

ABSTRACT

The rapidly changing scenario of world's socio- economics has aggravated the gender related issues, primarily, in developing and under developed countries. In recent years attention is given to the changing roles of women in society. Variety of cultures, traditions, strong religious bounds and vast income and educational disparity in Pakistan makes women empowerment a complex phenomenon to address. The investigation becomes more crucial for the rural women as more than half of the population of Pakistan is living in rural areas under stereotyped ideologies.

Data collection, by interviewing 160 females in Gangapur village - district Faisalabad, brings to light the importance of strengthening status of rural women and reveals that Socio-Economic Status(SES) positively correlates to women's Mental Health and Empowerment. Women belong to low socio-economic status have low household income, education , poor mental health and are underpowered, whereas women belong to high socio-economic status are educated and working to contribute actively in household income to raise their overall standard of living. Women who are victim of polygamous marriages, domestic violence and Watta Sal/a (bride exchange) are found to have poor mental health and underpowered. Similarly, sterile women are also depressed and underpowered. In addition, joint family structure causes depression and lack of empowerment in most of women. Methods employed for the findings includes one way ANOVA and ordinary least square regression analysis (OLS)

In the end, this research calls for developmental projects to fortify women's socio economic status by considering their participation and contribution as an integral part for the progress of society and economy of the country. The research concludes that women education is the most powerful tool to change the fate of rural women and is the only hope to boost up women's socio-economic status. It is a medium for the provision of good mental health and empowerments.