social economic status. Respondents were asked a series of questions on their participation in the national and local political process whether they cast vote whenever elections takes place, and participate in protests in terms of strikes and boycotts. On all scores participation of women with higher socio-economic status is highly significant relative to the middle class.

Women's interest in politics is largely influenced by their cultural setting and social economic status in which they were raised. The findings are in line with the underlying assumption that women with higher family income and education levels place greater importance in politics. In Equation (1a), coefficient for upper classes is highly significant which confirms, that women with higher socio-economic status shows greater interest in politics relative to the middle class. Whereas, the findings for lower classes suggest that women do not consider politics an important aspect in their lives, but inconclusive.

In equation (1b), the education levels shows a similar trend as the household income. Women with less education levels do not bother about politics relative to the higher secondary, but the results are inconclusive. Similarly, women with higher education levels places more value and importance to politics.

It is noteworthy that higher human development is a necessary but not sufficient factor contributing to women's political empowerment. Together, customary practice, socioeconomic conditions, political systems, and political culture create different gender roles and expectations that both facilitate and inhibit women's political participation and leadership (True, *et al.*, 2014). Hence, the present findings are in line with the theory suggesting that women socioeconomic status plays a significant role in determining their interest in politics. A body of literature suggests that women who work outside home have greater autonomy, hold distinct ideas relative to their husbands, and informed about public processes - show greater interest in political activities (Chhibber, 2002).

Table 4.3. shows that participation of women in political process through voting in national elections is highly linked with their socioeconomic background, particularly income class and education levels. The findings revealed surprising results in equation (2a), indicating that woman from lower classes sometimes vote in national elections relative to the middle class. The negative sign at coefficient shows that women do vote in national elections but it is not significant. On the other hand, the results are highly significant for upper classes indicating that women belonging to upper class vote more often in national elections than middle class. The interesting point shows in equation (2b) indicates that the level of education significantly influences the behavior of women towards voting in national elections. The positive signs at coefficient suggests that women with primary and middle level education do not vote in national elections and it is highly significant.

Women holding postgraduate degree always participate in national elections, which is highly significant as evident from the table. Whereas, women having graduate degree also take part in vote as oppose to higher secondary but it is inconclusive. Iversen and Rosenbluth (2007) argued that women who work outside the home are more likely to develop policy interests that are distinct from their husbands' as they face new challenges trying to balance family and career. The findings of present study supports the theory stating that working-women with higher education levels become more informed about political processes, develop their interests and are more capable of acting on them.

Respondents were also asked if they vote whenever local bodies' election take place in their vicinity. The survey revealed surprising results, which indicates that the level of participation of women decrease in local bodies' election irrespective of their socio-economic status.

Equation (3a) reports that women with from lower classes do not consider it important to vote in local elections relative to the middle class but it is inconclusive. Similar trends are found in upper classes, where women do not bother to vote in local election either that is also insignificant. While in equation (3b), of table 4.3 reports that lower education levels of women is significant in their lower participation in local bodies' election. As evident from the findings that women with primary and middle level of education do not vote in local elections relative to higher secondary levels. Similarly, the women with graduate and postgraduate degree show no interest in local bodies' elections. Since women in Pakistan struggles with decision making despite being part of the labor force and express less faith in the political processes. The reason possibly implies that women are accepting their positions as it is and do not question the facets of their lives in relation to men.

Joining in strikes is taken as the dependent variable to investigate whether women irrespective of their social class and education levels participate in strikes held, including peaceful demonstration, demand for equal wages, closed down of offices, hence it gives voice to their fundamental rights. In equation (4a), the findings indicate highly significant results that women from lower classes might join in strikes in catastrophe relative to the middle class. Whereas, women belongs to upper classes have already and will participate in strikes that is highly significant at 1% level. The trend in equation (4b), suggest that level of education also determines the women's interest and exposure towards their political and legal rights. Other political scientists such a Ross (2008) put the emphasis on female collective action that working-women are more likely to form organizations, to advance their common interests. However, the present findings demarcate that women with primary level education think neither entering into political life would be advantageous for them nor they have the required skills. On the other hand, women with middle level of education would participate in strikes but results are inconclusive. Similarly, graduate women have frequently taken part in strikes but it is also not significant as evident from the table.

Overall, the findings of present study indicates distinct pattern among household income and education levels. The higher education of women augment the exposure and ability to understand and participate in political actions. The possible reasoning of this outcome implies that the process of socialization and cultural norms also plays pivotal role in determining women's participation in public sphere other than income levels.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

At the onset, we ask the question to what extent socio-economic status of working-women determines the societal values. To this extent, a primary survey comprised of three hundred and six working-women in urban areas of Lahore has been administered. A Multinomial Logit model is employed owing to the categorical nature of the dependent variable to carry out the empirical analysis.

Overall, the results confirm that change in household income and education of women is a strong determinant of societal values on the premise that the increase in household income and education of working-women leads towards increase in their decision-making and bargaining power not only at household but also at the societal level. Particularly, their interest and participation in political activities significantly enhance through increase in their socio-economic profile. An important finding relates to the fact that more modern social values prevail in women belonging to the higher income groups relative to the lower middle-income groups, This phenomenon is more pronounced in women particularly having higher education levels. Overall, we can relate the findings to the socialization hypothesis, which advocates that fundamental change in social values, are more likely to take place for the income class who has experienced higher and sustained standard of living. It is not surprising that the results confirm that women from lower income groups give preference to the current times to fulfill their current consumption needs which undermines their values related to gender equality as well. This results in discrimination in allocation of resources at household level.

Furthermore, in Pakistan, women have made extensive effort to attain their fundamental rights and space in the public sphere. Despite all the efforts, their sense of security is mainly influenced by their social and cultural setting, therefore, significant shift from traditional to modern values has only been observed in women belonging to higher social strata. However, a key finding

related to the fact that the process of modernization as proxied by increase in women socio-economic status has led to a drift from collectivistic to individualistic society considering the values of religion, and family.

Moreover, women's participation in labor force unlocks the growth potential in economies. Similarly, education has a significant role in changing the deeply rooted societal attitudes, which also require transformation in gender relations, decision-making power and community participation. Based on our findings, women with lower income and education have not completely unbound themselves from traditional values and therefore, do not take part in social and public life. The policy makers should concentrate on increasing and improving female's education and skills. Women's education is not only important to start the virtuous cycle of higher human capital, lower fertility, better care of children, but also is an investment to push forward the boundaries of the country's development. In addition, there is a need to create a gender-friendly campaigns through media based on dialogue and debate to break the stereotypical perceptions and images of women.

We strongly recommend that further research be carried out, with larger sample of women both working and non-working. In addition, men constituting more than half of the population, their participation in social and economic activities also has a bearing on social values. The perspectives of both the genders can be insightful and may highlight gender differences in transforming social values. Nonetheless, this study is an important initial step in understanding the complex relationship between socio-economic position of women and its effect on societal values. We hope that it will spur the debate further and generate more extensive body of knowledge, which will add to this fascinating and important line of inquiry.

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