Empowering Women: NGOs Project

Impacts in Baluchistan-Pakistan

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DEDICATION

To my mother, whose strength and love have been an inspiration for me. Her belief in me has been the only constant source that has enabled me to come to Australia to do a PhD.
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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICATION

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

(Signature)
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADBP: Asian Development Bank of Pakistan
AF: Aurat Foundation
AusAid: Australian Aid
AKU: Agha Khan University
APWA: All Pakistan Women’s Association
BRSP: Baluchistan Rural Support Program
CIDA: Canadian International Development Association
EU: European Commission
FATA: Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FSA: Female Sales Agent
GAD: Gender and development
GDP: Gross domestic product
IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature
IMR: Infant mortality rate
INGO: International Non-Governmental Organization
LRP: Local Resource Persons
LHW: Lady Health Workers
LGEMW: Livelihood Grants for Empowering Marginalized Women
LEP: Livelihood Enhancement and Protection
MDG: Millennium Development Goals
MMR: Maternal Mortality Rate
NCHD: National Commission for Human Development
NIPS: National Institute of Population Studies
OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PPAF: Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund
PDHS: Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey
PMRC: Pakistan Medical Research Council
SG: Shirkat Gah
SPO: Strengthening Participatory Organization
UN Women: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNIFEM: Development Fund for Women
UNESCO: The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP: United Nations Development Program
UNIDO: United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNHCR: UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOPS: United Nations Office for Project Services
UNFPA: United Nations Fund for Population Activities
USAID: United States Agency for International Development
WAF: Women’s Action Forum
WESS: Water, Environment and Sanitation Society
WEEB Women’s Economic Empowerment Baluchistan
WE: Women Embellisher
WHO: World Health Organization
WID: Women in Development
ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to analyze the impact of a select sample of women’s economic empowerment projects, conducted by NGOs, on women’s status in the province of Baluchistan, Pakistan. For this purpose three NGOs were selected, Water Environment and Sanitation Society (WESS), Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) and Baluchistan Rural Support Program (BRSP). Data were collected from those areas of Baluchistan where these NGOs were implementing their economic empowerment projects. The study utilized a mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach and included in-depth and survey interviews. In the first phase 6 in-depth interviews were conducted with managers from three NGOs. In the second phase, the survey interviewed was carried out with 60 women participants of three projects, while follow-up in-depth interviews were conducted with 6 women participants selected from those already surveyed. Thematic analysis was used in application to both the quantitative and the qualitative research data.

A consideration of theories of patriarchy informs this thesis, but in the case of Baluchistan, patriarchal control over women is exacerbated, in the context of political instability and the degradation of infrastructure to pattern women’s empowerment (and disempowerment). Therefore, the theory of intersectionality is used, to aid in understanding the effect of those intersecting factors on women’s status. The argument advanced is that these projects have certainly been effective in bringing little differences to women’s lives. The strategies employed by NGOs were effective in so far as they enabled women’s participation. Women achieved the status of earning-member at home and were involved in the decision making of matters pertaining to home and children. They also attained the self-confidence, enhanced their social networking and obtained a sense of ownership towards the resources they received from the projects. It must be noted, however, that even after participating in the projects, women were confined by patriarchal restrictions as most of them were restricted to their homes.

The sense of empowerment achieved by women depended not only on the NGOs efforts, but was also the result of women’s own understanding of their situation and self-determination. This can be done when women acknowledge their weaknesses in
the prevailing social structure, and know how to use their strengths and available opportunities to make their own way towards empowerment.
Source: Google map:
Accessed 2015
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Translation: ‘The picture that this world presents from women gets its tints and scents. She is the lyre that can impart pathos and warmth to the human heart’

The above is a very popular lyric by Pakistan’s national poet, the ‘Poet of the East’, Allama Iqbal. His poetic expression has been interpreted in various ways by different scholars. The most popular interpretation for this is that woman is the source of all beauty and colour in life. However, I argue that she cannot spread her colours, her strength, intelligence and bravery, when she is shackled by the invisible chains of role restrictions. To fill the world with true colour she needs a space where she can breathe and show her strengths, where her kinfolk strengthen her power to flourish and develop, where she is treated as a complete individual having equal rights and so she can fill the universe with her beautiful colours.

Women are approximately half of the world’s population and their integration in development processes is inevitable for a country’s progress, because ‘real development lies in empowering the women’ (Dheepa and Barani 2010).

‘Empowering women’ is a popular subject of study in underdeveloped countries where women’s status is low, mainly due to gender discrimination, the persistence of patriarchal structures, and women’s limited access to resources, (Jejeebhoy and Sathar 2001; Bano 2009; Dufloo 2012; Ngo and Zaki Wahhaj 2012). Indeed, developed countries donate large sums of money to support women’s empowerment.

projects in such places (Siddique and Ahmed 2012; Kaiser, Doullah and Noor 2014). For example, Bano (2009) contends that most of the international development organizations are giving prime consideration to women’s empowerment programs. Among these programs, economic empowerment is at the top of the list. As Stein (1997 p. 27) identified, ‘Economic projects identify women as a vulnerable group locked out of the economy and therefore efforts are concentrated on enabling women to become income generators’. The present research provides a comprehensive analysis of the impact of three economic empowerment projects undertaken by NGOs for women in Baluchistan.

Extensive research has been done to evaluate the impact of patriarchal practices on women across the world; however, not much consideration has been given to its intersections with other factors, such as internal political instability and poor infrastructure, including a lack of reliable transport, poor roads, lack of health care, of education and vocational training institutes: together, these constitute impediments to women’s empowerment (Buvinic, Gwin and Bates 1996). My research identifies how these factors intersect with patriarchal practices to define patterns that dominate the lives of women in Baluchistan. This study analyse the voices of women who have participated in NGO projects while living in greatly restricted circumstances. My research potentially provides an understanding of the reality of the women’s circumstances, and the process of each NGO project that facilitates women to experience the power necessary to make choices for their own lives in Baluchistan.

To this end I conducted six in-depth interviews with the managers of three NGOs, a detailed survey of 60 women, and six in-depth interviews with selected female participants of these projects. The rationale was to bring the voice of these women to the surface, so that we can understand their experience in their own words and on their own terms. For this I examine firstly the strategies of the NGO projects, which treat classic patriarchal practices with sensitivity, so as not to inflame the situation for participant women. I then analyse the circumstances of women and the claims they made, and I observed, regarding the impact of the projects on their lives.

Pakistan women’s lives are constrained within a social context of extreme gender disparity (Moghadam 1992; Jejeebhoy and Sathar 2001; Raza and Murad 2010; Butt and Shahid 2012; Chauhan 2014). According to the Gender Gap report of 2014, Pakistan occupied the second last ranking 141 out ranking only Yemen in the extent
of gender disparity in the state (World Economic Forum 2014, p.9). Similarly, Pakistan ranked 126 out of 149 countries in the 2013 gender inequality index, which reported female participation in the labour market as just 24.4%, (Khalil et al. 2014) compared to 82.9% for men, and in secondary education as 19.3% compared to 46.1% for men (UNDP 2015).

Baluchistan is the least developed and most backward province in Pakistan (Javaid 2010, PDMA 2012; Naeem et.al 2015). Statistics reveal that poverty in Baluchistan is higher than in Pakistan in general: more than half (58%) of the population lives below the poverty line. Furthermore it has the lowest literacy rate, 29.81 percent compared to a national average of 39.69 percent. Male literacy is 18.3 percent while fewer than 1 in 10 women in rural areas are literate (Sial and Basit 2010, p. 8). Baluchistan’s depressed economy, dispersed population, underdeveloped infrastructure, current political instability and weak state institutions, have earned it a reputation as a backward region ‘with a life burdened by the toils of the field and rangeland and tribal disputes’ (World Bank 2008, p. 1). These factors make for a low standard of living for most of its inhabitants, while their effect is most directly felt by women.

Women are not homogenous in socio-economic terms: a rigid social class system also exists, wherein upper class women or those from the middle class in urban areas have comparatively good access to higher education and professional jobs (Awan 2012). However, most of the women in Baluchistan live in rural areas where, due to the control of strict tribal patriarchal norms, their access to health care, education, income-generating opportunities is severely limited. In addition, they experience restrictions on their mobility which consequently results in low socio-economic status overall (Amin 2010; Butt and Shahid 2012: UNDP 2014). This control on women’s lives is further exacerbated by the current situation of political instability and weak infrastructure. This situation gives a clear scope for NGOs to intervene in the multi-dimensional social processes to facilitate women to gain control over their own lives.

NGOs are well known for their work on welfare issues, and particularly the part they have played in empowering women by providing special opportunities in employment, training, and so on, for women disadvantaged by strict patriarchal practices. NGOs are seen as catalysts for change in mind and attitudes, and also as
being more efficient in providing goods and services (Awan 2012). Further, they are seen as improving the quality of the lives of their beneficiaries (Hulme and Edwards 1996; Taimur and Hamid 2013). Scholars such as, Rowland (1995), Oxal and Baden (1997), Townsend et al. (1999), Mosedale (2005), Nikkah and Redzuan (2010), Kilby (2010), Velurugan, Veerappan and Kalaiselvan (2013), Kaiser, Doullah and Noor (2014) and Ahamad, Hmlata and Narayana (2015) highlight the importance of NGOs as agencies for women’s empowerment. Moreover, where state institutes or civil society organizations are weak, as is the case for Pakistan, the presence of such organizations are indispensable in highlighting the issues of women rights (Weiss 2003; Jafar 2007).

Many studies have discussed the role of NGOs in women’s empowerment, and women’s willingness to change their marginalized condition particularly in underdeveloped parts of the world (Fonjong 2001; Dheepa and Baran 2010; Srivastava and Austin 2012; Kala and Margaret 2013; Wadekar 2014). Across Pakistan, NGOs have devised many projects to address gender inequality issues, such as women’s reproductive health, adult literacy, girls’ education and income-generating activities.

Among them, income-generating projects gain special attention, given that most of the women’s population in Pakistan is poor and underprivileged. These economic empowerment projects are undertaken with the dual objective of promoting the economic betterment and social empowerment of poor women (Buvinic, Gwin, and Bates, 1996; Subramaniam, 2006). Scholars have concluded that the involvement of women in household expenditures improves their socio-economic status within the family (Mayoux 1998; Osmani 1998; Hunt and Kasynathan 2001; Vijayanthi 2002; Isran and Isran 2012; Velurugan, Veerappan and Kalaiselvan 2013). For example, as I find in my study, when women started earning they are more likely to spend it on their families and children well-being. This eventually supports their male counterparts in management of family expenditures. As a result, men acknowledge women’s contribution, which raises women’s status at home, both economically and socially. Therefore, NGOs focus on women’s participation in income-generating activities.
1.1. Statement of the problem

The idea of NGO empowerment projects for disadvantaged women suffering with poverty and social restrictions began with the concept of micro-credit projects. The available academic literature deals with studies researching the effectiveness of NGO micro-credit projects. However, the evidence regarding their success in empowering women is mixed. Scholars such as Adegoroye and Adegoroye (2008), Parveen and Chaudhury (2009), Prabhat, Latha and Rao (2010), Khan and Bibi (2011), Jan and Hayat (2011), Idrees, Ilyas and Cheema (2012) Shah et al (2015) have all contributed to debates on the effectiveness of micro-credit projects. These studies, in turn, have been critiqued by (for example, Goetz and Gupta 1996; Montgomery 1996; Rogaly 1996; Rahman 1999; Khondkar 2002; Onyuma and Shem 2005; Al-Amin and Chowdhury 2008; Balasubramanian 2013) all of these researchers have pointed out the weaknesses of these projects and evaluated them as not necessarily being effective in empowering the women targeted. They view them as maintain dependency among women because women feel compelled to hand over the loan amount to their husbands. They consider that the projects pressurize women clients for timely payment, which increases tension among household members and maximizes workload in terms of household and credit activities.

This debate opens the way for new procedures that could be employed to give more power to women by taking better account of their social location and providing resources rather than by loan. I have found that the existing research does provide some evidences of the effectiveness of microcredit projects (Khan and Bibi 2011; Naeem et al 2014) as well as providing free of cost resources projects in Baluchistan, such as (Gulistan 2014). However, I feel that there remains a need to conduct a comprehensive study exploring the strategies used by NGOs working with women in the strictly patriarchal, tribal, insecure and backward provinces of Pakistan, such as Baluchistan, to see how different strategies employed over time by NGOs contribute differently to the empowerment of women in Baluchistan. I focus in particular, on how the free provision of resources such as livestock, poultry farming, home based shop management, embroidery and stitching can initiate the change in their lives. To address, my research will analyse how such NGO projects affect women’s status at home and their experience after they have participated in these projects. I have framed this study by looking closely at the strategies of each NGO working for
women’s empowerment in a strongly male-dominant society, with a local patriarchal culture.

I have chosen to focus on the family as a place to investigate changes in women’s socio-economic status, because the family is a central institution within classic patriarchal Baluchistan society, and is significantly more important in women’s lives than in the lives of men (Hall 1992; Hakim and Aziz 1998; Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016). Therefore, the family is the most important place for women to acquire high status. For this reason, the NGOs in this study devised careful strategies to involve women in their projects, which aim to bring empowerment to women’s lives without upsetting patriarchal practices in Baluchistan. For example, my research investigates the extent to which those strategies, particularly social mobilization were successful in lessening the initial objections to the projects raised by the community. I further explore how all the NGOs’ strategies altered women’s status at home, and how increasing women’s earning capacity shifted their role in decision making at home, particularly in regard to their children, their ability to move freely, and their own self-worth. In addition, I explore how this brought positive changes in men’s attitudes towards women’s work, where they became supportive of the women.

1.2. Significance of and rationale for the study

The intention of this research is to examine the extent to which women have gained status within the family unit as an outcome of their participation in the NGO projects. To achieve this I present an in-depth analysis of 3 NGO projects. These projects provided skills training, along with resources such as livestock and poultry, home based shop items, skill development centers for embroidery and stitching, and strategies and support to build market linkages for the women.

Although NGOs produce comprehensive annual reports for each of their projects, these are written primarily for the funding bodies, to ensure transparency and accountability, and to report on and discuss the outcomes in relation to their project objectives. This process does not provide detailed analysis of the impacts of the projects on their beneficiaries’ lives from the perspective of those involved in them. There is not sufficient detail to understand how and why people participate in NGO projects and the qualitative changes they experience. I provide in this thesis a detailed account from the perspective of the managers and, most importantly, the women beneficiaries. I investigate the initiation, management and implementation of
the projects: that is, the process of identifying prospective female beneficiaries, then the recruitment and participation of the women in the projects. This enables a detailed understanding of the complexities and struggles involved in the development and procedures of the NGO projects, and the impact of their efforts on the women of Baluchistan.

There are three main themes in the study of NGOs intervention for women’s empowerment. Some studies discuss women’s personal opinions about the projects (Basu and Basu 2001; Khan and Bibi 2011; Sivachithappa 2013; Islam 2014). Other focus only on the NGO’s perspectives about their projects’ impacts on women (Farman 2004; Islam and Sultana 2005) while yet others (Kilby 2012; Paterson 2008) bring together the perspectives of both stakeholders. My research provides an additional benefit of analyzing the perceptions and experiences of NGOs managers as well as the women beneficiaries regarding their projects’ efficacy in the specific context of Baluchistan.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The main objective of this research was to determine the impacts of these projects on women’s status in Baluchistan. The following objectives have directed the study:

1. To study three women’s empowerment projects undertaken by NGOs
2. To analyse the impact of empowerment projects on women’s status.
3. To suggest ways of improving future women’s empowerment projects by NGOs in Baluchistan.

Keeping these objectives in view, this thesis answers the following research questions (section 1.4).

1.4. Research questions

Q 1. Under different economic empowerment projects, what services or resources do NGOs provide to the women of Baluchistan?
Q 2. What are the challenges NGOs face in implementing projects?
Q 3. What strategies do NGOs adopt to overcome these challenges?
Q 4. What are the difficulties women faces while participating in these projects?
Q 5. What strategies do women utilize to overcome these problems?
Q 6. What are the impacts of NGOs’ economic empowerment projects on women’s status?

Q 7. How can future NGO projects be modified to be more effective?

These were the research questions of my study; the questions for the structured and the in-depth interviews were devised around them. These research questions have framed my argument throughout the thesis, and became the basis of my theoretical and methodological positioning in this study.

In answering these questions, mixed method research was carried out on economic empowerment projects of three NGOs in three Districts of Baluchistan. In the first phase, in-depth interviews were conducted in NGO’s offices in Quetta city, with six NGO managers responsible for the implementation of these projects. In the second phase, a survey was conducted with 60 women participants in these projects. Women were interviewed in their homes situated at target areas of Quetta, Pishin and Nasirabad. In the last phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with six participants in their homes.

My research explores women’s position in the social structure of Baluchistan, within a theoretical framework that draws on theories of patriarchy. The theory of intersectionality is also used, to analyse the effect of patriarchal norms on women's empowerment when they intersect with a situation of political instability and poor infrastructure. Using this approach helps us to better understand how these intersecting factors contribute to the marginalization of women in Baluchistan, and the significance of such projects in the society of Baluchistan.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 Chapter 2 offers detailed background information on Baluchistan; it covers women’s health, literacy, financial and social situations in the region. It provides an account of women within the social structure of Baluchistan, a structure which creates hurdles to their empowerment. To understand the position of women in Baluchistan it is imperative to acknowledge the norms of the tribal patriarchal structure, coupled with the current insurgency and the weak infrastructure of the region.
**Chapter 3** discusses the theoretical framework adopted for this study. It engages with the theories of classic patriarchy and of intersectionality, so as to understand the status of women in Baluchistan. I focus here on the political instability and weak infrastructure, which confine women in undesirable circumstances of illiteracy and poverty.

**Chapter 4** provides the discussion on power, empowerment and women’s empowerment. I built this chapter on a definition of empowerment that captures the sort of empowerment women are achieving in Baluchistan as a result of their participation in NGOs projects. I then proceed to talk about dimensions of empowerment and deals with the significance of socio-economic empowerment for women. I also provide comprehensive debate on the factors that affect women’s empowerment. Chapter ends with the discussion of WID and GAD approaches.

**Chapter 5** provides details of NGOs, including their history in Pakistan. It discusses the challenges NGOs facing in Baluchistan-Pakistan. Furthermore it also covers the role that NGOs play in promoting women’s empowerment in Baluchistan-Pakistan.

**Chapter 6** explains the empirical methods employed to conduct this study and elaborates on the process of data collection, from selection of participants to data analysis. A review of the relevant literature is also provided, to support the methodology of this research. The data analysis is divided into two chapters: chapters 7 and 8.

**Chapter 7** provides demographic information about the participants of this study (managers and women). It gives comprehensive details of three empowerment projects, including the activities carried out in the projects, and the strategies adopted by managers to implement the projects. In addition, it examines the experiences of female participants in these projects, and the benefits they received. It further studies the difficulties faced by managers during project implementation and by women during their participation in the projects.

**Chapter 8** is devoted to analyse the strategies utilized by NGO managers and women participants to overcome their difficulties. It thoroughly examines the managers’ and women’s views regarding the impact of these projects on the lives of
women’s’ participants. In addition, the suggestions made by managers and women to improve future economic empowerment projects, are also discussed.

**Chapter 9** Finally, this chapter provides the concluding discussion on the themes arising from the data analyses.

This chapter has introduced the study, the research objectives and the research questions. It has also identified the ways in which this thesis contributes in the present knowledge, about how NGO projects impact on women. The next chapter offers detailed background information on Baluchistan-Pakistan, explaining its socio-economic framework and cultural beliefs in reference to the position of women.
Figure 2: Map of Pakistan
Source: Google Map: Accessed 2015
CHAPTER 2: WOMEN IN BALUCHISTAN - PAKISTAN

Introduction

This chapter outlines the social economic context of Pakistan, and the position of Baluchistan within it. It begins with a brief history of Pakistan, proceeding to its general demography and ethnic differences in Baluchistan. I contextualize my study by reviewing women’s health, education, economic status and mobility, by which I mean a woman’s capacity to move freely outside her home, in Pakistan’s society and specifically in Baluchistan. I also position patriarchy as constituting both the social structure and the social values of Pakistani society that define the status of women via these social values. I also provided a brief picture on women’s status in culture of Baluchistan-Pakistan. Then, the discussion proceeds to the current situation of political instability and the weak infrastructure which has a significant effect on women’s lives in Baluchistan.

2.1 History of Pakistan

Pakistan came into being in 1947 after the division of the Indian subcontinent. Pak means ‘pure’ in Urdu, and the meaning of Pakistan is ‘The Land of the Pure’ (Lieven 2011, p. 1). The Muslims of the subcontinent struggled to obtain a separate land from Hindu-dominated India, where they could live their lives under Islamic law. This ideology was the basis of Pakistan’s foundation: hence the state’s name, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Pakistan is situated in the North Western part of the South Asian subcontinent and comprises a total land area of 796,096 square kilometers. It is bordered by India, Iran, Afghanistan and China, and its coastline is the Arabian Sea (Sheehan 1994). It is composed of four provinces: Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, along with the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA) and the Gilgit Baltistan region. Punjabi, Siraiki, Sindhi, Pashto, Brahvi, Balochi, Persian and Urdu are commonly spoken languages in different areas of Pakistan. However, Urdu
is declared as the national language, while English is used for official purposes (Qureshi 2003). Pakistan has a federal form of government, with a bicameral parliament in which the National Assembly is the Lower House and the Senate is the Upper House. The 1973 Constitution provided all rights of sex, race, class and religion to Pakistani citizens, without discrimination. Due to its unstable political history, regularly interrupted by military coups, Pakistan remains poor and underdeveloped. After 9/11 and the forging of a strong alliance with America in the War Against Terror, Pakistan came to the forefront of global politics, but also became one of the insecure regions of South East Asia. Taliban incursions, party political conflict and external or internal insurgencies have added to a dire security situation for its inhabitants, as well as damaging the country’s image internationally. The overall condition of Pakistan is reflected in its provinces, including Baluchistan. The prevailing political uncertainty, which can be seen in all of its institutions, causes hardships for its people.

2.1.1 Demography of Pakistan and Baluchistan

Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world, having an estimated population of 184.35 million in 2012-2013 (Khan 2010; Lieven 2011; Mazhar 2013). Punjab is the largest province, having 56% of the country’s population; Sindh has 23%, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa comprises 17%, while Baluchistan has only 5% of the country’s population. Federally administered tribal areas (FATA) encompass 0.5% of the population, and Gilgit Baltistan comprises 883,799 residents (National Institute of Population Studies [NIPS] 2013, p. 2). Pakistan is an agricultural country, where the majority of the population, 63.7%, resides in rural areas, with only 36.3% in urban areas (Khan 2010). Baluchistan has a low population density but comprises a large area, 44% of the country’s total area of 134,050 square meters (Government of Baluchistan, National Commission for Human Development [NCHD] and United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund [UNICEF] 2011). Internationally, it shares borders with Afghanistan and Iran (see Figure 2; Faqeer 2002; Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund [PPAF] 2013). Its geographical location increases its importance in the South Asian region, because it provides the easiest way to trade with Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf countries (Bakht 2008; World Bank 2008; Javaid 2010; Majeed 2015; Hashmi 2015).
Most of the area 80% of Baluchistan is mountainous, while the remaining 20% consists of flood plains and coastal plains (Pakistan Development and Management Authority [PDMA] 2012). The climate is dry in winter and summer, with the average annual rainfall as little as 50 millimeters. Earthquakes, drought and floods have always been major natural disaster factors in the province (Majeed 2015; Government of Baluchistan and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [UN Women] p. 2). The severe climatic conditions, the scarcity of water and the mountainous terrain, are the reasons for its low population density (Sheehan 1994, p. 7). Baluchistan’s population is about 8 million people (PDMA 2012) comprised of different ethnic groups.

2.1.2 Ethnic differences

The population in Baluchistan is ethnically and linguistically diverse (Haq ed. 2009; Government of Baluchistan and UN Women 2013, p. 2). The Baloch form the largest ethnic group, followed by the Pathan and Brahui while Persians, Sindhis, Siraiiks and Punjabis are smaller in number, thus Baloch and Pathans are the major dominant ethnic groups in Baluchistan (PDMA 2012). The social structure is tribal and patriarchal in nature (Government of Baluchistan and UN Women 2013).

The majority of the Baloch are located in west, east, south and south eastern area of Baluchistan, while most Pashtuns dwell in the northern part of the province including Quetta, Zhob, Pishin and Loralai district (Hashmi 2015). Majority of Brahuis are residing in Kalat, Jhalawan, Sarawan and Bolan districts. The roots of the tribal system are embedded in the Sardar and Khan System. The Sardar System prevails among Baloch and Brahu whereas the Khan System is characteristic of Pashtun tribes (Kundi, 2003, p.89). Sardars and Khan are heads or chiefs of tribes who deal with all tribal affairs according to the prescribed tribal codes. Furthermore the tribes in Baluchistan have their own code of ethics which every individual should follow, or be subject to sanctions (Sohadravi 2011, p. 457).

Baloch and Brahuis are different language groups but share a political ideology. Pashtun, on the other hand have their separate and strong cultural identities with their own political history which is quite different and in contrast with the Baloch. Politically they take opposite positions; some Baloch tribes in Baluchistan did not want to join Pakistan while Pashtun were largely in favour of Pakistan (Siddiqi 2012,
Furthermore, Pathans are economically better off than Baloch due to their involvement in trade and business of the province.

The cultural differences between Pathan and Baloch extend from language to dress and from customs of birth to those of death. However, both ethnic groups do share some common traits, such as living in a tribal system under a chief who is responsible for all affairs of his tribe. The patriarchal system prevails in both ethnic groups: women are essentially considered as the repository of man’s honour and therefore their lives are governed by the man’s authority. They do not possess property nor do they receive inheritance from their family property (Sohadravi 2011; Bukhari 2012).

The lives of Pathan and Baloch are predominantly governed by the religion and their own particular customs; however in most they prefer their local customs (Yamin 2011). All decisions related to marriage are carried out by the head of the families. In rich families marriages are performed in early age while poor families delay the marriage until a man can assemble a fixed amount of walwar (negotiated amount paid by the groom or grooms parents to the bride parents on occasion of marriage). In case of Baloch the amount paid by groom to bride’s family is called as Lub. The trend of Polygamy is observed to be higher among Pathan and particularly among those who are rich and can pay more walwar (Sohadravi 2011; Bukhari 2012).

Combines with ethnic differences, Baluchistan is the most underdeveloped and backward province of Pakistan, in terms of its social and economical position (World Bank 2008; Javeid 2010; PDMA 2012; Majeed 2015). The following section outlines the health education and economic status of women in Baluchistan and argues that their low status is mainly due to the influence of patriarchy; however, other issues such as instability and infrastructure deficiencies have also contributed to the problem.

2.1.3. Women’s health status

Health is central to women’s lives, not least because of their reproductive function. ‘Improve maternal health’ is the fifth goal in the Millennium Development Goals, and women’s empowerment and health are closely connected, because empowerment means to have control over one’s own life decisions, and access to, as
well as utilization of, available resources. Empowered women are assumed to have control over their health concerns and better access to health services. Here I provide details about the current situation of women’s health in Pakistan-Baluchistan and identify causes that affect their well-being. These include a lack of skilled midwives, a lack of proper knowledge about motherhood, poor economic conditions, lack of mobility, and an overall lack of proper medical services.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO 2012), Pakistan spent only 2.7% of GDP\(^2\) on health in 2012; less than Bangladesh 3.6% and India’s 4.1% spending on health. As reported by Pakistan Demographic Health Survey [PDHS] (2006-2007), one in every 89 Pakistani women dies due to causes related to childbirth (NIPS 2008; Save the Children 2009). The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)\(^3\) in rural areas is 319 per 100,000, while in urban areas the MMR is 175 per hundred thousand (Government of Pakistan and UNICEF 2012, p. 48). One of the major reasons for the rural MMR figure is that skilled medical staff handles few delivery cases (Rahman and Shahid 2010). During 2011, only 39% of births were attended by trained midwives, while more than half the Pakistani women gave birth at home or were attended by traditional birth attendants\(^4\) who are not medically trained (Government of Pakistan and UNICEF 2012). Since these attendants cannot handle complications during delivery, this may result in the death of either the mother or child; alternatively, the child may be born with some disability.

Women’s reproductive health is poor in Baluchistan which devotes very little public expenditure to women’s health (Akram and Khan 2007). In Baluchistan, maternal mortality is 785 per 100,000 live births, compared to the all-Pakistan rate of 276 to 280 deaths per 100,000 live births (Government of Pakistan and UNICEF 2012; Hanif and Qazi 2012). Furthermore, poverty and current insurgency in the region are also the factors due to which they are not able to receive additional quality care and medical facilities (Mahmood and Durr-e-Nayab 2000; Qureshi and Shaikh 2007; Shah 2014). Moreover, Baluchistan has fewer hospitals and medical centers, than the

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\(^2\) GDP, Gross domestic product, is the value of all final goods and services produced within a country in a specific time period or a year.

\(^3\) The number of maternal deaths in a given time period per 100,000 women of reproductive age (Ronsmans & Graham 2006).

\(^4\) The World Health Organization (WHO) 1992 defines a traditional birth attendant as one who assists the mother during childbirth and who initially acquired her skills by delivering babies herself or through an apprenticeship to other TBAs. They are older women, respected in the community for their knowledge and experience. They are often non-literate and have learned their skills through older, more experienced TBAs. They receive some remuneration for their services (Sibley et al. 2007, p. 2).
all-Pakistan average, and they do not have sufficient medical equipment and experienced medical staff (Green et al. 2000; Akbari, Rankaduwa and Kiani 2009). This situation is more critical in rural areas, where the few medical centers are often inaccessible, especially for women, since they need to seek permission from the head of their household to visit health services (Fikree et al. 2004; Qureshi and Shaikh 2007) and are not allowed to go outside unaccompanied by male adults (Mumtaz and Sarah 2005).

In strictly veiled and tribal society of Baluchistan, men do not want to take women to primary health care centers because most centers are staffed by men (Qureshi and Shaikh 2007; Government of Pakistan and UNICEF 2012; Hanif and Qazi 2012; Shah 2014). Sometimes, women themselves avoid visiting male doctors, because they are not comfortable receiving treatment from them. As a result, those in critical conditions tend to visit hospitals, most of which are in Quetta city. Travelling from rural areas to a city hospital via underdeveloped roads, using unsafe transport, takes much time and can result in death.

Moreover, less than one-third of the province’s population has access to a Lady Health Worker, because they prefer to work in hospitals of urban areas that are equipped with medical facilities (Mohammad and Farooq 2008). The situation is also deplorable in respect of the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) in Baluchistan, which is 130 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to Pakistan’s national average IMR of 70 deaths per 1,000 (Government of Baluchistan and UN Women 2013, p. 4). Various studies have shown that better education, independent mobility and paid employment have positive effects on women (Mehmood and Kiyani 1994; Fakree 2004; Khan et al. 2009; Maqsood 2009; Midhet and Becker 2010) and can contribute to lower levels of MMR and IMR. It is therefore important to consider the factors that are responsible for women’s lack of literacy.

2.1.4. Women’s illiteracy

Education plays a pivotal role in achieving a good standard of life, and ultimately leads towards better chances for a civilized life. Illiteracy causes social isolation and economic dependency, which are prime causes of disempowerment. Batliwala (1994) views illiteracy as the main hurdle for women in gaining access to health facilities, paid jobs, and awareness. The significance of education can be understood from the
fact that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) developed by the UN in 2000 and aimed at improving global standards of living, emphasize women’s education and empowerment. Among the 8 goals, the second goal is to ‘achieve universal primary education’, while the third stresses the need to ‘promote gender equality and empower women’. Most importantly, the third goal of MDG specifically talks about ending gender disparity in the field of education, and highlights the need to provide equal opportunities for females in primary and secondary education. The fact that education for women is listed as a goal indicates that it is a way for them to achieve empowerment. Not only does it provide them with better job choices, but it also broadens their perspective on life, giving them a better understanding of their capacities and the circumstances in which they live (see chapter 4). Illiterate women are left with few occupational opportunities and few chances to learn more about welfare services in the region, adding to their alienation. Because most of the women in my study were illiterate, and felt that this was the prime cause of their lack of empowerment, I now explore in greater depth the factors that contribute to ongoing female illiteracy, including the tribal patriarchal structure, the lack of girls’ schools, limited female mobility, early marriage, infrastructure and security concerns (World Bank 2008). The literacy rate in Pakistan was 54% of the total population (Government of Pakistan and UNICEF 2012, p. 35). According to 2014 World Development indicators, the literacy rates for male and female adults aged 15 years and above from 2005 till 2012, were 69% and 40% respectively (World Bank 2014). Literacy rates in Baluchistan were even lower: according to the PDMA (2012) 26.6% overall, with the percentages being 36.5% males and 15% females respectively.

The literacy situation in Baluchistan shows that ‘about two thirds of the population, 68% of 10 years and over have never been to school; 77% of the population 10 years and over have not completed primary school or higher’ (Government of Baluchistan, NCHD and UNESCO 2011, p. 24). Comparing women’s literacy situation with other provinces, the figures show that Baluchistan has the largest percentage of women, who have never attended school that is 85%, followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 72%, Gilgit Baltistan 68%, Sindh 58%, Punjab 51% and Islamabad16% (NIPS 2013, p. 38).

This is primarily due to the fact that parents prefer to educate their sons rather than their daughters, because girls are expected to get married and leave home, but the son
should remain at home to support the parents (Qureshi 2003). In this patriarchal structure, the man is the breadwinner for the family (Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013) and since education is a way of finding a better job, boys get preference. Kiriti, Tisdell and Roy (2006, p. 207) with Kabeer (2012) explain that ‘parents may prefer to educate their sons, because expected benefits are higher due to better job prospects for sons and dependency on sons in old age’. Moreover, parents consider daughters as liabilities (Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013) and fear that any investment in their daughter’s education would be beneficial for her future husband or in-laws (Dollar and Gatti 1999), who may not allow her to work (Chaudhary 2010). The investment of monetary resources in girls’ education is seen as a waste of resources (Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013), and this perception further reduces women’s participation in socio-economic activities (Naz and Chaudhry 2011).

Moreover, education for girls in a patriarchal society is assumed to be a modern thing, because ‘it is perceived as a move for modernization of women that contributes to undermine the strict control over women on which male honour depends’ (Kundi 1993, p. 31). The fact that educated women would be more likely to have a better understanding of life and be less dependent on men regarding all decisions, can be seen as challenging male autonomy (Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013). This has been supported by Qureshi (2003, p. 55), who also argued that educated girls do not take much interest in household work. Similarly, if they leave home for education, then they will not be able to help their mothers in carrying out home chores (Chaudhary 2010). As a result they will not be able to learn how to run their own household, something that is more valuable in the ‘marriage market’ than their education. Similarly, Sheehan (1994, p. 53) has pointed out ‘there is a feeling that too much education will only unsettle a girl by creating aspirations that cannot be fulfilled, as well as make her less attractive as a marriage partner’. She identified two important aspects of this problem: the first is that an educated girl is likely to ‘interfere’ in the decision making process, which is considered as deviating from cultural norms.

Second, if girls do receive a higher level of education, it would be in their teenage years, which are considered the best time for girls to marry in Pakistan. As Mahmood and Durray-e-Nayab (2000, p. 678) state, ‘with each increment in level of education, age at marriage is delayed by one year or more’. This is significant, given that Khan
and Reza (1998) have also ascertained that the late teens or early 20s are considered the best age for girls to get married; the longer they delay, the less chance they have of receiving proposals. That education may make girls unmarriageable is not the only parental worry. A girl may meet anyone, once outside the family home, and may want to marry a man of her own choice, which is not allowed. Further, if women go outside they may be harassed by strangers, which cannot be tolerated, as it leads to further clashes between people. Thus, to avoid future issues, many parents consider it preferable that women stay at home and get married off as soon as possible (Constable 2011).

The inadequate educational infrastructure is also the reason of women illiteracy in Pakistan (Kazmi 2005; Bhattacharya 2014). Even if parents do desire education for their daughters, they will likely prefer to send their daughters to girls’ school, but in Baluchistan there are few girls’ schools. Education for All Plan Baluchistan (2011-2015, p. 32) also reports that enrolment of girls in primary schools is much less than that for boys, due to girls’ lack of access to primary schools and the availability of fewer girls’ schools (Government of Baluchistan, NCHD and UNESCO 2011). The World Bank (2008, p. 161) reported that in Baluchistan in 2005/06, there was only one girls’ primary school for every 77 square kilometer, compared to one boys’ primary school for every 30 square kilometers. This situation worsens at the middle and high school levels. Girls who have completed primary school can hardly ever continue their education because of the non-availability of educational institutions in their area; in any case, these are mostly located in main cities. Their access is difficult due to restricted mobility, culture and parents’ concern about security (Qureshi 2003), so if a girl needs to attend the school, someone has to accompany her, which is a long term responsibility.

In a World Bank report of 2008 it was observed that in 2005/2006, the number of female students in government schools had dropped from 291,000 to 38,000 and then to 16,000. Net enrolment rates for girls in middle school were 4.4% and in high school only 2.3%. This was mainly due to the late enrolment of girls in primary school. Generally in Baluchistan, parents enroll their children of either sex in primary education when they are eight or ten years old, although the government states that enrolment should be at 5 years of age. The late start means that they remain in primary school till their late teens. By the time they complete their primary
education they are 12 years old or more. This means that in the case of girls, their chance of enrolment in middle school is further reduced, because they are expected to get married from the age of 14 onwards (World Bank 2008, pp. 160-162). The figures reported by the Government of Baluchistan, NCHD and UNESCO (2011, p. 25) also show that ‘only 40 percent of girls in the province are enrolled at the primary level, out of which a majority drop out before completing primary education’. Therefore the education system of Baluchistan shows low enrolment rates and high dropouts among girls (Mohammad and Farooq 2008).

Furthermore, the schools themselves hardly encourage their pupils to linger: about 93% of the schools are without electricity, 83% are without boundary walls and 74% lack water and sanitation facilities (Government of Baluchistan, NCHD and UNESCO 2011, pp. 24-25). Most of the staff appointed to rural schools are from the urban areas and, as female teachers do not feel secure and safe working and living in rural areas, they take frequent leave or try to transfer to less-rural areas (Kundi 1993; Shah 2014). Parents are also reluctant to send their daughters to school due to ongoing political unrest, and this further reduces girls’ enrolment. Shah (2014) has ascertained in one case that militants targeted and threatened a girls’ school to shut it down, as well as warning teachers to quit their profession.

The tribal patriarchal structure, lack of girls’ schools, limited female mobility, early marriages, poor infrastructure and security concerns, in Baluchistan play a central role in women’s illiteracy and their consequent lack of visibility in the economic field.

Moser (1993), Kazmi (2005) and Bhattacharya (2014) affirm that the low rate of education among women is another important reason for their poor level of economic empowerment. This leads to few employment opportunities for women, and sustains women’s economic dependency on men which ensures male domination. I now turn to a discussion of women’s economic status.

2.1.5. Women’s economic status

Pakistan’s economic growth and development depend largely on agriculture: 64% of the population live and work in rural areas (NIPS 2013, p. 2). Among the four provinces, Punjab and Sindh have the most fertile land for agriculture (Sheehan 1994, p. 33) so more people are involved in agriculture-related activities. In
Baluchistan, cultivation is only possible in limited areas, due to the mountainous nature of the region and scarcity of water\(^5\) (Government of Baluchistan and UN Women 2013, p. 3). The presence of vast rangelands or mountainous dry grass lands provides fodder for livestock, including goats, sheep, buffaloes, cattle and camels (World Bank 2008, p. 1), which provide good sources of income (Sheehan 1994; Government of Baluchistan, NCHD and UNESO 2011; PDMA 2012). However, besides agriculture and livestock, people are also involved in trade, the transport system, and day labouring. In urban areas, people are involved in private or public sector jobs. Baluchistan has few job opportunities, due to underdeveloped infrastructure, including lack of industry or factories (Government of Baluchistan and UN Women 2013). Mahmood and Farooq (2008, p. 482) count low labour efficiency, immobility, limited specialization in occupations, values and the social structure, as all contributing to less participation in economic opportunities. All of these factors become more severe in the case of women, since they are already confined by patriarchal restrictions on education, mobility and earning, and have the least access to other economic resources.

The paid labour force participation rate for females is 21.7%, while for males it is 84.9% (The News, 2011). For the most part, women’s work at home or in the agricultural field is not recognized as ‘work’; instead they are classed as ‘family workers’ (Isran and Isran 2012). However, it is important to note that the free labour provided by women in their home, as well as in supporting their male kin in carrying out their tasks, is vital to the domestic economy.

Women also make a substantial contribution to animal husbandry. According to a study conducted by Shafiq (2008) in Baluchistan-Pakistan, women perform 50% of livestock activities, while men perform 38% and children make up the reminder 12%; so all the women’s contribution is unpaid. He further ascertained that women feed the livestock, clean their surroundings, treat illnesses with traditional methods, and are also involved in milking, making butter and other products from the milk. However, they are not allowed to be involved in the direct sale or purchase of

\(^5\) Baluchistan is the most water-scarce of all provinces, with inefficient water management practices and excessive groundwater usage creates severe environmental consequences in the province (Government of Baluchistan and UNDP 2011; PPAF 2013).
livestock or their products, due to the prevailing patriarchal structure and its restrictions on women’s mobility. This fact is also reinforced by the results of this study: that women were involved in livestock rearing but did not participate in sales or purchases (see chapters 7 and 8).

Outside of domestic labour and animal husbandry, women are engaged in the production of goods for home use and for sale. These include traditional embroidering and stitching of dresses, knitting woolen scarves, making handbags, thongs, caps, wallets, sofa covers and decoration pieces. Such engagements are permissible for women because the work does not require them to be exposed to the outside world (Faqeer 2002). Some women who want to sell their embroidery work depend on the services of middlemen who provide them with work or sell their items in the market. These middlemen are likely to pay low wages for the women’s work, due to either the women’s lack of skill or knowledge, or their dependency on the middlemen (Isran and Isran 2012). As we will see, this issue was addressed by those NGOs who introduced economic empowerment projects offering training in embroidery, providing information on costing and budgeting embroidery work, and sharing market information. They provided home-bound women with a female broker whose duty was to bring embroidery orders from markets, give them to the women working at home, sell their items in the market and pay women appropriately (see chapters 7 and 8).

Sheikh (2010) claims that the low level of women’s education, their lower wages, unpaid labour work, limited working options and the existing social norms, constrain women from working outside the home. Faridi, Chaudhry and Anwar (2009) also affirmed, based on their study conducted in Bahawalpur District, Pakistan, that an increased level of education is directly proportional to increasing women’s participation in the labour force, because it raises their skills, efficiency and understanding of applying new technologies. The reasons for low participation of women in earning activities in Pakistan in general and in Baluchistan in particular are similar, but are aggravated in Baluchistan, due to women’s low literacy, their confined mobility, the province’s underdeveloped infrastructure and the comparatively more fragile social and political structure. For example, Baluchistan has only one vocational institute for women, while Punjab has 111 (DAWN 2008). Furthermore, the lack of skills, the lack of access to resources and, above all, the
tribal patriarchal structure, also hamper women’s involvement in income-generating activities (Isran and Isran 2012). The participant women in this study also stated that due to the restrictions on their movement, they were hardly in a position to venture out for jobs, even if jobs were available (see chapters 7 and 8).

Socio-cultural norms exercise significant control over women’s economic activities. Scholars such as Jejeebhoy and Sathar (2001) draw attention to the fact that men do not accept women working outside the home for wages, even if the family is in dire need. Sheikh (2010, p. 29) argues that there is a ‘widespread perception that a woman’s place is in the home’, which puts restrictions on girls working for wages. This phenomenon is associated with the sexual division of labour in which men are the sole breadwinners of the family, while females are responsible for home chores (Weiss 2010; Isran and Isran 2012; see chapter 3). This is partly due to the concern that if they work outside the home then they will not pay attention to their home chores and to children, and that this will eventually disrupt the family structure (Qureshi 2003). In addition, women are not in a position to look for additional work because they are already quite burdened by household drudgery (Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010, p. 767).

Women are also thought to be frail creatures and easily exploited, both emotionally and physically (Maqsood 2009). Weiss (2010, p. 15) explains that ‘women remain confined within their homes so that neighbours do not have fodder for gossip about their respectability and this has important implications for women’s productive activities’. Therefore, male family members are reluctant to give permission to females to take jobs because such gossip could lower the family status (Isran and Isran 2012). This reason is further explored by Weiss (2010, p. 20), who argues that ‘social values are the most powerful constraints on women’s economic activities’.

She quotes one participant response in her study: ‘people think badly if a woman works at all. Whether she works as a lady doctor or a teacher people still say that her mother and father eat from her labour’. Women earning is considered a stigma for the family, making families reluctant to allow women to work for a wage (Jejeebhoy and Sathar 2001; Rouse 2006; Sadaf 2010). This fact has been further highlighted by Rouse (2006, p. 37), who adds that men feel embarrassment if one of their female members is earning, and thus tend to hide the fact.
Currently, local political instability is another emerging reason for women’s lack of participation in earning activities, leading them to work close to home or in areas where the security situation is better. If they cannot find a job in a safe locality, then they prefer to stay at home. For example, Shah (2014) reports that most of the female teachers in Baluchistan’s rural areas quit their profession, refusing to perform their duties in insecure areas, or left the area for security reasons.

It is clear that the structure of patriarchy, and the socio-cultural norms that underpins and reproduces it, severely circumscribe women’s involvement in the economy and in any economic decision making within their household. A central pillar of patriarchal control over women is control over their freedom of movement, or mobility, which I will now discuss.

2.1.6. Restrictions on women’s mobility in Baluchistan

Mobility of women in Baluchistan is highly restricted by the tribal norms (Butt and Shahid 2012). They are not supposed to travel unless accompanied by a male relative. Research conducted by Mumtaz and Salway (2005, p. 1754) revealed that 79% of women in Baluchistan reported accompanied mobility, compared to just 39% of Punjabi women. Women in the Punjab, unlike women in Baluchistan, also reported that they could usually go unaccompanied to health centers. Restrictions on mobility were the major hurdle faced by managers and women during their participation in the projects. Indeed, the three NGOs in my study chose to provide resources to their participants directly, so that women were not required to move out of their homes in order to participate (see chapters 7 and 8). Restriction of women’s movement is a great impediment to women’s empowerment.

The patriarchal norms do not allow women to go outside unaccompanied, due to the apprehension that if they do, they will probably come into contact with strangers, which in the long run could be a mark of shame on the family, since women carry the burden of family honour (Khan 1999; Weiss 2010). The men justify this restriction as giving protection to their women, to save the family’s respect and honour (Paterson 2008; Weiss 2010). The ‘good and bad women’ perspective is largely endorsed by the people (Nainar 2013). For instance, Ahmed (2010) states that the characteristics of a good woman are passivity, staying within the home, not interacting with men, having a quiet demeanour, and dressing according to cultural
norms. Women who are mobile, active, who dress as they want and have more control over their lives, are considered ‘bad’ women.

Constraints on movement itself are the core reason for less access to information, a high rate of female illiteracy, health problems and low economic participation by women (Brohi and Kakepoto 2013). The findings of a study by Naz and Chaudhry in Malakand Pakistan (2011) affirm that restricted mobility is an important factor in the disempowerment of women. Isolation caused by immobility prevents women’s exposure to the outside world, so they cannot gain confidence in themselves and thus will not be able to speak up for their rights. Immobility also restricts their access to available social services and economic opportunities, because if they are not aware of them they cannot utilize them. Consequently, they cannot enter into the mainstream of empowerment. The effects of immobility are intertwined: they remain illiterate, so can only have meager employment opportunities; this in turn increases their dependency on men. This further lessens their decision-making role in the home, and strengthens their subordination to men. Khan (2010) argues that the interaction of education, employment and economic stability can give autonomy to women. However, this cannot be achieved until women get free mobility (Khan 1999; Mumtaz and Salway 2005).

In addition to the reasons cited above, women’s confinement is also due to security considerations. As reinforced by Leatherman (2011), the security issue, particularly during armed conflict, means women’s access to schools is reduced, as they would be at high risk of being attacked. Similarly, Detraz (2004) highlights that due to concern about women’s vulnerability, access to health services is also restricted. Therefore the prevailing political instability in Baluchistan, which is discussed later in this section, is a significant factor in denying women’s access to health care, education and earning opportunities that are already compromised by the patriarchal society in which they live.

Restrictions on women’s free movement are at the heart of any strong patriarchal structure. The influence of patriarchy is particularly felt in rural areas of Pakistan and less so in cities, where more girls are educated, more likely to be employed and to experience some degree of mobility. However, Pakistani society overall is predominantly patriarchal, and the dominance of the male is visibly engrained in its
primary institution, the family, and all of its associated practices. I turn now to a more detailed discussion of the patriarchal social organisation of Pakistan.

2.2 Pakistan’s society, patriarchal structure and women

Pakistan’s social organisation is complex: religion, tribe, culture and class are intertwined. Religion, cultural practices, traditional values, social class and family influences dominate people’s lives, filtered through an individual’s residential, educational and socio-economic background. The residents of rural areas are more influenced by patriarchal cultural norms shaping their lives, compared to urban areas, where expanding educational and employment opportunities have helped women to gain some access to a better way of life. However, Walby (1990) and Hopke (2013) argue that although educational qualifications and economic development have reduced the wage gap and increased the participation of women in certain fields of work, raising their status to some extent, a strong patriarchal grip is still held on most aspects of women’s lives. Hence, the general family organization, society, culture and social relations still remain rooted in the patriarchal structure, shaping women’s lives accordingly.

Generally, the structure of Pakistani society is based upon patriarchy, where the senior men hold power over the household (Moghadam 1992; 2004; Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016) and occupy the vast majority of positions in social, economic and political institutions, especially in the highest posts. Women are seen as inferior, mainly because of their biological makeup, the social and cultural interpretations of which provide justification for their dependency on men for their financial needs and for protection from the outside world. ‘This dependency is enforced by patriarchal structures entrenched in social, cultural and religious systems that are by and large the same across Pakistan’ (Sheikh 2010, p. 30). Brohi and Kakepoto (2013, p. 10) argue that women’s low status is the outcome of patriarchy because men exercise their power through this system to control their sexuality.

Patriarchal structures and norms saturate family and public life (UNDP 2011). This has been described by feminists such as Millet (1977), Daly (1978), Walby (1990) and Oakley (2002) as the institutionalization of patriarchy, where the male is dominant in all spheres of society (see chapter 3). Further, the Government of Pakistan and UNICEF (2012, p. 33) also report that: ‘a gender gap exists across most
well-being indicators in terms of capacities, access to resources and opportunities; inequality exists within the family, in the workforce, in the political sphere, in education and in health care’. Gazdar (2003) and Ambreen and Mohyuddin (2013) elaborates that in Pakistan’s patriarchy, women are disadvantaged in literacy, law, rights and social norms, and thus are secluded from the sphere of decision-making, either at home or at the level of politics. This institutionalization of patriarchy broadly covers both private and public spheres (Walby 1990; Isran and Isran 2012; Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016).

The family as a social institution is part of the private sphere which, in Pakistan, is deeply entrenched in patriarchy. ‘The family structure is patrilineal⁶ and patrilocal⁷ in which the property and blood relation is traced through the male head of the family’ (Chaudhry 2004, p. 66). Households typically are structured around a group of relatives related to each other through the male household head, and the kinship system distinguishes between descent on the father’s side and descent on the mother’s. Hence the local word for ‘father’s brother’ is Chacha, which is different from the word used for ‘mother’s brother’, Mamoo. Similarly the word for ‘mother’s sister’ is Khala, while the ‘father’s sister’ is Phopo. The senior man in the family is the head of the family and all women, children and junior men come under his authority. As head of the household, he is vested with the authority to make decisions regarding the family, and family members are bound to abide by these decisions (Isran and Isran 2012). The older women at home have control over some of the household daily finances (Chaudhary 2010, p. 106) and over the life of daughters-in-law (Brohi and Kakepoto 2013; Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016). This system has been referred to by Kandiyoti (1988) as a classic patriarchal system. Moghadam (1992, p. 37) agrees that ‘it’s the senior male authority over every one and entails a form of control and subordination of women which cuts across cultural and religious boundaries’ (see chapter 3).

Both men and women are expected to carry out their duties according to the norms dictated by society. Walby (1990) identifies the public and private spheres as being the basis of division of labour in patriarchy, according to which women are destined

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⁶ ‘The line of ancestry is traced through the parents and grandparents of the male head of the family’ (Chaudhry 2004, p. 103).
⁷ ‘In a patrilocal family system, the young married couple moves into the husband’s household’ (Chaudhry 2004, p. 241).
for household work and men for outside work (Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013). This division of labour is another prime characteristic of classic patriarchy, ‘where childbearing is the central female labour activity but the children are not considered to be her property but those of the patriarchal family and especially the male kin’ (Moghadam 2004, p. 141).

Rizvi (1980) and Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq (2016) ascertained that from an early age, girls are taught that they are temporary members in their parents’ home, which they will have to leave after marriage. They are trained in families to be a good future wife and so are taught to be flexible and obedient (Bhattacharya 2014; Mohyuddin, Chaudhry and Ambreen 2012), because after marriage they have to abide by their husband’s orders so as to ensure a happy marital life. Boys receive better treatment, as they are encouraged by the family to be more expressive. As a result, boys become aggressive, independent, authoritative and confident, while girls become shy, dependent and passive (Khan and Reza 1998; Qureshi 2003; Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013). Girls become accustomed to stay at home and are not allowed to go outside without prior permission from their father or brother, but boys are free to move about as they wish (Shaheen 1994; Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013). These routine life practices are further strengthened through social institutions such as family, religion, culture and society, which hold men to be superior, while women, being socially and economically dependent on men, are seen as holding an inferior position (Fakree and Pasha 2004; Mirza and Jenkins 2004; Isran and Isran 2012).

2.3. Marriage in Pakistani society

Marriage is indispensable for the family institution and, being the cornerstone of family life, it is the principal and most sacred institution in Pakistani society (Anjum, Malik and Khan 1995; Khalil et al. 2014), considered essential for any person to acquire adult status. For the females it is still more significant, because of the strongly held belief that adult women belong in their husband’s home and also because they acquire status in the family according to their roles of mother, wife, daughter and sister (Moghadam 1992; Khan and Reza 1998). The importance of girls’ marriage is underlined by the facts presented by Constable (2012, p. 61): in Pakistan, girls are mostly 70% married by the age of 18, and 20% by the age of 13. These figures are higher in rural areas. Similarly in Baluchistan, unmarried girls are seen as a heavy burden on the parents, who do their utmost to marry them off as soon
as possible. Keddie (1990) and Jensen and Thornton (2010) argues that the reason for this is the fear that after they reach puberty, girls can violate the family code by having contact with male strangers, which would bring shame on the family. Murry (2004) and Jalalzai (2000) identify another reason for early marriages, arguing that a young girl is assumed to have more energy to carry out household work, and can bear children for a longer time.

Arranged marriages are very common and are much approved of all over Pakistan (Khan 2006; Constable 2011). Most are arranged within the extended family, in order to strengthen the family bond in future generations (Lieven 2011; Constable 2012; Khalil et al. 2014). This is because, if a marriage takes place outside of the family or ethnic background, it will be difficult for the newcomer to adjust to entirely new family arrangements or to adopt its specific norms. In the long run this could be problematic for the whole family. In arranged marriages, the eldest member of the family, usually a male, makes the final decision about the marriage and girls are supposed to accept what has been decided by their head of family. Although the girls’ feelings about the marriage are not always taken into account, boys are usually consulted when deciding whom they will marry (Khan and Reza 1998; Kesarewani 2014). Increasingly, there are now love marriages or marriages outside the extended family, but this is more common in urban rather than rural areas (Chaudhry 2004). Marriages can be polygamous, although usually they are monogamous. If for example a man’s first wife has given him no children or no baby boy then he can marry again, ideally with the consent of the first wife (Chaudhry 2004). Her consent is not, however, obligatory.

On the occasion of marriage, brides are given away with a dowry, the main purpose of which is to give initial support to the newly married couple to start their life. The form the dowry takes can range from utensils, clothes, electronic items, to large sums of money, property, or luxury vehicles. Sometimes a dowry is also considered as compensation to daughters, who then forgo their share in family property. Nowadays, the dowry has become a huge burden for parents, often causing delays in marriages (Anjum, Malik and Khan 1995; Ali, Arnadóttir and Kulane 2013).

Women move from their parents’ home to their husband’s house and come under the authority of their husband or their family (Chaudhry 2004, p. 66; Habiba, Ali and
Ashfaq 2016). They are treated as the property of their husband and have to be obedient to him in all matters (Jalal-ud-Din and Khan 2008; Bhattacharya 2014). They have to live in the husband’s home, which is usually the husband’s father’s home, where they have to follow the prescribed rules as a subordinate and have no option but to adjust (Khan and Reza 1998; Brohi and Kakepoto 2013). It is common for husbands and in-laws in Pakistan to restrict women's reproductive autonomy and limit their rights and decision-making powers (Qureshi, Rabbani and Rizvi 2012; Bhattacharya 2014). They have little say in home matters and little freedom of movement. They can enhance their prestige and ensure their security at their husband’s home through their fertility, and particularly by the number of sons they bear (Jejeebhoy and Sathar 2001).

The birth of a son is an occasion for joy and happiness, because sons are symbols of economic and social utility and are seen as future breadwinners, while daughters are considered a responsibility (Mirza and Jenkins, 2004; Khan 2006; Brohi and Kakepoto 2013). The desire to have a baby boy is very strong, with some parents having more and more girls until they finally get a baby boy (Khan and Reza 1998; Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013). The mother of a baby boy receives special care that is not given to mothers of a girl child. Men can get married two, three or even four times in the quest to have a son. Women who produce sons are proud and socially more strengthened than women with only daughters. This is partly because they feel safe from the taunts of their husband and family members, which they would have faced if they had produced only girls (Murry 2004). Having many children is seen as a sign of prestige for men, as God blessing the parents. Any attempt at family planning by the wife is likely to be opposed, successfully, by her husband (Chaudhry 2004; Murry 2004).

Generally the husband’s home is the locus of a married woman’s life. They spend their lives there and try to avoid all possible confrontations with their husband or in-laws, which could result in separation or divorce. Sometimes, to safeguard their marriage, they tolerate violence from husbands or their in-laws, because they know that divorced or separated women have very little, value in society. Sheikh (2010, p. 31) states that:

Most women live under the constant threat of divorce from their husbands and therefore have no choice but to oblige to their demands. Due to the taboo
and stigma associated with a divorce, women are still not comfortable settling for a divorce even in the direst of circumstances.

In most cases a widow or divorced woman returns to her parents’ home, along with her children, who are an added financial burden on the family. Divorced or separated women with children are in a very difficult social position on account of facing a great deal of social and economic pressure. A divorced woman is blamed as being responsible for the divorce, while her ex-husband bears no blame and is likely to remarry. The results of a study conducted in one city of Pakistan identified that lack of understanding between partners, illiteracy, economic limitations, female infertility and bearing only female children, were the most frequent reasons for divorce (Ali, Krantz and Mogren 2012).

The divorce rate in Baluchistan is low, mainly because the culture strictly disapproves of divorce. A man may divorce his wife for three reasons: adultery on her part (proven or simply alleged), ugliness and ‘misconduct’. After divorce she is allowed to take with her nothing, except the clothes she is wearing (Roman 2000, p. 30). Apart from the cultural restrictions, there are some other factors contributing to the low divorce rate. First, most marriages take place after payment of the bride price, so the man who has paid the bride price now owns the woman. Second, being very subordinate to men, women abide by their husband’s will and perform all chores efficiently at home or even in the agricultural field, without any payment. This makes them an unpaid fulltime worker who after long hours receives only food and shelter. Third, though women never want their husbands to take a second wife, if they do so, wives cannot stop them, because being divorced such a stigma for women. For this reason they may suffer, but never seek a divorce. Divorced women are perceived by the community as having a weak character or being disobedient; therefore, the prospect of remarriage is most unlikely (Murry 2004).

Married women enjoy much greater social status in society. Usually parents try their best to marry off their daughters as early as possible, but if they fail to do so, due to any unavoidable circumstances, then society puts pressure on parents and women. Unmarried older women are not looked upon favourably, and relatives constantly remind the women of their single status. According to Perveen (2013), ‘unmarried aged women and divorced ones not only bear the usual burden of patriarchal mindset and social injustices but also have to face the additional share of stigma reserved for
them by society and its systems’. The presence of an unmarried older woman at home is a continuous form of tension for parents; women also have to hear taunts from relatives (Khan and Reza 1998).

Generally women are expected to wear a veil, particularly when they go outside. The ostensible purpose is to protect the women from male strangers, but in practice it functions as a way to control women’s actions, ensure male dominance (Keddie 1990, p. 80) and enhance women’s dependence (Kabeer 1988; Critelli 2010). In a similar vein, Mumtaz and Salway (2005) and Leatherman (2011) state that the veil is used to confine women’s movement and, as a part of patriarchal cultural norms, it further controls their sexual behaviour in insisting on chastity and family honour. The veil is strictly observed in rural areas, which insist on full body and face cover, but in urban areas this restriction is less severe. In some urban areas women do take long chadors⁸ and burqas⁹ to hide their body and face, while in some areas only a scarf or a silk scarf is sufficient. Jalal-ud-Din and Khan (2008) concluded from their research in Mardan-Pakistan, that women are bound to observe pardah and also confine their economic activities within the home.

The patriarchal structure is clearly seen in its enforcement of particular practices to govern women’s lives, which bind women in the name of the culture that defines women’s status.

2.4. **Patriarchal structure and women’s status in Baluchistan - Pakistan culture**

Pakistan is a patriarchal society (Critelli 2010; Tarar and Pulla 2014; Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016) and the effect is stronger in rural areas than in urban areas (Moghadam 1992; Levien 2011). ‘The deeper one ventures into rural Pakistan, the tighter is the grip of patriarchal tradition and the lower the status of women’ (Constable 2011, p. 61). Patriarchy gets more intense and entrenched in those rural areas where tribal social organization exists, because in such areas tribal rules, along with illiteracy, socio-economic dependency, religious ties and cultural patterns, simultaneously work together to strengthen patriarchy and women’s subordination. Tribal social organization is characteristic of Baluchistan and generally is more pervasive in rural

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⁸ An outer garment worn by women.
⁹ Enveloping outer garment worn by women.
areas. Baluchistan’s culture is primarily tribal, patriarchal and conservative in nature (Khoso et al. 2011; Perveen 2013). According to Moghadam (2004), ‘Tribes mean a tightly knit group under an autocratic chieftain. Tribal membership is a mark of identity and status; the tribes are divided into sub-tribes, for which new leading men emerge in every generation’ (Lieven 2011, p. 39). The heads of the tribes, sardars or nawabas, being hereditary leaders, enjoy unmatched authority over the people. Tribal leaders are selected from a single family, which usually receives unconditional loyalty and respect from the common people (Keddie, 1990). Public matters are judged by the tribal chiefs (sardars and nawabs), and their decisions are binding upon the parties involved in any conflict. This tribal setup and the cultural norms of male dominance and the subjugation of women (Naz and Chudhary 2011) serve to reinforce each other. These cultural norms are further sustained through routine practice and gossip. The latter, according to Paterson (2008), is the most effective tool for the social control of women’s lives in Baluchistan.

In most of the tribes, men are vested with the prerogative of taking decisions for the women, as fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons. The decisions can be about women’s education, job, mobility and marriage. In marriage women mostly do not have any particular say about their marriage partner; they are expected to accept the proposal approved by their families (Paterson 2008, p. 339). However, Murry (2004) argues that an older female family member who may be highly respected is likely to be included in the decision making regarding girls’ marriages.

Some prominent cultural practices that work to restrict women are commonly observed across Pakistan, under different local names. The following section discusses exchange marriages, bride prices, property division and women given in compensation for murder and honour killings, with specific reference to Baluchistan. These practices demonstrate the strongly patriarchal nature of the tribal system, which positions women as the property of men.
2.4.1. Exchange marriages

*Watta satta*\(^{10}\) or exchange marriages are common in Pakistan, though their frequency is higher in rural areas than urban ones. In this form of marriage the brother and sister of one family are married to a brother and sister in the other family (Jacoby and Mansuri 2010). This is commonly done within the same clan, tribe or caste (Zaman 2012), the idea being that this form of marriage requires fewer dowries (Jejeebhoy and Sathar 2001) and will protect women from divorce and possible mistreatment from their husband or in-laws (Zaman 2014). The prevailing idea is that in exchange marriages of siblings, there is a reduced chance of maltreatment of the man towards his wife, because he knows that his brother-in-law could, in revenge, mistreat his sister. Ideally, this means that both couples try to preserve their marriage in order to safeguard their sibling’s marriage. However, if a man’s marriage is unhappy it may adversely affect his sister’s marriage, which until then may have been a good marital life (Chaudhary 2010). Most of the time, a sister will put up with violence in order to save her brother’s marriage.

Another form of parallel/exchange marriage is also practised in the Baluchistan tribal system.

In this a man can acquire a wife by offering a woman that belongs to him who may be his sister, daughter, even granddaughter in exchange to the other family. This exchange links the fate of one woman to the fate of the other, thus if one is divorced, hurt or killed the other woman is likely to face the same fate in retaliation’ (Ali 2001, p. 22).

If the girls who are going to be exchanged belong to a different age group, then exchange is agreed through money. For example, if one has reached the age of puberty and the girl on the other side girl is under aged, then the parents of the latter would pay a sum of money along with the girl. Similarly, if a young girl is married to an old man, then the man also pays a particular amount to the girl’s parents (Pekolein 2010, p. 157). The practice of exchange marriages confirms the notion of women being treated as property; this is further endorsed by the practice of the bride price.

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\(^{10}\) *Watta satta* literally means give and take. It is the local name for exchange marriages.
2.4.2. Bride price

Bride prices are widely practiced across Pakistan. This term refers to the payment received by the guardian of the girl from the family of the groom, on the occasion of marriage. The bride price is determined by the guardian of the girl and depends on the age, beauty and status of the bride. In Baluchistan, this practice is called *Walwar* in the Pashto language, in Balochi *Lab*, while in Sindhi it is called *Wekro* (Ali 2001; Murry 2004; Bhattacharya 2014). In tribal areas, when a man wants to marry, he has to pay the bride price to the bride’s father on the day of the marriage. Women take no part in this.

Pre-wedding organization is dealt with by the father, brother or any male of the household, and after marriage, by the women’s husband or in-laws. Bride prices also function to reproduce the control of junior men by senior men. In most cases, junior men need assistance in acquiring a bride price, and this assistance is forthcoming from their elder kinsmen. Thus, in this way, senior men control junior men’s access to women. Junior men are then in debt to senior men: the control of junior men is as integral to patriarchal structures as is the control of women. In cases where a man does not have enough money to pay the bride price to the girl’s father, instead of giving money he can offer a girl from his family to the family related to the daughter he wants to marry (Murry 2004), in a similar way to the exchange marriage.

2.4.3. Women given in compensation

Women or girls are used as compensation to settle disputes of murder or honour (Lieven 2011). In the case of murder, according to Murry (2004), if a man from another tribe is killed, when a culprit is charged, he has to give some money along with a girl or, in some cases, more than one girl to the aggrieved tribe. It all depends upon the circumstances of the case and the decision of the local tribal council (*jirga*). Zaheer and Shameera (2012, p. 176) state that ‘Minor girls are also given as compensation, to settle a matter of murder. A *punchayat* or *jirga* decides to hand over a minor girl as compensation to rival families’. This practice of giving girls as compensation is common in all provinces of Pakistan, but goes by different names. It is called ‘*Sawara*’ in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ‘*Irjaee*’ in Baluchistan, ‘*Sung-Chatti*’ in Sindh and ‘*Wanni*’ in the Punjab (Naveeda and Razia 2013). Under this tribal practice, most of the girls under the age of 18 years are forcibly married with the...
male rival family, to settle disputes relating to murder or financial matters. Critelli (2010) reinforces that women are treated like an economic resource that can be used in marriages and in settling disputes. The number of girls given as compensation to the aggrieved party depends upon the nature of the dispute; sometimes one, two or even three girls are handed over.

### 2.5. Honour Killing

 Honour killing is another form of cultural practice against women that is also characteristic of classic patriarchy, as it rests upon the idea that women are the property of men (Khan 2006; Khoso et al. 2011) and thus are symbolic of men’s honour. Moghadam (1992) discuss the results of a study conducted in Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. In his evaluation, patriarchy controls women through restrictive codes of behaviours, rigid gender separation and a strong ideology that links family honour to female virtue. Therefore, as Ward (2005) substantiates, the concept of honour justifies male control over women’s bodies and lives.

Men have the right to protect the honour of their women, and thus they can kill anyone in order to protect their women. They can even kill or severally punish women to protect their honour, if women violate the prescribed code (Bhattacharya 2014). The honour belongs to men, which is represented by women’s physical chastity (Ambreen and Mohyuddin 2013; Usman and Amjad 2013) and, as family honour lies in women’s purity, so the slightest hint that she is not pure is unacceptable (Keddie 1990; Khoso et al. 2011). If a woman is involved or even suspected to be involved in any extramarital relationship with a man, then even without evidence she can be killed in the name of honour (Ali 2001; Murry 2004). Honour killing prevails in different parts of Pakistan: in Sindh it is known as ‘Karo Kari’, in the Punjab ‘Kala Kali’, in NWFP ‘Tora Tor’ and in Baluchistan ‘Sia Kari’ (Bhattacharya 2014). It means the ‘Blackness’ that a woman brings to the family, which can be cleaned away by the death of the adulterous woman. If a woman is married then her husband and if she is unmarried, then her father or brother has the right to kill her (Ali, 2001; Khan 2006). Women killed in the name of honour do not receive funeral prayers and are buried in a separate graveyard, with no family permitted to show grief at her death (Khan 2006; Khoso et al. 2011).
The act of a man killing an adulterous woman related to him in any way is highly valued among the family or tribe, on account of the fact that it restores his honour and erases the shame (Khan 2006). The tribal system supports this, because the honour of an individual is considered to be the honour of the whole tribe. The local community does not report such killings and thus, the state authorities cannot pursue these cases (Lieven 2011). This is further sustained by Pamela Constable (2011, p. 68) who, in her book Playing With Fire, quotes the words of a tribal chief, words that clearly convey the worth of strong tribal traditions and the low status of women in this system. The chief said:

We do not let the state interfere in our affairs and vice versa. In a tribal system a woman may be eighteen or eighty years old, but she is never free to marry of her own, and nobody will tolerate it if she has an affair. The honour of tribe and village does not belong to one person and it is the collective responsibility of every tribe man to restore and save the tribal code.

Honour killing is also used to gain monetary benefits from one’s rival. For this reason a man can kill any female member of his family, blame his rival for having an affair with that female and receive the expected benefits. The benefits can be in the form of money, girls or even both. In this way, girls are also used to settle the honour crimes of their male family members (Khan 2006).

2.6. Women’s share in property

As we have seen, men own women through their bodies, because they believe that women are their property. Therefore, they do not allow them to have property. This is another characteristic of classic patriarchy in Baluchistan, where women are not entitled to property ownership, with only males having this right. Legally, women can inherit, own, purchase or sell property (Keddie 1990), although most of the time their husbands, brothers, fathers or male relatives prevent them from exercising their legal and religious rights (Qureshi 2003; Moghadam 2004; Khan 2006; Critelli 2010). The justification for this is that wealth and property should be reserved for males because they are the head of the family and they, not women, are economically responsible for it. Moreover, they are also considered the protectors of property and all matters pertaining to it. Men can defend property (Murry 2004) but women are not allowed to go outside, and thus are unable to look after property.
Despite the above-mentioned practices, there are also some customs prevailing in Baluchistan, which give respect to women. Rival tribes do not hurt the women or children of their opponent’s tribes, only men. Furthermore, if two tribes are at loggerheads and a woman comes in between them, they stop the fight. Similarly, if a woman visits the house of an aggrieved party, requesting forgiveness and a ceasefire, then the aggrieved party should drop all claims against the perpetrator (Murry 2004; Lieven 2011). However, this custom is rarely practiced except in a very critical situation, because otherwise it would seem the easiest way to prevent conflict: to send a woman around.

Although Baluchistan shares common characteristics with the patriarchal structure prevailing in Pakistan, there are two important factors that differentiate it; severe political instability and underdeveloped infrastructure.

2.7. Political instability in Baluchistan

The deteriorating security situation in Baluchistan has affected not only people’s lives but also development work and NGOs’ outreach to the communities. This has meant that women have been deprived of the benefits of projects and activities focusing on their empowerment.

Below is an overview of three main causes of the current political instability in Baluchistan, which have had direct and deleterious impacts on the lives of men and women: the Baloch separatist movement, sectarian issues, and the Taliban insurgency (Lieven 2011; Ahmad 2012; Brohi and Khattak 2013; Samad 2014). The discussion focuses on their effects on the native people of Baluchistan.

Baluchistan is made up of four princely states: Makran, Lasbela and Kharan willingly joined Pakistan, while the fourth state, Kalat joined on 27 March 1948, eight months after independence, following an announcement by the Khan of Kalat.11 Meer Ahmed Yar Khan (Haq, ed. 2009; Khan 2012). It is commonly believed that the decision to unite with Pakistan was taken only by the Khan of Kalat, whiles the other three dominant Baloch tribes in Baluchistan, the Raisanis, Bugtis and

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11 The Khan of Kalat is leader of the Baloch Brahui kingdom, known until the 1950s as Kalat (Ahmad 2012, p.86)
Marris, were not involved in this decision (Siddiqui 2012). There had been conflict between the Pakistani government and the Baloch nationalists for many years, but it flared up again after the assassination of the Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Bugti in August 2006 (Samad 2014). Baloch people claimed that the Pakistan federal government (Islamabad) had been deliberately sidelining the development of Baluchistan for a long time (Hashmi 2015). The distribution of resources based on population was also a cause for fewer resources and funds’ being allocated to Baluchistan, as it is the least populated province, albeit with the largest land area: about 44% of the entire country. It could be that its relatively smaller population and lack of political influence were contributing factors to its isolation in terms of geographical location, human development and infrastructure, with rebel forces identified as groups demanding separation from Pakistan.

Furthermore, the fact that Baluchistan is rich in mineral and natural resources, including gas, coal and copper, could be another reason for conflict between the Federal government and the Baloch nationalists, as they compete for the benefits (Javaid 2010; Samad 2014; Hashmi 2015). The Sardars and their rebel forces demanded provincial ownership and a share in resources such as Gawadar Port, Saindak and Reko Diq (copper and gold mines) and gas pipeline (Siddiqi 2012; Hashmi 2015). Slow progress in these development projects was one outcome of the conflict between the government and the local Baloch Sardars. The Baloch nationalists also accused the government of not establishing technical training institutes in Baluchistan that could equip the local population with skills that would allow them to find employment in such projects (Vision 21 n.d, p. 6).

In addition to the above, nationalists consider that the ‘settlers’ (the non-local residents who despite having lived in Baluchistan for decades are still referred to as settlers or outsiders by the local people) have taken some of the resources in education and economic opportunities, thus depriving local people of their full share (Ahmad 2012; Khan 2012; Hashmi 2015). Particularly after 2006, many settlers

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12 Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti was the head of the Baloch Bugti tribe. He also served as Governor of Baluchistan in 1973.
13 Sardars are the hereditary leaders of tribes, carrying enormous responsibilities. They look after the interests of their tribes, settle disputes and arrange marriages. They are also entitled to make decisions that carry the full force of legal judgment and which affects people’s lives. They also command extra authority as large landowners and peasants turn to them for personal counsel and intervention especially in cases where the tribes honour is at stake’ (Constable 2011, p. 67)
migrated from the region, due to the constant threat of death at the hands of Baloch insurgents. In 2011 it was reported that 1,200 settlers, mostly Punjabi, although some were Urdu speaking, had been killed throughout Baluchistan. On the other hand, Baloch leaders blamed the Pakistani military or law enforcement agencies for killing Baloch people, who were suspected of being involved in illegal activities such as the targeted killing of settlers and bomb explosions (DAWN 2011).

Along with Baloch dominance in Baluchistan, particularly in the south of the province, the Pashtun of the north also are significant. Baloch demands for an independent Baluchistan territory for themselves, are opposed by the Pashtun, because they insist on a clear division of Baluchistan into two parts, one for the Baloch and the other for the Pashtun. This Pashtun’s position is strongly opposed by the Baloch, who see themselves as the only dominant people in the region and who desire a unified Baluchistan without any division (Ahmad 2012).

The Government of Pakistan has tried to negotiate with the Baloch nationalists in order to address their demands and complaints, by providing more vacancies for the inhabitants and by stopping militant operations against the insurgents, but the situation has still not settled down. In fact, it is worsening, as targeted killings, bomb blasts, strikes, the destruction of local infrastructure and energy resources, have become regular occurrences. This sad state of affairs is threatening the unity of Pakistan, because these insurgents are likely to be supported by foreigners such as Indian, Iranian, Afghani and U.S agencies who are possibly exploiting the internal conflict to gain benefits from the province (Haq ed. 2009; Vision 21 n.d; Samad 2014; Hashmi 2015). Peace and development in Baluchistan means the progress of Pakistan, which is not in the interest of some foreigners who support the activities of anti-Pakistan groups (Khan 2012).

Sectarian violence is a product of the global Islamic division between Sunni and Shia, another prominent and critical problem that has seen suicide attacks on Hazarah’s (Shia) gatherings and their rapid targeted killings by religious extremists. On the other hand, Hazarahs are also seen to be involved in the targeted killings of Sunnis. All of this has made the political situation worse in Baluchistan (Samad 2014).
In addition to facing insurgencies and the targeted killing of Hazarah people, Baluchistan has also been affected by the militancy of the Taliban in recent years. Taliban may easily enter Baluchistan as Baluchistan borders on Afghanistan. Afghanistan has accused Pakistan of providing shelter for Taliban in Baloch areas while Pakistan has accused Afghanistan of supporting Baloch militants (Hashmi 2015, p 80). As a result of Taliban invasions, the insurgency in Baluchistan further flared with many tragic events, including the Taliban’s kidnapping of NGO workers for a ransom (Shahid 2012). The reason NGO workers are targeted is not only for monetary gain, but also to send a message to the NGOs to cease their activities in the region, because of their ‘foreign agent’ image. This situation has severely hampered the activities of international and national humanitarian organizations, as a result of which some have closed their offices and left the region, while others have limited their activities to safer areas (European Commission 2006).

This insurgency has had a severe effect on the economic and social life of Baluchistan’s people.

Residents find it difficult to access education and health facilities. The prevailing insecurity and lawlessness has discouraged domestic and foreign investment. Foreign companies whose personnel were kidnapped or murdered have wrapped up operations, a further reduction in employment opportunities. (Khan 2012, p. 24)

Furthermore, due to security concerns, female doctors are reluctant to work in remote areas. Most of the provincial financial resources that could have been utilized to provide basic necessities to the people are now utilized to tackle the security situation (Shah 2014). This situation adversely affects the socio-economic development of the region, decreasing access to welfare services while increasing gender discrepancies (Brohi and Khattak 2013, p. 7).

The issues facing Baluchistan have not been properly addressed by either the federal or the provincial government, with the latter accused of ignoring public interests and not addressing the escalating drastic situation (Vision 21, n.d). On a macro level, this insurgency has badly affected the general population and regional developmental activities, including the development of infrastructure, the establishment of hospitals, educational institutions, welfare programs and economic opportunities for the inhabitants of the region. On a micro level, it has also restricted the mobility of the
general population, in particular that of women, and their participation in educational or occupational activities. The participants of this research explicitly mentioned the political troubles and threat of violence as constituting a major impediment to women’s empowerment, particularly in Baluchistan, with its underdeveloped infrastructure.

2.8. Infrastructure in Baluchistan

Most of the population of Baluchistan, around 77%, lives in rural areas, in nomadic and tribal structures. Their settlements are widely (Mohammad and Farooq 2008; Khan 2012) and for the most part they are involved in agricultural or livestock activities. Markets are few and far between (Mohammad and Farooq 2008). The overall provincial road network and connectivity generally, are the poorest in all of Pakistan. Quetta, the capital city of Baluchistan, has better dwellings and road structures than the rest of Baluchistan’s Districts. ‘Outside Quetta, the infrastructure of the province is gradually developing but still lags far behind as compared to other parts of Pakistan’ (Government of Baluchistan, NCHD and UNESCO 2011, p. 15; Naeem et.al 2015). The main towns and cities in the province have communication networks of mobile and landline telephones, as well as radio and TV stations (PDMA 2012).

Several sections of roads and highways are too narrow to allow vehicular traffic and are in such poor condition that it is unsafe to travel on them (PDMA 2012). In winter accidents are common, due to rain and snow causing landslides, with highways becoming completely blocked for days. This affects the delivery of goods to the main market and consequently, increases the price of goods at the market. Weak physical and institutional infrastructure and an under-developed road system do not attract public or private investors to explore the natural resources of Baluchistan. This in turn becomes one of the main reasons for the lessening of earning opportunities in the region (Government of Baluchistan and UN Women 2013, p. 3).

The underdeveloped infrastructure is one of the reasons for the lack of improvement in social life, health, education and economic opportunities in the region. The poor road system and transport, the lack of properly equipped and accessible educational, vocational and health units in the region, make life more difficult for the women.
This situation, in addition to the cultural barriers, further restricts their mobility, reinforcing their low status in the areas of health, literacy and economics.

**Conclusion**

This overview of literature gives the introduction to general and specific features of Pakistan and Baluchistan’s society respectively, including significant details about the demographic, economic and social structures, with reference to the status of women. It specifies how the women’s rank and prominence in Baluchistan is low, compared to that of men, principally because of patriarchy, supported by various cultural practices in the tribal setting, all of which grossly affect women’s position in terms of health, literacy, economic independency and mobility. At the end of this chapter, I thoroughly discussed the issues of present political instability and poor infrastructure in Baluchistan which has an enormous effect on the general population, but specifically on women.

As presented above, the social structure of Baluchistan is patriarchal in nature; given this I selected the theory of patriarchy which gives specific details on its features. Along with this, I also considered the theory of intersectionality as means to comprehensively understand the situation of women in Baluchistan; this is explained in the next chapter.
CHAPTER THREE: PATRIARCHY AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Introduction

My thesis is informed by the aspects of feminist theory, central to which is the theory of patriarchy. Here I provide an overview of the conventional analyses of patriarchy, and the way in which they explain its structuring power in the lives of men and women.

I begin with an exploration of that set of theories of patriarchy which helped me to understand women’s socio-economic position in Baluchistan. I argue that patriarchy is certainly the main contributing factor to the low status of women, but further, where it intersects with insecurity and infrastructure issues, this intensifies the restrictions on women, leading to their dependency and subjugation. To understand the interlocking effect of patriarchy, insecurity and poor infrastructure on women in Baluchistan, I used the theory of intersectionality.

3.1. Feminists and Patriarchy

Feminists not only analyse and position women’s oppression to be the result of male domination, and consequent inequality (Hall 1992; Bhopal 1997) but they also debate ways to alleviate this oppression. Indeed, Rawat (2014, p.45) referred to feminism as ‘awareness of patriarchal control, exploitation and oppression’. Three primary schools of feminist thought, the Liberal, the Marxist and the Radical, have identified different causes of women’s subordination. Liberal feminists argue that women are denied equal rights on the basis of perceived differences derived from their sex (Beasley 1999, pp. 52-53), and emphasize reforming the social system through government legislation in order to end discrimination and provide equal opportunities to women in education and in jobs. Marxist feminists point out that capitalism gives earning power to men, while excluding women from productive

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14 It has been argued that this categorization might be differently theorized in Pakistan and South Asia (Nainar 2013), the insights that can be drawn from the western theorizing are applicable also to Pakistan, as I demonstrate in this chapter.
earning activities, thus confining them to home activities, and it is this economic exclusion which becomes the fundamental source of women’s oppression.

Radical feminists attach primary importance to men’s generalized power over women, arguing that society is divided on the basis of gender and patriarchy, the latter which they perceive as a social system that benefits men, allowing them to exert power over women in both public and private life, economically, politically and socially (Wearing 1996). Radical feminists seek a transformation of the existing power structure between men and women. Unlike liberal feminists, they do not emphasize the involvement of government bodies, because they believe that governments themselves are patriarchal in nature (Beasley 1999, pp. 56-57). The radical feminist approach more appropriately reflects the society of Baluchistan-Pakistan, where from the family to state offices, men are dominant, possessing authoritative posts, interpreting religion, and implementing law and policies for women with very little or no female representation.

Feminists analyse patriarchy in relation to women’s biology, the division of labour and the economic sector. By linking patriarchy with biology, Firestone (1978), Learner (1986) and Curthoys (1988) argue that patriarchy assigns different roles to both sexes based on an assumed meaning of biological differences, relegating women to domesticity and men to economic maintainers and public representatives of the household. Firestone (1970) concedes that women’s oppression is due to their child bearing capacity, or more precisely to the social interpretation of this capacity, which makes women appear weak and dependent on men. This was reinforced by Learner (1986, p. 16) who pointed out that in patriarchy a woman’s goal is motherhood while, Rowbotham (1973) argues, women’s procreative capacity is important for men, because more children means more labour and men, being head of the family, rule the women’s bodies, labour, and capacity to bear children. The value assigned to domesticity is the result of strong conditioning by a society that demands women devote themselves to their home and children without giving value to their own work (Millet 1971; Rowbotham 1973; Leo 1973; Daly 1978). Therefore, even in the Western world, where women may be involved in office work, they still perform their home chores. As Connell (2005) notes, referring to the results of
sociological studies, conducted on the division of labour in Australia, women involved in paid jobs still undertake housework and childcare.

Feminist such as Nainar (2013) affirm that patriarchy is the basis for all prevailing systems and structures in South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Afghanistan, Maldives and Srilanka. Patriarchy in Pakistan is sustained and reinforced through the state policies, laws, and interpretations of culture and religion which buttress the domination of men over women (Awan 2012; Nainar 2013; Tarar and Pulla 2014). In South Asian societies women’s biology, specifically her capacity to bear children, that is given as the reason for her prescribed roles, such as caring and nurturing children and performing domestic chores in the private sphere of home. Therefore, feminists such as (Rowbotham 1973; Andre 1973; Federici 1975; Curthoys 1988; Beneria 1992; Kabeer 2012; Butt and Shahid 2012; Nainar 2013; Ferrant, Pesando and Nowacka 2014) argue that men and women hold different positions in relation to the labour force, whereby men’s labour is paid, while women’s domestic work is not paid, which makes them dependent on the men’s earnings.

This reasoning is highlighted by Khan and Bibi (2011) who, from their study in Baluchistan points out that because women’s work is done in the home, a private sphere, it is not visible and therefore undervalued, whereas men work is visible, recognized as economic, and paid. Another reason given by Antonopoulos (2009), Kabeer (2012) and Nainar (2013) is that women are paid less because they are considered to be secondary earners and assumed to be unskilled. The invisibility of women’s work is also pointed out by Shafiq (2008) who, from his study in Baluchistan, argued that besides performing regular domestic chores, women carried out substantial other work at home, looking after livestock while also being involved in the agricultural field. Their work, though underestimated and not reported accurately, provides essential economic support to the men, who are freed to work outside. Scholars, such as Rowbotham (1973), Hooks (2000), Saul (2003), Connell (2011), Sultana (2011) and Tarar and Pulla (2014) establish that woman’s domestic work benefits men because on the one hand, it frees them to work outside the home and have no child responsibilities, while on the other hand they receive emotional support from the women. Consequently, it is unlikely that men would support
women having jobs, as this would affect their patriarchal advantage, or what Connell terms ‘the patriarchal dividend (Hooks 2000; Connell 2011). Hence, Butt and Shahid (2012) argue that the sexual division of labour is a key to gender politics as it affords men with power over women. Therefore, Beneria and Sen (1997, pp. 43-48) emphasize that women’s work needs to be made visible and recognized as forming part of the economy; because men could not work outside if women did not carry out their work at home.

In Pakistan, women’s participation in the labour market is influenced by socio-cultural, economic and structural factors (Ali 2013). The reasons for women’s low labour market participation rate in Pakistan-Baluchistan are various, as scholars indicate. According to Butt and Shahid (2012), educated and economically conscious women are difficult to control, therefore patriarchal ideas work to restrict their access to education, or at least priorities the education of boys over girls. Hunt and Kasynathan (2001) claim that women are less skilled, less qualified and less informed about the market system. Moser (1993) Kabeer (2012) and Ali (2013) point out that women are not seen to be the breadwinners of the family, so their work is not generally appreciated in a patriarchal society. This means that even if they do participate in the labour markets they are paid less, promoted less, and are more at risk of losing their jobs. Likewise, Ali (2013) argued that Purdha, the cultural practice of veiling serves to exclude women from the labour market. Similarly in Baluchistan, women are associated with home responsibility only, are mostly illiterate and are confined to the home due to the restriction of veil. Furthermore, seeking a job is subject to the decision of their male folk (Sarwar and Abbasi 2013). Along with this, the present unstable situation in Baluchistan is another obstacle to women’s involvement in employment activities (Shah 2014). As Walby (1990) Leatherman (2011) and Sultana (2011) rightly identify, violence, or the fear of violence, restrains women from having jobs and receiving an education (see chapters 7 and 8). Furthermore, Sexual harassment in the work place (Ali 2013; Malik and Farooqi 2014), job discrimination, and limited job opportunities, are also undeniable reasons for the lack of women in the labour market (Sultana 2011; Sarwar and Abbasi 2013). In a similar way, Saul (2003, p. 12) argues, jobs are defined in ways that suit men. For example, women cannot work long hours (Sarwar and Abbasi 2013) because they are responsible for home chores (Fonjong 2001). This in itself
disqualifies them from many jobs (Rosaldo 1974; Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010). Social restriction on women’s mobility in tribal oriented setup of Baluchistan is another big reason of their absenteeism from labour market (Butt and Shahid 2012). Even if a woman produces goods at home, such as needlework and embroidery, or raises goats, she depends on men for selling or marketing the home made products (Nainar 2013). Nainar further argues that patriarchy is not limited to the job market but it extends to exclude women from all resources that might economically strengthen them, for example the possession of property, and of education (Nainar 2013).

In addition to the above, many men view money as a mean of retaining power, and women’s dependence on them. This allows them to remain the decision makers and, as Rowbotham (1973) points out, women can only have money when this is allowed by their husbands. Figes (1987) with Butt and Sahid (2012) argues that men’s sense of superiority is elevated when they become breadwinners of the family, and this argument is elaborated on by Connell (2005, 2011), who suggests that men view women’s economic independency in a patriarchal structure as a threat to their male identity, so they oppose women’s participation in the workforce. She argues that men rank their position as breadwinners so high that they thwart the professional progress of women. The apprehension that women could gain increasing autonomy and less dependency on men leads to power struggles and conflict in family relationships. Heise (1998) and Connell (2005, p. 18) describes men’s resistance towards women’s paid work as a defense of their male supremacy. This can be seen in Baluchistan-Pakistan, where majority of men do not allow women to take part in the labour market, because feeding the family is their primary duty; this gives men privilege over women. This is one of the prime causes of women’s dependence, and that is why Millett (1971, p. 40) with Sen and Grown (1988) Isran and Isran (2012) refers to women’s economic subjugation as a cause of their oppressive position in patriarchy because they counts economic stability as a means of achieving autonomy and prestige. However, scholars such as Osmani (1998), Mayoux (1998), Hunt and Kasynathan (2001), Vijayanthi (2002) and Kabeer (2005) argue that women’s participation in earning activities, leading to their ability to spend household income, gives them a better status at home, allowing them to participate in decision-making as well as to negotiate their status. Similarly, studies conducted in Baluchistan on
women’s empowerment by Khan and Bibi (2011) and Naeem et al. (2014) have determined that women’s earning is imperative in upgrading their value at home. This latter is one of the signs of being empowered, something that most of the women in the present study claimed to have to some extent achieved (see chapter 8).

Feminists such as Butt and Shahid (2012) and Tarar and Pulla (2014) view patriarchy as the rule of men and their power to control women, because men are its planners, while others claim that patriarchy is a social system of women’s oppression (Walby1990; Lim 1997; Hooks 2000; Scott 2009; Rawat 2014) in which men control them in the areas of socialization, sexuality, family, domestic labour, economics, politics, and culture (Millett 1971; Bryson 2008; Sultana 2011; Rabia, Ali and Ashfaq 2016). Connell (2011) also observes men’s control over most of the world’s wealth and institutional authority, while Leatherman (2011, p. 3) has ascertained that ‘women have been traditionally subordinated in both the productive and reproductive sphere of global economy under the institution of hegemonic masculinity’. Walby (1990, p 21) with Rawat (2014) therefore refers to patriarchy as a system of social structure where subordination of women prevails from family to society. Patriarchy, being institutionalized, forms the base of gender inequality (Oakley 2002), and has prevented women from attaining education, economic independence, self-respect and equal status (Sultana 2011; Awan 2012; Tarar and Pulla 2014). This institutionalization can be practically observed in Baluchistan, where women are suffering from lack of education, limited access to health, little representation in occupations and restricted mobility (see chapter 2).

As Walby (1990) argues, patriarchy is a holistic ideology that blankets all aspects of women’s lives; it is the privilege men have over women, where women have to struggle for the recognition of those rights which for men are natural birth rights. Despite the fact that patriarchy is institutionalized, Cohn and Enloe (2003), with Ward (2005), argue that patriarchy is neither natural nor automatic, but is sustained through the support of all social institutions. Leatherman (2011, p. 3) explains it further ‘patriarchy requires an investment of time, social organization, and resources to sustain such disciplinary practices as honour killing; bride dowry that values men over women’. In turn these practices further strengthened patriarchy (Habiba, Ali and
Ashfaq 2016). Patriarchy, then, is not simple a set of believes or ideas about men and women, it is equally a set of practices that empower men and disempower women.

The above account demonstrates that patriarchy, being holistic, encompasses all aspects of women’s lives. The traditional classic patriarchal structure, with all of its prominent characteristics, is present in Baluchistan, as I now discuss.

3.2. Patriarchy in Baluchistan-Pakistan

Baluchistan-Pakistan exhibits the classic patriarchal structure observed by Kandiyoti (1988), who argued that ‘Classical patriarchy is visible in the geographical area, including, North Africa, the Muslim Middle East (Turkey, Pakistan and Iran), Southern and Eastern Asia (specifically India and China) (Kandiyoti 1999, p. 226). Among the different structures of patriarchy, the classic one is the rule of one set of men over subordinate men and all women.

3.2.1. Women in classic patriarchy

According to Kandiyoti (1988; 1999), classic patriarchy is based on patrilocal/patrilineal extended family households, in which central power is vested in the hands of senior men. Young men, on attaining the position of elder men, act as the head of the family, yet the women always remain subordinate. Men embody autonomy and make most decisions pertaining to family and outside matters (Isran and Isran 2012). Girls marry young, and then leave the parental home for their husband’s home, where again the head of family is their husband’s father. They face three levels of control: first, they have to obey the head of the family and second, any other males in the family (these may be their husband or brother). Third, they have to obey the most senior women (Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016). Marriages mostly take place within the same ethnic group, and husbands are responsible for women’s honour. The subordination of women is linked with the reproduction of the kin group and the division of labour, in which their major work is child bearing and rearing (Sultana 2011). A young bride can secure her place in her husband’s home only by producing a male child (Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016).

The classic patriarchal structure of Baluchistan is also reflected in another characteristic, identified by Kandiyoti, in which elder women hold power over
younger women of their household; these can be their daughters or daughters-in-law. Most marital matters are approved by the elder women, who do not let the younger girls have a voice in their own marriage decisions. Daughters-in-law most usually remain with their in-laws, where they are duty-bound to obey all orders given by their mother-in-law (Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016). Palriwala (2000, p. 64) confirms that women support this system, as it gives them autonomy within the family unit, and they exercise their power over younger women’s labour. However, while elder women do have some authority in the household, this authority derives from their relation to the male head of the household.

The dominant features of classic patriarchy in Baluchistan include bride prices and dowries, exchange marriages to maintain kinship within the family (Lerner 1986; Tarar and Pulla 2014), the use of women as economic resources to settle disputes (Critelli 2010; Lieven 2011) and linking honour with women’s chastity (Kandiyoti 1988; Moghadam 1992; 2004; Ward 2005; Leatherman 2011; Hopke 2013; Tarar and Pulla 2014). In addition, restrictions on women’s free mobility (Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016) and the compulsory wearing of the veil (Kandiyoti 1988; 1999), limited access to earning opportunities and land ownership (Kandiyoti 1999; Kabeer 2006; Critelli 2010; Isran and Isran 2012; Nainar 2013) also reinforce their subordination.

To further explain the specific features of Baluchistan patriarchy and its control on women’s life, I refer to a case that occurred on 13 July, 2008 in South-Western Baluchistan. According to the reports, three young girls were shot by order of the tribal jirga. When two other adult women interfered they also were shot. All of them were buried when they were still alive. The reason for these actions was that the girls were trying to get married as per their own choice: this is not acceptable according to cultural norms. This was a very high profile case, which received massive attention in the media, with human rights organizations exerting pressure on the Government to bring the culprits to court (Masood 2008; Lieven 2011). On the other hand, a senator in Pakistan’s upper house of parliament defended it, stating ‘these are centuries old traditions and I will continue to defend them, only those who commit immoral acts should be afraid’ (Lieven 2011, p. 359).
The exact details of this case vary from one report to the other, as it occurred in a very remote area. However, at the same time, the people of Baluchistan believed that it did happen, because the idea of women being killed to serve the honour of men is not an unusual one. This case can exemplify the low status of women in the strong cultural tradition that is patriarchy in Baluchistan. Moreover, it should be recognized that while this tradition may be expressed in the idiom of religion, and justified by resort to supposedly Islamic beliefs and principles, the subjugation of women is not a principle of Islam. Islam promulgated a doctrine of equality and given equal rights to every one without considering sex, caste, tribe, colour, class and region (Engineer 2005; Kesarewani 2014). All forms of violence against women, including honour killings, domestic violence, and sexual assault are prohibited by the teachings of Islam (Korteweg n.d; Kesarewani 2014). In a similar vein, Islam has given the right to women to undertake education, make a marriage contract or divorce, and be in possession of property (Engineer 2005). However, patriarchy is institutionalized in all spheres of life including religion. It is men who interpret religion in a way that ensures their dominance and the subjugation of women (Macey 2005; Nainar 2013; Kesarewani 2014).

A comparison of Western feminism with South Asian feminism is beyond the scope of this thesis. A great deal of western feminism does apply to Pakistan, but, some does not, given the differing socio-economic and cultural contexts. The status of Pakistani women is still circumscribed by traditional socio-cultural practices, as well by a lack of resources or, more simply, poverty. For example, for many Pakistani women access to fundamental resources such as water, health, and education are still lacking, hence that need to be the focus of any sort of project intervention but that does not mean that the issues of access to the labour market and sexual discrimination are not important. The UN United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000 taken up by Pakistan focuses on providing basic needs to its population, as Goal 2 is to achieve primary education, Goal 3 is to promote gender equality, Goal 4 is to reduce child mortality and Goal 5 is about improving the reproductive health of women. These are the major problems in Pakistan or South Asia. Unlike in the developed world where most women are privileged in terms of having access to all fundamental services, women from South Asia find it difficult to access these services because of physical restrictions and the patriarchal society and
culture. This occurs because patriarchal structures and practices are not the same all over the world; they vary from region to region, depending upon religious interpretations and the economic, political and social scenario (Hopke 2013). All of these factors interact in a complex way and shape the experiences of Pakistani women. Besides the intersection of these dynamics, women’s oppression is also the outcome of other interrelated factors. In the case of Baluchistan, patriarchy is not the only factor that accounts for women’s situation, women do have some agency, as defined by the theorists such as Crenshaw (1989; 1991) there are other contributing factors. These include the women’s fear for their personal safety, due to local unrest. The underdeveloped infrastructure, including poor transportation and road networks, inadequate and non-functional educational and medical centers, adds to their oppression. In order to understand how these factors affect women’s lives, which are already oppressed by patriarchy, it is essential to use the lens of intersectionality.

3.3. Women in Intersectionality

The concept of intersectionality was formally introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989; 1991), who pointed out that black women are subordinate because they are black and because they are women and, for many, because they are poor. Crenshaw (1991) focuses on examining the intersection of multiple forms of oppression on women of colour because, she argued, each one is linked to the other in affecting their lives. This theory argued that every woman faces discrimination with different intensity depending on the intersection of her class, race and so on in the society (Delavande and Zafar 2013). This is supported by Brah, Avtar and Phoneix (2013, p. 76) who argued that intersectionality is to simultaneously study all aspects of social life as ‘different dimensions of social life cannot be separated out into discrete and pure strands’. It means that every aspect of social life intersects with other aspect to influence our identity (Fischer 2012). This is further elaborated by Leatherman (2011, p. 67), who claims that the concept ‘also examines how identities are shaped by inequalities and reinforced systematically through interlocking mechanisms’.

15 However, the idea of intersectionality originated with the landmark speech of an enslaved woman Sojourner Truth in 1951, Aint I a women’ when she emphasized the multi-faceted nature of subordination and slavery of black women due to the effect of intersecting factors. Afterwards the debate of feminists surrounded the concepts of and intersections between class, gender, sexuality and race (Brah and Phoenix 2013).
Importantly, intersectionality recognizes more than the fact that many women experience multiple dimensions of discrimination: it claims that the intersection of these multiple dimensions strengthens each, and serves to sustain them (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991)

Yuval-Davis (2006, p. 202) asserts that social divisions, such as gender and race, are irreducible to each other, but also emphasizes that these division are intermeshed. Phoenix (2006, p. 22) further argues that to understand each category, ‘intersectionality demands its analysis of differences, as well as commonalities, within groups’. Yuval-Davis (2006, p. 203) agrees that to understand the way these divisions interact, interrelate and affect each other in a particular context, it is essential to investigate specific social, political and economic processes. However, she admits that some social divisions are more important than others in specific situations, and in relation to specific people. Therefore, Phoenix (2006, p. 28) and (Mehrotra 2010; Fischer 2012) suggests, that any analysis of intersections must locate the most relevant intersections for specific groups or individuals at particular times and on particular issues.

Scholars have primarily included six divisions and categories in these multiple forms: race, class, ethnicity, gender, sex and age, but Lutz (2002, p. 13) added eight categories, nationality, culture, ability, origin, wealth, North–South, religion and stage of social development, while maintaining that the list was still not complete. Choo and Ferree (2010) argue that the introduction of intersectionality to an understanding of gender formations makes analysis more difficult and complex.

As discussed in chapter 2, gender discrimination is found in all aspects of social life in Pakistan. However, there are empirical evidences that assert that gender is not the only reason for discriminations. Scholars have conducted researches to assess the different intersecting factors that determine the situation of women in Pakistan. A study conducted by Delavande and Zafar (2013) investigated gender discrimination in three educational institutes of Pakistan. They found that wealthier women because of their higher socioeconomic status were favoured over middle class females, despite both groups having the same educational background. They suggested that for empowering women the intersectionality of gender with social identity should be emphasized; education alone is not sufficient for addressing gender discrimination.
Fischer (2012) who studied the Sightsavers (organization), a Lady Health Workers program in Pakistan, contends that disabled women experience various oppressions as a result of disability and gender intersection. She argued that women could not get treatment for their compromised vision because they were bound to a confined household routine, and could only be treated by male doctors if they were accompanied by male members of their household. This means that women are more prone to have vision related health issues. Sightsaver utilized the system of women health workers in Pakistan in which lady health workers provide primary health care to local women at their door step. Sightsaver disseminate its services of eye care to local women through the lady health workers. Fischer suggested that to support disable women it is necessary to understand the mutual effect of gender.

Besides assessing the intersection of race, caste, class with gender, recent feminist scholars, such as Leatherman (2011), Detraz (2012) Cohn (2013) Aoláin (2009) and Purkayastha and Ratcliff (2014) have added armed conflict/terrorism, insecurity, violence or fear of violence to the list of social divisions or categories, and have analysed how these divisions/categories intersect with a patriarchal context in affecting women’s lives (Cudworth 2013). The effect of political insecurity or war, on women is not new and indeed history has recorded countless incidences of war crimes against women, such as rape, breast mutilation, killing and so on (Abdullah 2010; Kantengwa 2010; Purkayastha and Ratcliff 2014). The purpose of using violence is to control, threaten and dishonour the habitants of the rival country (John 2006). Walby (2012, p. 99) argues that now guerrilla tactics, terrorism and genocide prevail in different parts of world. While there is less military engagement, these other activities continue for longer periods of time and mostly affect the civilian population.

Globally women worked to gain international attention as they are more exposed to sexual violence during conflicts. As a result of their efforts the United Nations, in its Resolution 1325 passed on 31 October 2000, proclaimed its opposition to all forms of violence against women, including during armed conflicts. It calls parties to armed conflicts to protect women from gender based violence, and called on states to prosecute the offenders of any type of violence against women with heavy hands (Sheppard 2008).
Of these, terrorism heavily affects civilians, weakening political stability and threatening the economic well-being of a country. Detraz (2012) took this analysis further and emphasized the need for an intersectional approach in order to understand the causes of terrorism and the nature of insecurity. She further argued that security issues affect not only the local social groups, but also international institutions and NGOs. The data of the present study support this notion and provide evidence that the prevailing insecurity has severely affected the proper functioning of the NGOs: all three in this study reported security threats while performing their groundwork. Two were highly affected, with (BRSP) workers kidnapped by a militant group; also a (WESS) female worker was targeted and injured, but managed to escape. The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) (2013, p. 14) has also reported that NGO workers in Baluchistan were abducted and intimidated. As a result, many NGOs have restricted their activities to more secure areas of the region, reduced their operations and cancelled or ended their projects, focused on health and schools. Inevitably, this has had a negative effect on the already marginalized community of Baluchistan.

Leatherman (2011) explains that sexual violence against women, within the context of armed conflict, is intensified in patriarchal societies, where women are already vulnerable due to structural conditions. He uses examples of countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Africa where women’s situation becomes more miserable during times of conflict, on account of pre-existing men’s authority, coupled with instability which intensifies men’s control on women. In such societies, where women’s freedom is already severely limited in all aspects of life by patriarchal limitations, when violence becomes institutionalized, they are more prone to suffer, as they are physically weak and carry the burden of family honour. Leatherman (2011) further points out that insecurity affects girls’ access to schools, and Detraz (2012) highlights the effects of insecurity on women’s health, as they are unable to travel to hospitals. Given this situation, men impose even more restrictions on women’s movements, when their mobility is already limited (Kabeer 2012).

This situation is similar to that of women in Baluchistan, where the current political instability is threatening the general population, and specifically women. As reported in a study conducted by Brohi and Khattak (2013), regional conflict in Baluchistan
has increased gender inequalities. Families further restrict women’s movement, due to security concerns, and women themselves feel threatened, leaving their education. This means they can no longer play a productive role in society, even if they could possibly have done so under the patriarchy of peacetime (See chapter 2).

In general, the significance of adequate infrastructure is recognized in the field of development as central to well-being (Ilahi Grimard 2000; Agenor and Agenor 2014; Fay et.al 2005). A study conducted by Ilahi and Grimard (2000) in Pakistan concluded that women would like spend more time in income generating activities if their water supply infrastructure would improve. The lack of infrastructure, however, has received scant attention from scholars, particularly, as another determining factor that intersects with patriarchy to increase women’s oppression. This could be because many feminists are from developed countries where infrastructure is well established, including road networks, good transport, well-equipped and well-functioning health units, and educational institutes that are sufficient to fulfill the needs of the community. Recently, the issue of poor and unsafe public transport grabbed the attention of government, and to address this, the Government of Pakistan, launched Pink bus service (male driver and female conductors\(^\text{16}\)) during 2012 for the safe travel of women. Initially, this service was introduced only in Lahore and if it serves the purpose of giving women safe travel it will probably be launched in other cities of Pakistan (Saigol 2014). This issue being one of the prime causes of women low representation in the paid economy is still on its very initial stages of having government attention. The women in Lahore, which is one of the major cities of Pakistan with better infrastructure is suffering with this issue, the intensity of this becomes severe when it comes to women in Baluchistan.

In Baluchistan, the poor infrastructure is an undeniable factor essential to understand women’s lives. They have limited access to educational, occupational and health care institutes, due to the non-availability of such institutes and also due to the poor transport and road systems. The Mumtaz and Salway (2005) contend that the insecure environment, gender and poor infrastructure place impediments on women’s movement. They argued that these limitations have enormous impact on women gaining access to health services and educational facilities (Saigol 2014). This,

\(^{16}\) Conductor is a person who gives ticket and collect fare from the passengers in public transport, such as bus, vein etc.
eventually would impact on ‘their exposure to new ideas, development of inter-
personal skills, initiative and confidence in interacting with the larger world’
(Mumtaz and Salway 2005, p.1763). Kabeer (2012) argues that the lack of safe,
reliable transport, and the poor road networks, poses more challenges to women’s
mobility, compared to men. In Baluchistan, security and infrastructure are further
sites of the subjugation of women, as explained by Crenshaw (1999, p. 1249), who
calls this ‘disempowerment’, who claims that ‘Intersectional subordination need not
be intentionally produced; in fact, it is frequently the consequence of the imposition
of one burden that interacts with pre-existing vulnerabilities to create yet another
dimension of disempowerment’.

Conclusion

Patriarchy structures women’s lives, from their birth till death. Within a patriarchal
society a woman can only ever be a mother, sister, daughter or wife, because ‘a
woman’s existence in South Asia is defined in relation to the men in her life’ (Nainar
2013, p. 2). Patriarchy as a practice gives privileges to men at the cost of women’s
subjugation (Kesarewani 2014), denying women access to education, healthcare, and
income indeed, anything which might empower her. As reinforced by Oakley (2002,
p. 218), ‘patriarchy gives us a theoretical framework for understanding the nuanced
experiences of our everyday life’.

Since the patriarchal infrastructure is already very strong, when it intersects with
poor infrastructure and political instability, women’s vulnerability and dependence
on men is only increased. To analyse this, theory of Intersectionality is used that ‘has
become the ‘gold standard’ multidisciplinary approach for analysing subjects’
experiences of both identity and oppression (Nash 2008).

The socio economic situation of women in the region is quite deplorable, largely due
to the patriarchal constraints. Such constraint is only strengthened by political
conflict and consequent risks to personal security. This accompanied by poor
infrastructure, leads men to further exert control over women, and confine women to
the home. Mobility is central to women’s ability to access education, health, and paid
work, and to attain over all well-being in the society. In present circumstances, they
cannot leave the home until they are accompanied by a male family member, because
the mere fact that they are female means that their safety is more at risk. Thus
women’s dependency on men is increased, and men feel they have more reasons to control women’s lives. Better infrastructure and security would possibly provide grounds for women to negotiate their socio-economic status with the men and their patriarchal privileges.

In summary, the intersectionality of these factors in Baluchistan are largely undermining women’s empowerment. The concepts of women’s empowerment and linking factors are discussed at length in the following chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR: WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

Introduction

This section of the literature review commences with the idea of power as discussed by Foucault and Giddens which then leads to the discussion of different perspectives of empowerment and women’s empowerment. I adopt a single definition of empowerment that I argue to be the most relevant in the context of this study. I then analyse the economic and social dimensions of empowerment in the life of women, proceeding to the factors affecting empowerment. Last part of this section deals with an overview of two important approaches to women’s empowerment, Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD).

4.1. Power

Power and empowerment cannot be disengaged one from the other. Before discussion extends to empowerment it is vital to talk about power. In general terms, power is a way to induce others to act in a way they would not otherwise choose: to take the free will of others. According to Foucault power is a way of action, a strategy, a practice, but not a possession (Foucault 1982; Sergiu 2010). He analysed power relations between people and institutions and the way it affects everyday life. He argued that power relations are rooted in society where individuals and institutions exist and flourish, so to him power is a system which runs a society (Foucault 1982; Sergiu, 2010) He mainly focused on studying the way different institutions exert power on individuals and then how individuals resist or react to the effects of power. He argued that resistance is mandatory for the existence of power because in every relation, one side exerts power while on other side there is resistance which yield productive relations (Sergiu, 2010)

An ability to act or to achieve and structure are the two main component of Gidden’s definition of power. Like Foucault he asserts that power is not something to possess rather it is an enacted ability. Individuals or groups develop their ability to act
according to the societal procedures which may facilitate or hamper their capacity to achieve their goals (Giddens 1984; Ponic et.al 2014). Giddens like Foucault also emphasis power as action and practice because it is through action that we exert power in our social relations (Ponic et al 2014). Indeed, power can only be exercised and recognized in a relationship (Foucault 1982, Giddens 1984, Ponic.et.al 2014). Giddens and Foucault both hold the view that power exists in a society and ‘implicates all social structures, relationships and individual actions’ (Ponic et.al 2014, p.44). Therefore to understand the individual position in power dynamics it is relevant to understand the structure and practices which governed power relations. The next section provides the discussion on empowerment and its related concepts.

4.2. Empowerment

The term ‘empowerment’ has been widely discussed in literature, and is acknowledged to be multi-dimensional and hard to define (Subramaniam 2006; Paterson 2008; Chaudhry, Nosheen and Lodhi 2012; Akram, Shaheen and Kiywani 2015). It is multidimensional because it covers social, economic, psychological and political aspects of one’s life (Page and Czuba 1999; Pettit 2012). It is hard to define because it has different meanings in different socio-cultural contexts (Malhotra and Schuler 2005). Similarly, Batliwala (1994) looks at it as a broad concept that can be interpreted in various ways by different people.

Scholars have shown general agreement that there are four ways to explain this term empowerment: it is a process, it requires participation in empowering activities, there is no definite or absolute stage of being empowered, and it is for those who were previously disempowered (Ibrahim and Alkire 2007; Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton and Bird 2009; Kabeer 2012). It is a process because, according to (Zapata 1999, p. 152), ‘it is not a moment of being empowered enough’ but rather is a gradual process of development and growth. It is a process of achieving independence during which people build their capacities to find and utilize the resources to improve their lives by making their decisions (Lazo 1995; Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland 2005). When an individual participates in creative activities it enhances their empowerment, because with participation, a person is able to acquire skills, knowledge and self-confidence that enable them to manage their life effectively (Page and Czuba 1999; Malhotra 2004). It is for this reason that Batliwala (1994) with Parpart, Rai and Staudt (2003,
p. 4) called empowerment a process as well as an outcome. As process it involves
efforts and as outcome it ‘can be evaluated and measured against expected
accomplishments’. Stein (1997) and Kabeer (2012) refer to empowerment as an
outcome of empowering activities, which can be in the form of improved self-
esteeem. Similarly Holcomb (1995) and Pettit (2012) ascertain that participation and
empowerment are means to an end, because they complement each other.

In summary, we can say that empowerment is a process consisting of several
empowering activities and that people who used to be disempowered, by
participating in such activities, can become empowered. This participation enhances
their capacity to utilize resources to bring about improvements in their lives. This
improvement is determined by the quality of life achieved, which enables them to
make decisions about their life. This argument provides valuable insights into the
concept of empowerment and its importance in relation to women, who constitute
half of the world’s population, and the perception that they are struggling for
empowerment.

4.3. Women’s Empowerment

The term empowerment has been extensively used by feminists, scholars and
development organizations in relation to women, because generally they have less
control over their lives than do men. Often they are submissive as individuals, tied to
the home and subsequently, also disempowered at the societal level, so
empowerment has special significance for them. At the same time, scholars and
feminists argue that understandings of empowerment and its implications are
different for every woman, depending upon her societal upbringing, cultural and
religious background, age and ethnicity, economic and social conditions and
understanding of gender relations (Moser 1993; Mosedale 2005; Pettit 2012). On the
other hand, feminists also argue that empowerment for Western women is different
from that of third world women, who are mostly bound by the culture, traditional
norms, mobility issues, poverty and illiteracy (Mohanty 1997). Postcolonial and
postmodern feminist scholars discuss the relation between Western women and Third
World women and emphasize that in discussing empowerment, consideration should
be given to the specific situation of women in a specific community (Marchand
1995; Mohanty 2003) to understand what empowerment constitutes for each woman,
because empowerment is to achieve what one did not have before. In a similar vein, Oxal and Baden (1997) along with Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002) and Mason and Smith (2003) give more importance to the context, rather than the services, and argue that services, like credit, can only be beneficial for women when relevant to their specific context. This context includes the social, economic and political situation of the area, which differs from region to region. Thus, even though it has been an extensively researched phenomenon since 1970, it does not have an exact definition. However, scholars and development organizations have presented several definitions to cover the main ingredients of this concept, with special reference to women.

According to UNICEF, empowered women can benefit from development processes when they have access to resources and attain gender equality in all areas of life. The Inter-American Development Bank (2010, p. 3) states that ‘empowerment of women is understood to mean expanding the rights, resources, and capacity of women to make decisions and act independently in social, economic, and political spheres’. This means that women are sufficiently capable, and by giving them access to and control over resources, and providing an atmosphere of freedom, they can utilize the resources to attain a state of self-sufficiency and overall well-being.

The same idea of empowerment is also presented by academic scholars such as Holcombe (1995), Kabeer (1999), Vijayanthi (2002), Kiriti, Tisdell and Roy (2006, p. 203) and Akram, Shaheen and Kiyani 2015 that women’s empowerment is the ability of women to have control over their resources, making required changes and decisions for their lives. Hashemi and Schuler (1996) broaden this definition by emphasizing that empowerment should be reflected in women’s mobility, economic security, ability to buy things on their own, freedom from domination by the family, political and legal awareness, and participation in public protests and political campaigning.

Besides the common understanding of women’s empowerment, which refers to access and control over resources, Batliwala (1994) extends this discussion that empowerment is to challenge the existing power relationships to get control over the sources of power. She suggests that through political force, existing power structures should be challenged and transformed for women’s empowerment. However, it can be asked to what extent these existing power relations can be challenged, and
possibly what steps are required to transform the societal structure, which is deeply embedded in patriarchy. As power relations are based on gender differences, Kabeer (1999) argues that gender identities are developed throughout one’s life in the socialization process, and cannot be easily shaken off just because of some small change being introduced. However, Batiwala (1994; 2008), with Kabeer (1994), also accentuate that empowerment is a ‘process of change’ that requires three major changes in three dimensions. First, to transform the ideologies of gender discrimination; second, to modify the existing forms of access to and control over economic resources, and third, to amend the institutions, including family, market, state and social structures economic, social, cultural and political that strengthen power structures and favour gender segregation.

Malhotra et al. (2002) and Kabeer (2001: 2012) also linked empowerment with making choices. Kabeer argued that ‘women's empowerment is about the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability’ (Kabeer 1999, p. 435). She asserted that women should gain the capacity to make their own life choices, in regard to their marriage, education, livelihood or any other matter that significantly affects their lives. This is further extended by Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland (2005) who claims that making choices is a sign of an individual’s autonomy to control one’s life and attain self-confidence (Abrahim and Alkire 2007).

Mosedale (2005, p. 252) argues that empowerment is about finding possibilities, defining ‘women’s empowerment as a process by which women redefine and extend what is possible for them to be and do in situations where they have been restricted compared to men from being and doing’. She does not particularly call for transformation of the existing structure of society but rather emphasizes that women should locate and use those opportunities that could empower them, even in the presence of constraints that these opportunities should be expanded to include other women as well, so that they also can receive benefits.

In defining the concept of women’s empowerment, scholars have also specifically highlighted that the empowerment process cannot create dependency, because its roots are in self-sufficiency. It is argued by Rowland (1995) Townsend (1999) and Mosedale (2005) that development agencies can only support the women and not
empower them, because the availability of opportunities alone cannot bring empowerment until women participate in them and become aware of their own capacities to utilize them. Rowland (1997) Parvin (2005) and Kaiser, Doullah and Noor (2014) further explained, that this is not a top-down approach; development organizations can facilitate the women’s acquisition of empowerment by initiating projects that encourage women’s participation, acquisition of skills, decision-making capacity, and control over resources.

Women can receive benefits only if they participate in empowering activities as participation and empowerment are reciprocal, thus scholars argue that without participating in these activities, the empowerment process cannot take place, because it occurs in a social setting (Lazo 1995; Stein 1997; Page and Cuzba 1999; Pettit 2012). Participation encourages empowerment, as Parvin (2005, p. 71) ascertained that ‘empowerment means development of skills and abilities in people to enable them to manage better’. Therefore as a result of participation an individual can gain practical knowledge, concrete skills and genuine opportunities.

The above definitions of empowerment given by scholars identifying four main ingredients, the first of which is the right of access to and control over the resources that enable women to make decisions for them. This includes women’s capacity to participate in activities, as well as getting the strength to control their lives. The second requirement is that it is a continuous process, and there is no absolute stage of being empowered. Thirdly, no agency can bring empowerment to the women they can only create a conducive environment. The fourth ingredient for empowerment is a keen understanding of the context and social situation of the women; it cannot be assessed on general assumptions, as empowerment has different meanings for different individuals and cultural groups.

Empowerment, with its different connotations, is a very complex process. In this research, for the analysis of the present data, I am taking Mosedale’s understanding of women’s empowerment, as it is more relevant to my data, given that the participant women demonstrated that they had an understanding of their position so they made all possible efforts to achieve autonomy within the constraints of the patriarchal structure.
They were tied to the home and not allowed to do anything on their own, but managed to use the opportunities given to them through the NGOs to achieve a degree of empowerment (see chapter 8).

Moser (1993) and Rowlands (1997) view empowerment as a transformational process of women where power gained by women do not suppress others but rather enhance their own capacity to acquire self-esteem, self-awareness and self-reliance. Therefore, Moser (1993, p. 75) argues, empowerment is the redistribution of power within, as well as between societies. To clarify these power relations with regard to women, Rowland (1997) outlined distinctive levels of power:

**Power over** means that one person’s gain of power is another person’s loss, and that is why women’s empowerment is taken as a threat to men’s control over women.

**Power to** require an increase in one person’s power without reducing the power of another, and therefore it does not raise a conflict of interests.

**Power with** refers to the collective efforts of a group, in which more is achieved than with just one individual’s effort. Batliwala (1994) further argues that the empowerment process unites the women on a platform and thus they can more effectively challenge their subordination rather doing in isolation. This is further elaborated by Moser (2005, p. 250) that most development organizations working for women’s empowerment, gather women into groups where they can discuss and solve their problems.

**Power within** is specifically associated with the woman’s individual strength, self-confidence, self-esteem and self-respect, which enable her to understand and benefit from opportunities. Townsend (1999, p. 63), argues that power from within is to realize one’s own abilities to decide or to move on. ‘It is knowing who you are, that you have a right to exist; it is self-respect’. In a similar vein, Moser (2005) also states that development activities target women’s self-strength to bring change in their lives.

Rowland (1997) and Guerin, Kumar and Agier (2013) explains the significance of these levels of power and states that ‘power over’ is a zero-sum game, because one person is in a position to suppress another; this certainly can lead to real conflict. This is the reason Rowland states that men become scared of women’s empowerment and resist it, as they view it as leading to male suppression. Similarly, Batliwala
(1995) emphasizes that women’s empowerment will not make men disempowered. On the other hand Kabeer (1999) also does not favour ‘power over’, as power should not produce social inequalities or restrict others’ rights. Power on the other three levels would be more likely be to create a fairer environment for women’s empowerment, because it would not create a conflicting situation which demands that one part rules and the other be marginalized. Therefore, women must start with their ‘power within’, through which they can develop their abilities to grow in confidence. Their ‘power to’ can help them to make decisions and ‘power with’ can help them to move ahead collectively without reducing other power.

In accordance with these levels of power, Rowlands (1999, p. 15) further emphasizes three dimensions in which women practice empowerment in their lives. The first is personal empowerment, which refers to self-confidence and the capacity to undermine oppression. The second is close relationship empowerment, which signifies the ability of women to negotiate and influence the nature of their relationships and the decisions made within them. Collective empowerment implies women cooperating and working together to make a greater impact than any individual could do alone.

In specific application to the present study, I am taking Rowland’s (1997) levels of power as the empowerment framework for analyzing the empowerment of women. Predominantly, the participants of this study showed the ‘power within’ and ‘power to’ as the main changes in their lives. Their self-confidence and self-realization increased to the extent that they had control over their resources and were able to change their status at home. This is further discussed in the analysis chapters (see chapter 8).

4.4. Dimensions of Empowerment

The concept of women’s empowerment is multi-dimensional in nature and different international organizations, as well as scholars, have associated it with different aspects of a woman’s life. The Canadian International Development Association (CIDA 1997) focuses on four aspects: legal, political, economic and social, whereas the World Economic Forum 2005 categorizes ‘economic participation and opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment, health and wellbeing as dimensions of women’s empowerment’ (Lopez-Claros and Zahidi 2005, p. 2).
Stromquist (1995) cites the relevant dimensions of empowerment as psychological, economic, cognitive, and political. However, Chung et al. (2013) do not give much consideration to the political dimension, while including the media as their fifth dimension in the list, along with economic contribution, education, government and health. The most commonly cited dimensions are economic, social, political and psychological. As explained above, empowerment is not about attaining an absolute state: empowerment in one dimension does not give guaranteed empowerment in other dimensions (Mason and Smith 2003). For example, a study conducted by Khan and Bibi (2011) on a Participatory Development Project in Baluchistan found that the project improved women’s decision-making as well as their economic activities, but did not significantly affect their movement and control over income. Kabeer (2001) and Malhotra et al. (2002, pp. 12-13) argues that empowerment in one dimension does not mean equal empowerment in other dimensions, because it depends on the individual social context. He also ascertained that these dimensions are very broad in sense and that different aspects of women’s social life cannot be studied in one dimension. However, he focused on economic, socio-cultural, family, legal, political, and psychological dimensions of women’s empowerment. A study of these dimensions of empowerment may be helpful in measuring the level of empowerment women gained as a result of their participation in any empowering activity.

The present study focuses on two dimensions of women’s empowerment: economic and social. They may appear separate; in actuality they are closely linked with each other. Although the political dimension of women’s empowerment is just as important, it is beyond the scope of the present study.

4.4.1. Women’s socio-economic empowerment

Women’s socio-economic empowerment is essential for their wellbeing. Economic empowerment is associated with the control and utilization of income generating resources. It means that women can do a job or take on a profession of their choice and spend their income as they wish; this economic independence allows them to have a good standard of life. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] (2012 p. 3) also includes property rights, assets and land ownership, skills development and market information in economic empowerment. Having control over income is also one of the indicators of economic empowerment
that can contribute to improving the status of women in decision making. The World Development Report (2012, p. 94) also states that economic empowerment refers to generating and managing income. Subramaniam (2006, p. 7) affirms that ‘empowerment in the economic sphere therefore involves both earning and controlling earnings in terms of decision making’.

Economic empowerment is significant for women, as well as for their families. A woman’s earning raises her position at home, even if it is not equal to that of a man. At an individual level, it enables women to participate along with men in expenditure, and to have a role in decision making. According to the UNDP (2011), economic security enables women to achieve an equal position in the family and consequently, in society. Likewise, Roy and Tisdell (2002) with Akram, Shaheen and Kiyani (2015) ascertain that economic independence can be a way forward to gender equality and hence empowerment. Study conducted by Naeem et.al (2014) in Quetta-Baluchistan affirm that the economic position of women gives them due status in decision making within the house and enables them to be a contributor to household earnings. Economic empowerment requires that women commit themselves to work, which gives them financial independence, no matter how small at first or how difficult to achieve. Evidence supports the notion that when women have access to paid work, boosts their economic independence, and with it they acquire a greater level of general independence. The results of research conducted in Malakand division Pakistan by Naz and Chaudhary (2011) reported that a strong relationship exists between women’s empowerment and economic independence, and that economic obstacles significantly reduce women’s empowerment. Similarly the participants of a study conducted by the World Bank (2012, p. 94) in South Africa also emphasize the need for the availability of financial resources. For instance, one participant explained that ‘we are not free to do what we want because we do not have money’. The scarcity of economic resources leads women to be dependent on others, which is, in itself, one of the causes of their subordination to men in patriarchy.

Women’s are more likely to invest any economic resources on family welfare (Ngo and Wahhaj 2012). It is reported by WHO (1992) and the World Bank (2012, p. 5) that when women exercise increased control over household income, either through their own earnings or cash transfers, it gives benefits to their children. It is because
women contribution to household finances changed their position in the family, allowing them a say in household decisions, food choices, and the education of children and family health (Jan and Hayat 2011; Khan, Sajid and Rahman 2011). In line with this Dufloo (2012) also asserted that children’s health and nutritional status improves when women have control over their economic resources. The positive effect of women earning is further recounted by Mayoux (1998), Pitt et al., (2006) Ngo and Wahhaj (2012) and OECD (2012): women are more likely to spend their earnings on their families than are men. Research also endorsed this fact that economically active women are beneficial not only for themselves but for their families as well (Khan and Bibi 2011; Vasanthakumari 2012; Akram, Shaheen and Kiyani 2015). They can also become the source of change, which allows more women to play an effective role in the economic sphere. To this end, it can reduce their dependency on men and gradually transform their subordinate position (Anjum et al. 2012). When women help men in household earnings, they gain respect from men who could motivate to involve women in decision making (Osmani 1998; Isran and Isran 2001; Hunt and Kasynathan 2001).

Social empowerment refers to the equal status of women at home and in society. It is associated with women broadening their life perspective, understanding their situation, realizing their capacities, achieving self-confidence and self-awareness (Khan and Bibi 2011). It gives them a sense of individual identity, which leads them to self-determination and control in decision making. Women’s social empowerment is necessary for their own well-being as well as that of their children and family members who are dependent on them. Lazo (1993, p. 27) asserts that women’s lack of awareness about their circumstances has become a reason for their loss of a sense of control over their situation. Social empowerment helps women to understand the social setting in which they have to survive. It gives them the power to foresee the situation, to generate and make choices, and select that, which best suits their needs. Fonjong (2001) therefore, ascertained that women need to build their conscious towards their social setting.

Vijayanthi (2002) with Akram, Shaheen and Kiyani (2015) argues that the improvement of women’s economic status can be the reason for their enhanced social status such as decision making ability, skills and self-confidence. In fact, women’s involvement in earning opportunities increases their knowledge related to
work and their understanding of their own abilities. This understanding improves their self-esteem, and eventually they may gain the trust of their family members.

In agreement, Parvin (2005) argues that the economic contribution of women not only increases their awareness about their social status but it also positively affects their relationship with family members. Therefore Roy and Tisdell (2002) suggest that women economic contribution should be socially recognized, to raise their status at home. Women in Baluchistan are eager to economically strengthen their families by involvement in income generating activities which support their families and also empower them financially and socially (Naeem et al. 2014).

Contrary to this, scholars have argued that economic independency does not always necessarily give women social status where they can have freedom to make all of their decisions (Parveen 2005; Hapke 2013; Littrell & Bertsch 2013). For achieving gender equality women, require economic, social, reproductive and political autonomy, a life free from all violence (Awan 2012; Bradshaw, Castellino and Diop 2013).

Empowerment of women is indispensable for their higher status in society, yet there are numerous common factors that affect them. Following is an overview of the factors that act as barriers in women’s struggle to become empowered.

4.5. Factors affecting empowerment

4.5.1. Patriarchy / Male Dominance

Patriarchy is one of the most important structures and normative systems that constrain women’s empowerment (Sultana 2012; Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016). In the prevailing patriarchal structure, women’s socio-economic independence is seen as a challenge to male authority, which is the significant factor negatively affecting women’s empowerment in Pakistan. Feminists such as, Walby (1990), Hunnicutt (2009) and Rawat (2014) view patriarchy as a power structure that privileges men.

Any attempt to empower women and transform patriarchy will encounter male resistance. The study conducted by Sohail (2014) in Lahore, Pakistan, found that men feel insecure if power is extended to women; the gendered division of roles and responsibilities is one of the most effective ways of establishing and reproducing patriarchal norms in society, which in turn strengthens men’s domination and
women’s subordination. Sultana (2011) with Hapke (2013) suggests that an analysis of patriarchal structures is indispensable in understanding the persistence of gender inequality. Scholars such as Rowland (1997), Kiriti, Tisdell and Roy (2006) agree that social and economic changes which can increase women’s access to income do make men defensive, as this is perceived to be against the gender norms of Baluchistan’s society (Naeem et.al 2014). The patriarchal structure has deprived women of any property rights, of access to credit and of access to land reform programs (Sen, 1999; Kabeer 2000; Kiriti, Tisdell and Roy 2006; Gulistan 2014; Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016). Furthermore it also excludes women from highly paid work, restricting them only to specific low paid jobs, creating a male-oriented market system, and lastly it condones harassment techniques (Connell 2011) which further discourage women.

4.5.2. Constraints on women’s movement

The ability to move freely is one of the determinant indicators of women’s empowerment (Malhotra, Schuler and Boender 2002) and restriction on this is the prime constraint to achieving emancipation for women in Baluchistan (Paterson 2008; Gulistan 2014). The lack of mobility can create isolation, which eventually deprives women of any benefits of development. There are several reasons counted by the scholars, for the lack of women’s mobility. Kirti, Tisdell and Roy (2006) and Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard (2010) stated that women are bound to their home, due to their responsibilities of child care, household chores and home-based agricultural activities that prevent them from leaving home for work. Furthermore, conservative customs exercise constraints, such as (Gulistan 2014) strict norms of observing the veil (purdah), men’s control on women’s movements, and a male-oriented market system.

The effects of lack of movement are multi-dimensional because they isolate women from the outside world. Women remain illiterate, unemployed, and unaware of how the market system operates, are denied access to educational institutions, hospitals and basic health units, and are not able to get benefits from any welfare program initiated by the governmental and nongovernmental machinery until permission is granted by male authority. They are dependent on men in terms of having access to information and markets, so as to sell or purchase any products/items. Palriwala
(2000, p. 49) argues that due to restricted mobility, women are believed to know little about anything, compared to men, who possess more knowledge on account of their free mobility.

The findings of studies conducted by Jejeebhoy and Sathar (2001) in Pakistan, North and South India, and by Khan, Sajid and Rehman (2011) in Gujrat, Pakistan, concluded that women faced restrictions on their mobility: they were only allowed to have accompanied mobility outside, especially outside the village or community.

4.5.3. Education of women

Education plays a pivotal role in gaining and enhancing empowerment. Murphy-Graham (2008) asserted that education, as a source of information, can foster women’s empowerment by increasing their knowledge and understanding of gender issues. This enables women to improve their livelihoods and empowers them to take their right place in society (Bukhsh 2007). Additionally, it equips women with understanding of their environment (Rahman et al. 2008) therefore, educated women have a sense of control over their lives, giving them confidence in decision-making (Bukhsh 2007; Kabeer, Simeen and Sakiba 2011). Therefore their vision is broad; they have a good understanding of their rights (Acharya 2008) and take a more pragmatic approach towards life.

Education develops knowledge and skills in women that can help them in achieving better employment opportunities (Heaton et al, 2005), which then can improve their status; eventually they are more likely to be the agents of change (Tornqvist and Schmitz 2009, p. 25). Faridi, Chaudhry and Anwar, (2009) states that better education is a source of getting better employment, as this means they are more likely to know about current technologies that can directly increase their efficiency.

Educated women with formal employment are more likely to be confident and are expected to be more knowledgeable. They are more likely than uneducated women to be consulted and approached for advice (Kabeer, Simeen and Sakiba 2011). Sohail (2014) affirms that in today's era, empowerment is education and technology, while illiteracy leads women to be unaware of their rights; being illiterate, they can hardly make their way in society, and so remain subjugated and dependent on men. Sen (1992) reinforces that woman’s earning power and literacy gives independence to women so they can make decisions for themselves.
4.5.4. Low female status: poverty and lack of access to resources
The general low status of women makes them more vulnerable and marginalized on a
social, economic level; this in turn becomes a barrier to women attaining empowerment. Their low status is associated with poverty, lack of access to resources and their utilization, and becomes a reason for their unconditional and long term dependency on men for survival. Government of Pakistan and UNICEF (2012, p. 33) also reported that: ‘a gender gap exists across most well-being indicators in terms of capacities, access to resources and opportunities; inequality exists within the family, in the workforce, in the political sphere, in education and in health care’, affecting women’s status. Therefore Vijayanthi (2002) stated that women need access and control over resources which could enable them to improve their status in patriarchal structure.

There are several interlinked and multi-faceted reasons for women’s low rank in private and public life. These include patriarchal structures, biased laws, low social mobility, gender discrimination, economic dependency, and inadequate medical and education services. Furthermore, the lack of household power, less political awareness, ignorance of new technologies, violence against women, unsafe working environments and unpaid work, also add to their low status. Similarly Kiriti, Tisdell and Roy (2006, p. 206) note that women have restricted access to property rights, agricultural technologies, credit and land reform programs, and that this impedes their economic stability. Sen (2001) and Awan (2012) states that traditionally, women have less decision-making power and less access to and control over assets than men, which contributes to their overall low status. This is expanded upon by OECD (2012): if women work, they are not treated equally. They are not being paid equally to men, they earn less and have fewer opportunities for professional advancement. This limited access reduces their ability to participate in development and to contribute to their families (World Bank 2001).

Women’s unawareness of their rights, their low legal knowledge and the poor implementation of laws, further reduces their capability to speak up to claim their rights (Quisumbing and Pandolfelli 2009). In a similar vein, Kabeer (2012) assembled many factors in women’s low economic status and states that less education, fewer training opportunities, less access to good waged work, the division of labour, constraints on women’s mobility, the uncertainty of owning property and
ineffective market systems, all contributed to their low status. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization UNIDO (2013) pointed that due to cultural norms, women do not have easy access to markets; consequently, they lack relevant knowledge about the market and essential skills for dealing in the market.

The availability of and access to resources are vital elements in women being empowered. The utilization of resources is beneficial to them in two ways: on the one hand, they will be able to discover their own interests and capabilities, the realization of which will allow them to make optimum use of their resources. On the other hand, their standard of living will be improved, and this will eventually extend to their families and their overall well-being. Sharma (2004) advocate the need for a progressive environment for women to utilize resources, as another significant factor to address to improve their low status.

The above factors are commonly cited in regard to women’s empowerment, and are relevant to the present study conducted in the region of Baluchistan, which is predominantly patriarchal. All of these factors, although they may be treated separately, are very much linked with patriarchy, which has a direct influence on women’s education, mobility and socio-economic status. Furthermore, factors such as discriminatory laws and violence against women, the lack of women’s representation in the political sphere and biased cultural norms, also adversely affect the well-being of women, and contribute to their low position in the mainstream of development.

4.6. Approaches of Women’s Empowerment: Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD)

Women’s empowerment has always been a focus of attention for development practitioners, academics and international organizations. The concept of women’s empowerment attracted particular attention between 1970 and 1980, with the emergence of the WID and GAD approaches in prevailing developmental interventions (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton and Bird 2009).

The WID approach emphasized integrating women in the development process by providing them with equal opportunities in health, education, employment and in all spheres of life. This was seen as increasing their productivity as a whole and decreasing their vulnerability, thus helping them to overcome their disadvantaged
conditions at all levels (Moser 1993). Kabeer (1994) argue that women had not been given an identity in the devising of the development strategies; rather, they were considered only as beneficiaries of welfare programs. In that context, WID insisted on women’s participation in developmental policies, giving them equal opportunities in every sphere of society, thus raising their status and making them active members of society. The advocates of the WID approach believed that the provision of equal services in health, education and legal rights enhances women’s generally low status.

This approach was criticized for not giving due consideration to the causes of women’s subordination, not addressing the male dominant power structures (Hirshman 1995) and diversity of women’s situation rather focusing only on their equal involvement in development initiatives (Chowdhry 1995).

In response to the WID approach, the GAD approach was introduced in late 1980s. Parpart (1995) and Rowlands (1997; 1998) advocate it, because this approach analysed unequal gender relations and the causes of women’s subordination. In a similar vein, Young (1997) explain that the GAD approach called for the reformation of all societal institutions, social, cultural, political and economic, because gender discrimination prevails in all structures. Rathgeber (1990; 1995) sees GAD as not only devising strategies for women’s integration in development activities, but going further, by calling for the re-examination of the social structure, to help women to be active change agents rather than just passive participants in development activities.

Rathgeber (1990, pp. 494-496) states that GAD is based on socialist feminism, more concerned with women’s productive and reproductive roles, and questioned the validity of the gender roles assigned by society. GAD covered women’s emancipation in all areas of their lives, including family, political, legal reforms and social systems, by focusing on the role of the state in providing services to women. It also focused on women organizing themselves and being politically empowered to raise their voice to attain legal rights. It further analysed women’s oppression at a family level, and also the work being done by women inside or outside the home.

However the WID approach was critiqued, most organizations still emphasized the importance of women’s involvement in development activities (Rathgeber 1990; Saunders 2002) because participation is itself a tool for empowerment. Therefore,
both the WID and the GAD approaches are influential and actual working strategies for addressing the needs of impoverished women (Udayagiri 1995, p. 167).

During the 1980s, the term ‘women’s empowerment’ was coined to challenge patriarchy as a power structure; in the 1990s, it became an extensively used terminology in the development field, in calling for change in women’s conditions (Batliwala 2007). Women’s empowerment became more prominent after the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, which explicitly focused on women’s empowerment and advancement by addressing their full participation in all spheres of life, including decision making and access to power, as a sound foundation for women’s equality and development (article 13). It accentuated women’s involvement in socio-economic activities for the elimination of poverty (article 16) and focused on the need to design and implement developing policies and programs that efficiently empower them (article 19; United Nations 1996, p. 3-4).

The conference addressed all issues concerning women’s empowerment across the globe, relating to their education, health, economic and social well-being, violence against women, equal access, participation in all developing opportunities, and equal decision-making power. It emphasized that all these broad aims can be achieved by the establishment of gender equality, as this is the cornerstone of a sustainable developed society.

The centrality of women’s empowerment to the development process was one of the key themes of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000. To promote Gender Equality and to empower women was the third of the eight goals on which all 191 UN member states agreed to try to achieve by this present year, 2015. To achieve this goal, emphasis was placed on the provision of basic education to women, in order to widen their economic opportunities and to address inequalities in their political representation (Naz and Chaudhry 2011). The MDGs complement other international declarations on gender equality in education, employment and political participation. These are all significant ends to attain the women’s empowerment goal and across the world the signatory counties have been devising policies and implementing different programs through their government as well as non-governmental bodies.
The above literature shows that the concept of women’s empowerment is a central point of interest and attention for international organizations, as well as for academic scholars across the globe. The complex nature of this phenomenon requires workable approaches in the specific context of where the women come from.

**Conclusion**

Empowerment, specifically projects aimed at enhancing women’s empowerment, is essential for elevating vulnerable women out of hardship and poverty. Having outlined the various concepts of empowerment, I presented Mosedale’s (2005) interpretation of empowerment as most relevant to my present study. According to this scholarship, women determine the existing possibilities available to them and make use of it for achieving empowerment despite the restrictions of patriarchy. It further follows that to achieve empowerment in this context, it is necessary to be involved in activities which promote the sense of being empowered. The discussion also emphasized the significance of socio economic factors which are indispensable for determining women’s empowerment.

Empowerment has been central to many development organizations since the 1980s (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton and Bird 2009, p. 2). The role of NGOs in women’s empowerment is one of the most-argued topics in the discourse of development. Many studies discuss the standing of and need for NGOs with an equal critique on their part in women’s welfare. Non-governmental organizations are assumed to keep in focus the different contexts in devising strategies for women’s empowerment. Keeping this in view, the next chapter gives comprehensive details on the NGO sector and its role in women’s empowerment in Pakistan.
CHAPTER FIVE: NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Introduction

This section of the literature review deals with the various definitions of NGOs, from that, I formulated a definition which describes the NGOs I selected for this study. It specifies the details about the history and functions of NGOs in Pakistan. I then provide a discussion on the relationship of NGOs with the state and the importance of people’s participation in NGOs’ projects. A brief overview is also given on the growth and specific efforts of women’s NGOs in Pakistan. This is further followed by an examination of the challenges NGOs are facing in Baluchistan- Pakistan while carrying out their projects. I discuss the role of the NGOs and their different levels of involvement relevant to empowering women in Baluchistan- Pakistan. The last section elucidates the social mobilization process that NGOs adopt when working in Baluchistan.

5.1. NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

‘Non-Governmental Organization’ is a well-known and extensively used terminology in the field of development. Officially, the term NGO was used particularly for those private organizations working for war-affected people after World War II, as the result of the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 (Binder-Aviles 2012; Missoni 2014). The UN recognized 40,000 international NGOs working in diverse fields at different levels (Binder-Aviles 2012). Different terms were also used for NGOs, including Third Sector Organization (TSOs), Non-profit Organizations (NPOs), Volunteer Organizations or People’s Organizations (Missoni 2014).

Scholars such as Mawlawi (1993, p. 392) defined NGOs as ‘private, voluntary, non-profit organizations, whose members combine their skills, means and energies in the service of shared ideals and objectives’. Ghosh (2009, p. 475) agreed that NGOs
belong to the voluntary non-profit sector, arguing that they differ from other voluntary organizations because they have paid staff and obtain funds for particular development projects. Martens (2002, p. 1) defining NGOs, moved from merely counting their general characteristics to discussing the way they operate. He stated that ‘NGOs are formal (professionalized) independent societal organizations whose primary aim is to promote common goals at the national or the international level’. This was followed by Gupta (2006), who ascertains that NGOs are organizations of private individuals, having certain basic principles, formulating their activities to develop the community they serve. Missoni (2014, p. 53) also included the component of registration in his definition of NGOs: the term ‘NGO is used for organizations that have a formal structure, offer services to people other than their members and are, in most cases, registered with national authorities’.

I define NGOs as non-governmental or private, non-profit organizations of professional individuals who have certain aims, formulating and implementing development projects with the financial assistance of donor organizations in order to meet the welfare needs of disadvantaged communities. In this research the selected three NGOs (WESS, SPO and BRSP) demonstrate similar features. Most of their projects are foreign funded; they are not part of the government, nor are they governed by it, ‘even though they may receive support from Governmental sources’ (Missoni 2014, p. 57). All three of them are non-profit, formal, professional and mission-oriented organizations. This is due to their having skilled, paid staff, following set operating guidelines, and being governed by their board members. They all work for humanitarian issues, addressing the social needs of disadvantaged groups or communities. These include providing education, health care, water and sanitation, humanitarian assistance during earthquakes, floods, wars and conflicts. In addition poverty alleviation, rehabilitation of the destitute, human rights, protection for women and children.

NGOs in general, work at local, national and international levels, according to their hierarchical structure and financial resources. Gosh (2009, p. 481) broadly characterized them into domestic and international NGOs (INGOs), with the latter conducting projects in several countries through their main branches in metropolitan cities. These main branches further establish their sub branches or offices in more
isolated areas, with the help of local or domestic organizations where local staff have direct access to local communities. My chosen three NGOs implement projects through funding from international donors and international NGOs. With regard to the monitoring of project activities, expatriate representatives of the international NGOs or donors usually visit the project locations in the cities, but find it difficult to visit the project sites in the rural areas, due to security issues. However, their national and local staff frequently visits the project areas in all locations, for monitoring purposes and to give technical support. This is how the three NGOs I worked with during this research study (WESS, BRSP and SPO) operated.

Gupta (2006, p. 2) classifies NGOs into four broad and overlapping categories, on the basis of their functions:

- **Charitable organizations** involved in distributing basic necessity items such as food, clothing, books, blankets, free medicine, transport services etc. to the needy communities. They also work in the aftermath of natural disasters, providing different services to the affected communities, including free medical facilities, by organizing medical camps, establishing temporary shelter homes, distributing food items, etc. These organizations therefore do not require much participation from their beneficiaries.

- **Service organizations** design and implement different projects focusing on community health, education, poverty alleviation, water and sanitation, etc. The community participates in the implementation of such projects and receives the benefits.

- **Participatory organizations** require the complete participation of people at each stage of the project, from its inception to implementation. Local people contribute by giving cash, material, labour, land, and also cooperate fully in the implementation of the project.

- **Empowering organizations** help raise local awareness, advocating people’s social, economic and political rights.

However, NGOs do not necessarily restrict themselves only to specific areas, as mentioned above, but can take on different roles. For instance, a service delivery organization can take part in advocacy campaigning, emergency relief activities, multi-year development work, etc. The three NGOs involved in this study actually
exhibited all the above-mentioned characteristics: working as service delivery organizations, with community participation implementing projects to address the different needs of the communities, the formation of community groups and empowering them.

The following section presents the history of NGOs in Pakistan and gives the details about their financial resources.

5.2. NGOs in Pakistan

NGOs have been active in Pakistan since its inception, in 1947. As a new country, it faced several challenges, which the new government had to address. First and foremost was the high number of Muslim migrants from India, most of whom had lost their families or were physically or mentally handicapped, and who were socially and economically vulnerable. Further, the overall socio-economic condition of the state was poor, due to a lack of proper infrastructure, resources and professional and skilled labour. This meant that the government faced two major immediate problems: to maintain the peace and to improve the lives of migrants as soon as possible. For this they needed the assistance of private organizations that could provide rehabilitation services, a need that was met by voluntary private organizations, among which the All Pakistan Women’s Association (APWA) was prominent. Established in 1949 under the chairmanship of Begam Rana Liaquat Ali Khan17 its main purpose was to help needy children and women by empowering them with education and skills (Haq 2005). Other, similar, private organizations also provided health and education services to the marginalized, although at that time the term NGO was not specifically in use (Islam 2001). In 1951, the government asked the United Nations experts in social welfare to visit Pakistan to assess the on-ground situation of social welfare services there, and provide training to social workers in Pakistan. Between 1952 and 1954 the UN organized short-term service training courses in Karachi-Pakistan (Khalid 1992). As part of this, they initiated two urban community projects in Karachi-Pakistan as a practical demonstration for the trainees. These projects were further replicated in other cities of Pakistan and thus, opened the

17 The wife of the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, Khan Liaquat Ali Khan.
way for the formation of new voluntary organizations (Khalid 1992; Iqbal, Khan and Javed 2004).

In addition to the above, laws were introduced to register the rapidly growing number of NGOs, and the Population Welfare Department and Women Welfare Division made it mandatory for NGOs to be registered. The purpose of this registration was to regulate the NGOs undertaking welfare services (Asian Development Bank of Pakistan [ADBP] 1999 p. 3). Most of the NGOs are registered with the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (registration and control) Ordinance 1961, but there are other three laws under which NGOs can be registered: the Societies Registration Act, 1860; the Companies Ordinance, 1984; and the Trust Act II, 1882 (ADBP 1999, p. 2; Pasha, Jamal and Iqbal 2002, p. 4). Due to a weak registration system, and to being listed under four legal entities, it is difficult to gather data on the exact number of NGOs registered. However, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) estimated that there were between 8,000 to 16,000 NGOs, without counting the non-registered ones, which would bring the total to between 25,000 to 35,000 (ADBP 1999, p. 4). A 2004 survey reported, ‘there are 45,000 active organizations varying from unregistered entities to registered, formal and more professional organizations present in Pakistan’ (Bukhari, Jabeen and Jadoon 2014, p. 580). According to Shaheen (2012) the total number of non-profit organizations is over 56,000.

The NGO’s development projects in Pakistan are mostly funded by the World Food Program (WFP), the UN Development Program (UNDP), the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Habitat and the UN Population Fund and many other United Nations agencies. Other international donor agencies include the European Union, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Australian Aid (AusAid), the World Bank and so on. Some international NGOs also generate funds through fund raising from private donors and philanthropists. Funding is provided for various projects in different countries, for development activities and humanitarian assistance during emergencies and disasters. In some cases, the complete project is funded by such organizations; other times NGOs may receive financial contributions from governmental sources (Werker and Ahmed 2007)
NGOs operate with funding from donors; they identify the problems and needs in the communities and submit proposals to the donors, with a detailed activity plan and budget. When approved, the NGOs receive funds to implement their projects. The NGOs’ dependence on donors might lead them to be influenced by donors’ decisions (Bano 2012), which could leave some communities ignored. However, NGOs do care about their beneficiaries (Smillie 1997; Binder-Aviles 2012). Apart from those donors who respond to a specific thematic area, NGOs keep searching for other funding resources in order to be able to respond to the other needs of communities.

The current scenario of aid to NGOs in Pakistan has changed, as it has been caught up in the political turmoil unleashed by the war against terror. Particularly, after the discovery of Osama bin Laden in 2011, the burden on Pakistan to ensure a measure for curbing terrorism increased. The US being one of the major funders of NGOs in Pakistan show more concern for the survival of NGOs which are under threat because the discovery of Osama indicates the presence of other terrorists. However to refrain people from being involved in felonious activities the US continuous to provide aid for further development projects in Pakistan to make it more stable and developed so that it won’t become a breeding place for terrorism (Siddique and Ahmed 2012).

Scholars such as Siddique and Ahmed (2012) and Shaheen (2012) also pointed out the possibilities of corruption in the utilization of international funds in Pakistan. They argued that funds sometimes may not be utilized as they should be because the elite class consisting of politicians or bureaucrats takes control of these funds to do as they choose. For example, with these funds they run their own NGOs which primarily work for their own interests rather for country’s development. However, scholars such as Islam (2001), Awan (2012) and Shaheen (2012) also contend that NGOs are contributing in improving the rights and general condition of impoverished and neglected classes of society. Through their effective work, reaching out to the communities and involving them in the implementation of projects, NGOs earn credibility and access to further funding opportunities from international donors. Parveen (2005) argues that international donors tried to give their funding to government departments to implement their projects, but the inefficiency of government departments resulted in dissatisfaction. This diverts the
attention of international donors to the NGO sector. In addition, local NGOs are more likely to receive funding from donors and international NGOs, because most of them impart relevant training to their beneficiaries, along with the provision of services (Islam 2001, p. 68; Banks, Hulme and Edwards 2015) that help empower their beneficiaries.

NGOs are concerned with their transparency and work sustainability. They maintain transparency of their funding and expenditures by publishing project reports (IUCN and Government of Baluchistan 2000). A study conducted by Bukhari, Jabeen and Jadoon (2014, p. 589) showed that 98% of third sector organizations, including NGOs, produce financial statements that are audited by a qualified auditor. Most of these organizations, 77%, publicize them, and 100% make them available to their board members. Moreover, as a sign of their transparency, 94% of organizations have websites referring to their projects. By providing report details about each of their projects, NGOs help people to understand what they are doing. This includes donors, who also conduct audits of the provided funds through audit firms.

With regard to their sustainability, funding is the life line of the NGOs, as they are mainly fund-driven organizations (Shaheen 2012, p. 79). NGOs work on a project depends on their approved budget because they receive funds in the form of project aid either from government or international donor (Ismail 2002, p. 8). Furthermore it must also be noted that NGOs may have several projects running at a time, each with a specific duration. NGOs depend on these projects to meet their operational costs. They also keep working on identifying the communities’ needs and looking for funding resources from various donors. Once the projects are completed, if there is no more funding left with the NGO to cover the further operational cost of a project, then project’s sustainability becomes a major concern. Furthermore, if NGO get new projects, different from the previous one, then its focus will shift and thus, continuous shifting from one development project to other may reduce the long term sustainability of a particular project (IUCN and Government of Baluchistan 2000).

Most donors have specific thematic areas they work in, such as education, health, women’s well-being and so on. NGOs, being dependent on the donors for funding, have to propose new projects accordingly. NGOs try to develop projects to continue their work for the sake of communities, and also for their own survival. Therefore
Shaheen (2012) argued that the sector of volunteerism in Pakistan is weakened as NGOs cannot initiate any movement unless they have funding for it. The next section discusses the relationship between NGOs and the state.

5.3. NGOs and the State

The state and the NGOs work for the welfare of their communities, and although the latter work separately from the government, they have to coordinate with the relevant departments from the start to the end of each project. It can be said that NGOs form a bridge between people and the state, by informing the general public about government welfare programs and at the same time passing on information to the state about their issues in the hope that government will adopt policies to address them (Khan 1982; Gupta 2006). Since NGOs work closely with the local people, they have a good understanding of their socio-cultural life and their needs (Ahamad, Hemlata and Narayana 2015). For example, two NGOs in this study (SPO and BRSP) shared information about Government-owned veterinary services with the target community’s participants, so that they could seek assistance when needed.

The reasons for the growth of NGOs may be, first, their aim to fill the gap left by the state in providing immediate services to needy communities (Bebbington and Farrington 1993; Hulme and Edward 1996; Jafar 2011; Tamur and Hmaid 2013; Bukhari, Jabeen and Jadoon 2014). Second, they are seen as more effective than the state in providing humanitarian assistance, acting more promptly, due to their resourcefulness and independent nature (Mawlawi 1993; Martens 2002; Werker and Ahmed 2007) and are seen as a substitute to the state in providing services (Hulme and Edward 1996). Although Parvin (2005) argues that we cannot assume that all NGOs perform better than governments, however, she agrees that most do, in the development field. NGOs, on account of their flexible working approach, can modify their work. They are directly involved in development activities by working with the beneficiaries (Gosh 2009). Mawlawi (1993, p. 408) adds that by providing direct relief services and performing mobilization activities, NGOs are more successful in welfare work than are government organizations. Moreover, they extend their projects to those areas where the government can hardly gain access (Davenport 2012). Scholars such as Pasha and Iqbal (2002) viewed this as NGOs taking on government responsibilities, and therefore governments are supportive to NGOs.
carrying out welfare activities with vulnerable communities (Iqbal 2006). The next section explains the importance of people’s participation in NGOs work which is the distinguishing characteristic of NGOs.

5.4. NGOs and People’s participation

Since NGOs provide welfare services to marginalized communities, they are appreciated by the general public, who see them as working for poverty alleviation, the empowerment of people, the improvement of livelihoods through the provision of income earning opportunities, as well as the improvement of access to health and food, education and the basic necessities of life, including healthy environmental (Clark 1991; Werker and Ahmed 2007). NGOs encourage people’s participation in their projects for several reasons, one of which is that they take it as a sign of their success that their project has been accepted by the locals. Secondly, participation leads to people’s empowerment the two factors being inter-related. When people participate they acquire knowledge, skills and confidence, which in turn increase their ability to control their own lives (Cerne 1984; Binder-Aviles 2012, p. 49). For Botchway (2001, p. 135) ‘once people are “empowered,” development becomes both attainable and sustainable’. This is confirmed by Binder-Aviles (2012) and Ahamad, Hemlata and Narayana (2015) who see community participation and empowerment as key in NGOs’ efforts to bring about sustainable change, because once people experience the benefits of change they are more likely to sustain it. This has the added benefit of making an impression on other people who, after observing them, may participate in such projects.

In order to secure participation, NGOs have to take into account the socio-economic context of an area (Botchway 2001), along with geographical and political matters, and also the cultural and religious beliefs of the community, before beginning any project. It is expected that people will participate in those projects which do not directly confront their socio-cultural practices and which will also benefit them economically. To obtain the maximum participation of community people, Cernea (1984) suggested that NGOs should consider the influential role of local key people, available community resources, information of community interest, and the cultural characteristics of an area. Further they need to communicate clearly the nature, time duration and benefits of the project with the local people, to ensure their approval.
and active participation. He suggests that ignoring these factors could negatively affect people’s participation in the project.

NGOs work in the community by acknowledging the social practices of the people and working for and with them to resolve their problems. In this way they can modify power relations and promulgate practices without creating discordance (Gosh 2009 p. 485; Shaheen 2012). This is affirmed by the findings of this present study, in which NGOs designed their projects according to the local cultural norms, where the activities respected the local culture and created an enabling environment that enabled women to participate in income generation. The projects I studied were implemented in rural and remote areas where women are homebound and where the cultural norms and practices do not allow them free mobility, interacting with men or engaging in earning. In this patriarchal society, NGOs were somehow succeeded in convincing the men about the women’s potential role in using their skills to contribute to family earnings, and that it would not harm or confront their existing cultural traditions. The women participants in NGO projects reported changes in their lives, as is discussed in chapter 8.

The field of operation for NGOs in Pakistan is diverse (Bukhari, Jabeen and Jadoon 2014) and includes education, health, disability, migrants, poverty alleviation, women’s rights and empowerment, violence against women, child abuse, drug addiction, youth welfare, elderly people, over-population, environment, sustainable development, human rights advocacy, emergency and relief (Awan 2012). Each NGO has its own objectives, policies and programs that determine their working space, and they run many projects of short and long time duration (ADBP 1999, p. 1; Islam 2001). The focus of this study is NGOs projects emphasizing women’s economic empowerment, as these NGOs. However, it is necessary to look at the struggle of women’s NGOs those that are totally dedicated to women’s rights in Pakistan.

5.5. Women’s NGOs in Pakistan

APWA was the first formal service delivery organization in Pakistan, and it still works on health, education and income-generating activities for women (Haq 2005; Jafar 2011). In 1953, it campaigned for the allotment of 10% seats in the National
and Provincial Assemblies to women, and also worked for the approval of the Family Law Ordinance of 1961\textsuperscript{18} (Awan 2012). During 70’s large number of various women rights oriented organizations were mushroomed (Shaheen 2012). In 1975, NGO, Shirkat Gah (SG) was formed, dedicated to raising awareness about women’s rights, to women’s empowerment, and to providing legal and medical assistance to female victims of abuse (Jafar 2011).

The government of Ayub Khan (military ruler) and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (political leader) encouraged women’s literacy and tried to include women in the labour force (Moghadam 1992); however, the military era of General Zia ul Haq from 1977-1988 was a dark period for both NGOs and women, with the latter suffering legal, social and economic discrimination (Shaheed 2010). A supporter of religious fundamentalist political parties, General Zia ul Haq set about making Pakistan a ‘fort of Islam’, imposing his own interpretation of Islam (Haq 2005; Akhter 2012), which specifically targets women. Any progress hitherto achieved with their participation in different fields, being educated and professional, he took away from them, confining them to the home by utilizing the concept of \textit{chaddar or char dewari} (veil and home). Furthermore, his government encouraged the people not only to adopt Islamic rules for themselves, but also to impose them on their neighbours. Therefore, the general attitude of people towards women working or going outside the home changed (Naz et al. 2013), and any women who did so were perceived as deviating from Islam and accused of being Western supporters (Jamal 2005). During his regime, women were gradually excluded from all active spheres of life, including media, jobs, sports and education, through various government laws banning them from involvement. This ranged from their ineligibility to join the Foreign Service to more everyday activities such as banking (Jafar 2011; Critelli and Willet 2012).

In addition to controlling women’s lives, the military regime also punished them for sexual misconduct (Moghadam 1992), an example of which is the Zina Ordinance\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{18} This deals with marital issues, including divorce, polygamy. It declared women’s right to choose a marriage partner as well as to initiate pleas for divorce and so on.

\textsuperscript{19} The Zina Ordinance of 1979 deals with fornication, adultery, rape, theft, alcohol consumption, and defamation. Under this law a rape victim has to bring four eyewitnesses to court to prove her accusation. Failure to do so leads the victim to be prosecuted for the offence of adultery. Further, the testimony of women or victims is not admissible (Jafar 2011, p 33). The punishment for adultery committed by married men and women is stoning to death, and the punishment for fornication is 100 lashes, for both men and women (Naveeda and Razia 2013).
part of Hadood law, and the law of Evidence.\footnote{Under the law of evidence the testimony of two women is equal to one man (Jafar 2011, p. 39).} This latter on the one hand made women man’s property, as well as being responsible for the family honour, while on the other hand giving them even lower legal status than before. These laws, rather than protecting women, made them more vulnerable to abuse, with a high risk of violence in both the private and public spheres (Haq 2005; Akhter 2012). In response to this the women’s organization Shirkat Gah called on other women’s organizations to establish a strong platform, the Women’s Action Forum (WAF) in 1983, to jointly contest these discriminatory laws (Iqbal, Khan and Javeed 2004; Jamal 2005; Jafar 2011; Critelli and Willet 2012; Akhter 2012). This was the period, 1980 to 1990, when a large number of women’s rights organizations were founded (ADBP 1999, p. 3; Iqbal, Khan and Javeed 2004, p. 33; Critelli and Willet 2012; Awan 2012), seemingly as a direct result of the imposition of biased policies and laws against women in the name of Islam (Haq 2005).

Scholars joined the protest, arguing that true Islam advocates equal status for men and women (Alavi 1998; Jamal 2005). This women’s movement was met with strong opposition from the government because under martial law, all political demonstrations were banned, so many activists who took part in the protests were sent to prison. As a result of the high level of protest, the rule according to which testimony of one man was equivalent to that of two women was slightly changed. In the amendment the same law was made compulsory in only financial matters while in other cases this was not mandatory but left to the discretion of the judge (Jafar 2011, p 39).

Although the governments of Banazir Bhuttoo and Nawaz Sharif, after Martial Law, did not offer much growth in NGOs (Critelli and Willett 2012) but then change was observed in NGOs growth with General Musharraf’s Military government, established in October 1999 (Jafar 2011). Musharraf’s stand on the ‘War on Terror’ in September 2001 attracted substantial international funding for NGOs in Pakistan, a sign of their support for his government (Bano 2012, p. 139). The issue of Hadood Law was again raised by NGOs, and since Musharraf was keen to present a liberal image of Pakistan to the international community, he introduced the Women’s
Protection Bill in 2006\textsuperscript{21} and repealed laws discriminating against women (Naveeda and Razia 2013). He also encouraged the participation of women in politics, allocating 33% of seats in local government to women and 17% in National and Provincial Assemblies (Naz et al. 2013, p. 26). Afterwards the Sexual Harassment Bill 2010, Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Bill 2012 were also passed. The efforts of NGOs, particularly working for women’s rights are undeniable in the enactment of these legislative measures for upholding the women status in Pakistan (Awan 2012).

Currently, women NGOs are playing an important role in bringing awareness to women through their programs of advocacy and their focus on education and economic uplifting projects. However, Critelli and Willett (2012) argued that NGOs will only make a real difference when the grip of the patriarchal structure is loosened. They have also noted that most of the NGOs are based in urban areas and run by educated and well off females who do not effectively represent the situation of most women hampered with numerous issues. Furthermore, NGOs are still not successful in devising strategies to address the diverse socio-cultural characteristics of the region. It is also noteworthy that most of the Pakistani women live in poor rural areas and are illiterate. They are not in position to get access to the material published by NGOs nor do they have enough resources to purchase such material (Awan 2012).

NGOs are only able to establish themselves in Pakistani society after a rigorous struggle, and they still face numerous challenges, particularly for those working for women’s empowerment. This includes the NGOs of this research; it is therefore necessary to explore the reasons behind their struggle.

\textbf{5.6. NGOs and Challenges}

Morales and Serrano (1996, p. 101) note that a major part of the Asia Pacific region is under the threat of fundamentalism, where fundamentalists show ‘intolerance towards the beliefs and practices of others’. This is mainly felt in Pakistan and

\textsuperscript{21}The Women’s Protection Bill 2006 repealed some parts of Hadood law; it declared all sexual acts against women as offences. The victim of rape is no longer required to produce four witnesses. Men committing rape are punished with death or twenty five years imprisonment (Naveeda and Razia 2013).
Bangladesh and, to some extent, in Malaysia and Indonesia where a contributing factor is the strong patriarchal structure, where women’s free movement, decision making and empowerment are seen as belonging to Western thought. This has led to a situation whereby female education, polio vaccination and family planning projects are met with strong opposition from some religious groups, who consider having numerous children to be a blessing, and girls’ education as un-islamic. They see women’s rights as a modern concept imposed by secular NGOs nature (Siddique and Ahmed 2012). The increasing opposition of fundamentalist groups to these projects has resulted in attacks on NGOs and the murder of health workers (Shirkat Gah, 2007; Zia, 2009). Refuges for the most vulnerable groups of women are also under constant threat of closure. NGOs, government officials or religious leaders who support the rights of women have also received threats from such groups (Critelli and Willett 2012).

Further, NGOs are seen to be working to promulgate international agendas that are against Pakistan’s socio-cultural interests (Siddique and Ahmad 2012). They are accused of spreading vulgarity, especially among the women in Pakistan, and thus their work is seen as challenging the traditional values of Islamic society (Iqbal 2006). The fundamentalist groups require NGOs to be silent on women related issues, including Hadood laws, honour killing, domestic violence and so on. The reason for this is stated by Critelli and Willett (2012, p. 213) that ‘Non-government organization has also been accused of exaggerating problems, sullying the image of Pakistan abroad and pandering to western agendas’.

NGO staff have also had their life and property threatened by religious extremists. For instance, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a province of Pakistan, a fundamentalist threw a hand grenade at NGO offices and set fire to an NGO-administered girls’ school (Jafar 2011). Similarly, in Baluchistan, the resistances to NGOs by religious groups are further strengthened by classic tribal patriarchy (Siddique and Ahmed 2012). Jafar (2011, p.56), during her study in Loralai,22 Baluchistan, came across a religious declaration (fatwa) passed by local Islamic scholars against local NGOs. She quoted some of the words of the fatwa:

In NGO offices, men and women gather without purdah (a veil, or physical separation between the sexes). They travel in one car without purdah. They

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22 Loralai is a district of Baluchistan-Pakistan.
entice people with sewing machines, dams, and latrines. Women workers of NGOs go to people’s homes and say to the women: ‘Come to our office. We will train you in keeping a clean and healthy house and children. You live in such poverty. You should become an NGO worker. You will be paid very well.’ But NGO workers real purpose and agenda is to lead them astray from Islam.

A similar situation was also conveyed to me by one manager during an interview that a religious cleric at a local mosque had issued a fatwa declaring that work for women’s economic empowerment was prohibited by Islam (see chapter 7). Further, Paterson (2008, p. 334) points out that NGOs have acquired a bad reputation on account of their working environment in which, against the prevailing socio-cultural norms of Baluchistan, men and women work together. In a similar vein, Jafar (2011) also mentioned that conversation between men and women, and women’s free mobility, were viewed by the people as making their women shameless. The women participants themselves also reported that the reputation of NGOs was part of the resistance they faced when participating in projects (see chapters 7 and 8).

NGO activities have also been affected by the ongoing political instability in Baluchistan, which poses a threat to their survival in the region. As previously mentioned in (chapter 2), Baluchistan is currently in a state of upheaval, due to the Baloch political movement, to the Taliban and other religious extremist groups, which have had an enormous, negative effect on NGO operations as well as on women. As a result, they have stopped or limited their activities or withdrawn from the most conflicted areas.

The managers of three NGOs also reported that they faced difficult situations during implementation of their projects. For example, BRSP staff members were kidnapped and held for ransom; two were murdered. A female WESS worker was attacked and seriously injured, while SPO received an extension to a project’s duration because it could not complete the activities within the stipulated timeframe, due to security issues (see chapter 7). This state of affairs is confirmed by the European Commission [EU] (2006, p. 1): ‘this level of insecurity has forced agencies to withdraw, reduce their activities in certain regions, or change their operational approach’. Further, as Critelli and Willett (2012) state women now are more concerned about their safety, and have less attention to spare for their rights.
Despite all the challenges mentioned above, the role that NGOs are playing in Baluchistan, Pakistan for empowering women are worthy of mention.

5.7. The role of NGOs in women’s empowerment, Baluchistan - Pakistan

NGOs played a vital role in high lightening the plight of women and in offering solution (Awan 2012). Number of studies in Pakistan, such as Javed et al. (2006) in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Jan and Hayat (2011) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Khan and Bibi (2011) Gulistan (2014) and Shah (2015) in Baluchistan-Pakistan discussed the positive effects of NGOs intervention on women’s socio-economic empowerment. NGOs have shown great potential for integrating women into the development process in Pakistan (Islam 2000; Shaheen 2012) this can be seen with the work of the three NGOs in this study (WESS, SPO and BRSP). They achieved their aim to mainstream the women in the economic field, which in turn led them to gain slightly improved social status. Islam (2001) Haq (2005) with Khoso et al. (2011) argued that NGOs are one of the actors playing a significant role in highlighting women’s issues, campaigning for women’s empowerment, health and education, violence against women, honour crimes and biased laws. They initiated income-generating projects for women such as providing credit schemes and giving training in home based income-generating activities such as embroidery, sewing cloths, decoration pieces, homemade pickles and so on (Islam 2001, p. 70). NGOs such as Shirkat Gah (SG)\(^{23}\) and the Aurat Foundation (AF)\(^{24}\) also run advocacy campaigns for women’s rights, and play an effective role in policy formation about women. Qureshi (2003, p. 16) reported that NGOs are also involved in providing:

Free legal aid to women victims of discriminatory customs, lobbying with political parties for inclusion of issues related to women in their political manifestos, monitoring incidence of domestic violence against women, gender discrimination and women trafficking.

Scholars acknowledge the efficiency of NGO projects in the field of empowerment through variety of ways (Awan 2012; Shaheen 2012; Ngo and Wahhaj 2012) as their

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\(^{23}\) Shirkat Gah is a national NGO established in 1975, working for women’s empowerment in Pakistan. (http://shirkatgah.org/).

\(^{24}\) The Aurat Foundation is a national NGO established in 1986, working largely for women’s economic, social and political empowerment (http://www.af.org.pk).
objective is to distribute the equal resources for women’s development (Taimur and Hamid 2013). Moser (1989) and Taimur and Hamid (2013) asserts that they are providing services to women, encouraging them to establish their social networks and to gain confidence, which could increase their negotiation power at home (Ngo and Wahhaj 2012). Furthermore, they may achieve a level of freedom of mobility and it may also help them to reduce violence against them or their children (Schuler and Hashemi 1994; Taimur and Hamid 2013). In the context of women’s empowerment, NGOs are likely to give more attention to women’s economic well-being (Shaheen 2012), because their financial status is one of the main factors contributing to their low status at home in Baluchistan. Therefore, many prominent organizations have designed different projects to make women earning members of the family while working at home. NGOs try to focus on home based economic activities for women, first because of restriction on mobility and second because of household responsibilities (Ngo and Wahhaj 2012). Income generation activities include small enterprise development, agriculture, kitchen gardening, livestock rearing, carpet weaving, embroidery and traditional crafts. For this, NGOs provided financial as well as technical services to the women (Parveen 2005), in similar fashion to NGOs working in Baluchistan for women’s empowerment. Therefore, Taimur and Hamid (2013) maintained that women’s income bestowed them with financial independency.

Scholars such as Batliwala (1993), Kabeer (1994), Rowland (1997), Townsend (1999) Mosedale (2005) and Werker and Ahmed (2007) agreed that development organizations can facilitate women in acquiring empowerment by initiating such projects, which encourage their participation, acquisition of skills, decision-making capacity, and control over resources, but that it is women who need to receive benefits and be empowered (Oxal and Baden 1997). That is why the economic empowerment projects initiated by the NGOs in this study mainly focused on the increased participation of women, seeing this as equipping them with the necessary skills to get the benefits of the services provided.

Scholars such as Paterson (2008) and Awan (2012) suggest that the patriarchal tribal system in Baluchistan makes it a difficult place for NGOs to work in for women. Therefore, in order to secure women’s participation; NGOs cannot avoid the socio-cultural context of the region. As Bromideh (2011) states, NGOs’ activities are
dependent on the cultures and environment of the region where they operate. Bond and Hulme (1999) emphasize that NGOs should acknowledge the ground realities before trying to empower the beneficiaries. For this they need to develop social support and to adopt a flexible approach towards the projects that can change according to the current situation. Therefore, Oxaal and Baden (1997) and Ahamad, Hemlata and Narayana (2015) recommended that strategies should be devised to encourage women’s participation. For example, they suggested that to deliver training to women, the location and timing of trainings should be considered, as this may facilitate more participation. The three NGOs of this study also organized trainings within the locality where the women lived, for their accessibility; this in turn increased their participation in trainings. To address the socio-economic context, NGOs propose income-generating activities that require minimal or even no mobility of women. Further, female staff interact with the women participants (see chapter 4). On account of these flexible strategies, community people accept such projects and allow their women to participate. Paterson (2008, p. 338) argues that women empowerment projects involving women in traditional embroidery work are actually promoting and maintaining the same traditional roles and patriarchal structure, rather than addressing women’s intellectual development. On the contrary, I argue that these projects have made more space, however slowly, for women in the patriarchal structure. It is essential for NGOs to devise projects for women’s empowerment that are accepted by the men, so that they permit their females to participate. Furthermore, the projects of this study are gradually changing women’s status at home for example, making them earning members of the home, giving them some role in decision making (see chapter 8). NGO projects cannot confront centuries-old traditions because by attempting to do so, they risk failure. Mosedale (2005) also affirmed that some development interventions have failed due to the lack of understanding of local circumstances.

This understanding of the local circumstances of targeted areas is very important for NGOs’ successful implementation of a proposed project. On that basis, they develop strategies to ensure beneficiaries’ participation, which they could not do without acknowledging the local context. In order to secure people’s participation, NGOs have to adopt workable strategies that help them gain wider acceptability among the community; this in turn enables them to work harmoniously, having cast off or
amended their negative image. One of these strategies is social mobilization, which was adopted by the three organizations of this study in order to generate a common consensus among the community about their projects.

5.9. Social mobilization

Social mobilization is a process through which awareness is raised among the community about the availability of a program, with the aim of promoting participation. It is one of the vital strategies that are used to bring sustainable change in the behaviour of a community (WHO 2006). McKee (1993, p. 4) explains that

Social mobilization is the process of bringing together all feasible and practical intersectoral allies to raise awareness of and demand for a particular programme, to assist in the delivery of resources and services and to strengthen community participation for sustainability and self-reliance.

NGOs use this to inform the people about the project and to become closer to them. This mobilization is about persuasion, because they actually persuade the community to participate in the project. The three NGOs (WESS, SPO and BRSP) had carried out social mobilization as a first step in implementing their projects, something they continued till the end of the projects in their targeted communities. This is usually done prior to initiating the project, and continued throughout its duration, as the aim is to get community acceptance and the ongoing participation of beneficiaries. This is what Gosh (2009, p 485) points out, that ‘NGOs can convince powerful groups mostly in accommodative, gradual and incremental ways to accept change’. The length of time of social mobilization depends on the community’s social and cultural situation and on the general image of the NGOs, as well as on the nature of the NGO project.

Lee and Chan (2011, p. 44) argue that ‘mobilization is a mechanism through which people are actually drawn into collective action. It involve persuasive attempts to activate or change people’s attitudes and/or behavioural intentions’. In social mobilization, the community is motivated through persistent efforts to change their behaviour towards new things, so that they adapt or participate in it to receive benefits. It helps people to develop their understanding, which should be followed by action. In the present study the three NGOs prioritized social mobilization, giving it particular attention because strong social mobilization is one of the factors vital for
successful implementation of a project. This is because it changes the mindset of the people making them aware of the necessity of acting differently in order to receive the benefits. As Lee and Chan (2011, p. 44) further stated ‘it is persuading people about the worthiness of the cause…necessity and/or effectiveness of the planned collective action’.

Social mobilization is an intrinsic part of the work of the NGOs, raising awareness in the local community about the upcoming project. With its help they organize the people whom they target for participation in their project, as well as clearly addressing any concerns that could be raised by the community. Scholars such as Hassan and Nargiza (2002) argue that it is not a onetime activity but rather a complex and continuous process involving a two way dialogue between social mobilizer and community members/individuals/key community persons. The social mobilizers meet with the community people, introduce their organization, emphasize the need for and importance of their project and the role that the community would be expected to play in the implementation of the project. The community is free to share their ideas and to discuss their concerns of the project with the mobilizers who, as representatives of the NGO, clarify all things pertaining to the project so that the community will be satisfied, participate in and then own the project (World Health Organization 2006).

The mobilization phase in this study entailed the social mobilizer setting up meetings with key people: for example, the local school teacher, the Imam (religious cleric) at the local mosque, a community social leader, tribal head, political leader or any elder of the community who is very senior in age and well known to most of the community. Cernea (1984) also agrees that NGOs should include the local key people, because their views can affect the opinions of people in general. Therefore, social mobilizers firstly brief these key people about the project and the benefits. If they are satisfied they call other community people and then the NGO arranges a full-fledged meeting with them. Such meetings are held frequently, to reduce community resistance and to gain their trust, so that the NGO can start their project.

The purpose of such meetings is to organize the community, build consensus and address any apprehensions; to gain their support and eventually to create a general

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25 Social mobilizers are staff member of the NGOs. They are usually the first NGO representatives at the community level, who hold talks regarding the NGO project.
environment supportive of project implementation. Men discussed the project activities at home and eventually their women gain some initial information about the projects. Social mobilizers then hold individual talks with specific beneficiaries, providing further information about project activities, the expected role of the beneficiaries and the benefits to them. In the case of this study, three NGOs sent their female staff (social mobilizers) to meet with the targeted women participants in the project to mobilize them.

NGOs operating in diverse areas of human welfare, and especially women’s empowerment, have successfully secured their position in Pakistani society, because of their efficiency in service delivery. Their growth is an indicator, recognized by the Government of Pakistan, of their role in promoting social welfare programs in Pakistan (Islam 2000, p. 18). NGOs have also shown themselves to be more organized than when they began, operating in a cohesive manner and trying to develop their relationship with the Government, as their representatives, in some cases, are connected to the Federal and Provincial Assemblies (for example, members of Boards of Directors). Their cost effectiveness, ability to work in rural areas, outreach to the local people, people’s involvement in the project activities and their sense of ownership, has been widely acknowledged. In addition, the effectiveness of some NGOs’ work has left a positive impact on the lives of their beneficiaries, which has led to an improvement of the general image of NGOs (Pasha and Iqbal 2002, p. 890). These include the three NGOs in this study.

It can be seen that NGOs are operate within quite diverse political and social environments. Despite opposition, they are attempting to persuade the community to accept participation in their empowerment projects, to work with them without creating a more challenging environment.

**Conclusion**

The above review analysed NGOs and their historical development in Pakistan, and highlighted their endeavours to survive and progress in the dominantly patriarchal structure of Pakistan. Importantly, NGOs work parallel to government so that they continue to receive government support. Furthermore the bottom up approach of NGOs means they work closely with the people and are thus able to provide instant services to its beneficiaries.
The patriarchal mind set offers resistance to NGOs working for women in Pakistan and particularly in Baluchistan (Paterson 2008) but despite these challenges NGOs have been contributing to the wellbeing of women through health, education, advocacy and income generating projects. For this, NGOs explicitly emphasize the participation of women in such activities which can bring positive effects into their lives, leading to their empowerment (Ahmad, Hemlata and Narayana 2015). Scholars (Awan 2012; Gulistan 2014) argue that the empowerment of women requires the change in patriarchal structure of the society, however they do appreciate the efforts of NGOs as facilitator to bring women into the mainstream of empowerment (Shaheen 2012; Ngo and Wahhaj 2012). NGOs adopted various strategies by considering the socioeconomic and cultural circumstances of the region to work for the women’s empowerment. One of these strategies is the social mobilization which is the common strategy of NGOs working in Baluchistan to introduce the project among the community and receiving their acceptance.

This review of literature suggests that women in Baluchistan are marginalized and vulnerable in all aspects of their lives. Compared to their male counterparts their literacy, access to health care services, economic participation, freedom of movement and status at home are very low. The reason behind this is the strong patriarchal structure, with tribal and cultural practices that knit together to govern women’s lives. Feminists explained the patriarchal structure as a system of male authority that directs women’s behaviour from private to public spheres. The classic patriarchal structure describes well the characteristics of Baluchistan. The patriarchal theory, in combination with intersectionality theory, is adopted to explain the combined effect of patriarchy, political instability and weak infrastructure on women’s empowerment.

Baluchistan having the characteristics of strong patriarchal structure with weak infrastructure gives solid ground for NGOs to initiate projects for women’s empowerment by focusing on their earning capacities. With the assumption that income is one of the essential steps of having some control on one’s life. Therefore there is a need for an in-depth study to investigate the impact of such projects initiated by NGOs on women living in these circumstances. This was done by designing an appropriate research methodology which is explained in detail in the next chapter.
CHAPTER SIX: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this research, beginning with the justification for taking a feminist standpoint, and my positioning as the researcher. This is followed by a discussion on the mixed method used in this research and the rational for using mixed methods and its benefits for the research. I also describe the data collection methods and how I used them to collect data from each set of participant. I then explain the process of selecting the sample, the NGOs and the research participants, descriptions of the study sites, the study participants, and the sampling frame adopted. The steps taken to collect data and the process of data analysis are also explained. Finally, the ethics approval process and the limitations of this study are discussed.

6.1. Epistemological positioning

The ways in which this study was conceptualized and conducted was framed by the positioning of the researcher. I have adopted a feminist standpoint. The feminist standpoint theory focuses on the identity and concerns of particular sectors of society, with broader implications for the way in which research is done. One aim is to ensure that the voices of marginalized, subjugated groups are heard. This is done through the ways in which the research is designed, conducted and reported (Bazeley 2013 p. 26). I chose the feminist standpoint because the women I was working with were socio and economically marginalized; this theory gives key representation to women’s voices in the research process.

The feminist standpoint emphasizes the value of listening to women’s voices about the phenomenon under consideration, ensuring their perspectives are central in the production of knowledge (Lorber 2012). As Hesse-Biber 2012, remind us, ‘knowledge is achieved through paying attention to the specificity and uniqueness of women’s lives and experiences’ (Hesse-Biber 2012, p. 9). The goal of feminist
standpoint research is to pursue matters that shape women’s life experiences and to support change. It also discovers factors that can be important in bringing about social change (Brook 2007; Miner and Jayaratne 2014). For this, as Brook (2007) suggests, the knowledge gained through analyzing women’s experiences can be used to understand the discrimination they are facing, as well as to find a solution for it. This framework utilizes data gathered from the women’s point of view, and analyses women’s stories from a critical feminist perspective.

Harding (1987) argues that research exploring women’s issues should be designed from the women’s perspective. Whether it is carried out by men or by women, the main focus is to explore the women’s experiences. Jaggar (2004) argues that women produce more reliable research because, as the oppressed class, are likely to have a better understanding of the challenges faced by women. Whereas men would probably not give much consideration to such issues because they do not experience the same as them the same as women do. Further, Lorbor (2012, p. 184) suggests that women are aware of other women’s problems and ‘sensitive to how other women see problems. … are better able to design and conduct research’. She explained that women, being more attached to families and homes, are in a better position to have more detailed insights into the experiences of other women. However, the feminist standpoint has been criticized as being a very women-centered approach, as women gather information from other women. Researcher and participants are both women, so the generated data could possibly be partial. It is because, the researcher’s own position as a woman may affect the research process or the participants’ responses.

Research from a feminist standpoint enables discussion grounded in the experiences of the women’s social and personal world, utilizing the experiences of the women participants to gain insight into the concept under study (Shields and Darwin 1993). In my study I focus primarily on women’s voices, as their experiences, in terms of their participation in the project, are central to my thesis. This is because they are the beneficiaries of the NGO projects and are likely to be in a position to analyse the impact of these projects on their status. However unlike gender resistance feminists, who insist on including only women’s voices in research, I have also included men’s voices (five male NGO managers, along with one female manager), as they were the ones in charge of the projects. They implemented the project and have clear idea
about the social environment of the areas. In order to gain a better understanding of
the women’s experiences of the projects, I focused on their social setting, and the
specific circumstances which led to their involvement in the projects. This is
important, as the feminist standpoint emphasizes on understanding the women’s
experiences at a particular time and place and within a set of social relations
(Hartsock 1998, p. 124). Scott (1999) also added that the local conditions and values
should also be considered because it affects women’s participation and influences their
experiences. Eventually, this can yield rich information on the topic under study.

In adopting the feminist standpoint, I was able to explore the experiences of women
participants of the projects who were living in a strong patriarchal structure, further
exacerbated by insecurity and weak infrastructure (see chapters 2 and 3). Talking to
women participating in these empowerment projects provided the opportunity to
understand how their involvement creates space for change. The participating
women, as the less privileged class of society, with minimal access to resources, can
provide insights into their participation in the projects, the problems they faced, the
strategies they used to overcome them and subsequent changes that came about in
their lives, all of which can be better analysed by using the feminist standpoint.

This enables the researcher to take into account women’s everyday experiences
through paying particular attention to the gaps that occur when women try to fit their
lives into the dominant culture’s way of conceptualizing their situation. This
standpoint helps us to understand the complexities of women within multifaceted
situation (Smith 1987). Moreover, by adopting the feminist standpoint approach I
was also able to gain insight into the lives of the women, bringing their voices to the
forefront with regard to their own concepts of empowerment. It helped me to discuss
their needs which, if addressed by future projects, could bring further positive change
in women’s lives.

Research conducted around women’s experiences, regarding their oppression,
struggle and achievements, can be addressed by taking the feminist standpoint,
because the information which women provide reflects their own experiences
regarding the concept under study (Lorber 2012; Bazeley 2013). Similarly, in this
study, as a female, I was able to visit the women’s homes and talk with them about
their involvement in the project. They were relaxed in talking with me since it is generally easier for a woman to share her feelings and experiences with another woman (Jayaratne and Stewart 1991). However, it was not only my being female that helped, but also the fact that I came from the same region and understood the male dominant societal structure and women’s oppressed status. It would be impossible for a male researcher to gain such direct access to the women because, in the patriarchal structure of Baluchistan, male conversation with females generally meets with disapproval. Furthermore, the data collected by a male researcher would most probably not be rich, because women might not be comfortable discussing their experiences with someone of the opposite sex. Thus, feminist research understands the experiences of women in the social, economic and political aspects of their lives in the patriarchal setup. It further helps to uncover the aspects of oppression they feel as women, and the efforts they put into achieving emancipation in their lives.

Thus, I take a feminist standpoint as my epistemological positioning for this study. In the next section, I discuss my position as a researcher

6.2. My position as a researcher

This section explains my position as a researcher. As a native of Baluchistan, my position as a researcher has been both advantageous and disadvantageous. I know this region well. I grew up in this area, which gives me the advantage of speaking the national language, Urdu and knowing the local culture. I understand the value of the traditional patriarchal structure and am familiar with the local customs and practices. However there were also disadvantages, one being my class background, which was different from that of most of the woman with whom I was conducting my research. This meant that even as an insider of Baluchistan, my middle class background and higher education distinguished me from the women I interviewed, who could be described as the disadvantaged class. There was much about their lives that I did not know. I was not a foreigner but I was different to them on account of my privileged life.

My parents reside in an urban area of Baluchistan, are financially stable and, most importantly, are educated and support me in pursuing my studies. I am privileged, as a PhD student studying at an international University. Not having suffered the same social pressures of inequality myself, meant that I had to learn about the day to day
lives of local women from Baluchistan by listening to their experiences and recording their stories.

An interpreter accompanied me to all the interviews. The interpreter was a 39 year old lady who had a good command of local languages. I was introduced to her by a woman near where I lived. She could speak Pashto and Balochi. We wore the usual simple national dress (shalwar, kamiz with long chadar), covering us from head to toe when we went to women’s homes to conduct an interview. We both covered our faces, except our eyes, while moving within the community, going from one participant’s home to another. My interpreter also had a good understanding of Baluchistan’s social structure. Our mode of dress and behaviour made the women feel comfortable. I was aware of the importance of behaving in a similar manner to my participants, so as not to create an invisible gap between us. My dress, my language and cultural awareness enabled me to sit with women in their homes, talking about their participation in the projects. The interviews were conducted in their homes therefore, they were relaxed during interviews.

The norm in Baluchistan is to behave respectfully. Most of the participants seemed comfortable about being interviewed in their homes, some were even excited. They greeted me with smiles and in each home I was offered a local drink or black tea, evidence of their hospitality. I endeavored to ensure that my questions were tactful, so as not to offend the women in any way.

However, some women seemed nervous, inspecting me from head to toe. I assumed they were wondering what I would ask them and how they might reply, especially when they saw a pen and diary in my hands. As they became more relaxed talking to me, most of them expressed surprise that my family allowed me to visit their local areas without my brother or father accompanying me. Some even asked my interpreter if I was married and, when they discovered that I was not, they commented that my father must be a modern man to give his blessing and allowed me to study.

Being well aware of these differences, as well as the social structure, I always began with a traditional greeting of As-salamu alaykum, which means ‘May peace be with you’, and then began a casual conversation about the weather, which then led to a more formal interview. After the pleasantries were completed, most of the women
were eager to share their experiences about their participation in the projects, speaking enthusiastically and freely. They shared their suggestions for future empowerment projects. They reported that they had never before been given an opportunity to explain what they felt or how they felt before taking part in these projects.

I could also sense how some of them had a feeling during the interviewing process, of actually being important. I put this down to the fact that I was documenting their stories by writing down what they said or getting them to speak into an audio-recorder. They spoke with enthusiasm, sharing their aspirations for themselves and for their children; I asked them questions that no one had ever asked them before. In this sense, my research was a way to give a voice to these women’s needs, problems, feelings, and the struggles they have in bringing about change in their lives. Despite the differences of class and education between myself and these women, we still shared a Baluchistan identity, firstly as women, secondly by belonging to the same region and thirdly through our knowledge of the patriarchal structure. This advantage allowed me to visit the women in their homes and to collect valuable and rich data that provides an insight into their lives.

I also conducted five interviews with the managers of NGOs, all of whom were male and educated, residing in urban areas and working in a professional environment with other female staff. They were relaxed and comfortable during the interviews, in which they gave details about their understanding of the project and showed awareness of the importance of the research I was doing. In order to gain insight into the impact of the projects, I chose the mixed method for carrying out this study, which I discuss in the next section.

6.3. Methodology of the research

I have taken a mixed methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods. This section explains the rationale behind this choice to assess the impact of the NGO projects from two different angles (qualitative and quantitative). Jayaratne (1983; 1991) advocated the use of the mixed method in feminist research in order to generate effective data. In a similar vein Reinharz (1992) stated that the combination of methods can enlarge the feminist’s scope of exploring and understanding the critical issues affecting women’s lives. Feminist scholars such as
Jayaratne and Stewart (1991) and Reinharz (1992) identified that using the single method approach would not be sufficiently helpful to understand all aspects of the phenomenon under study, whereas the mixed method allows a more comprehensive study. They also argue that using the mixed method in a single study adds validity and a component of generalizability to the research, because it uses different methods of data collection and techniques of assessment in seeking to understand one phenomenon. A combination of methods can give a degree of generalizability and, at the same time, in-depth knowledge of participants’ perspectives (Creswell and Clark, 2007). It is also recommended when the researcher does not feel comfortable with having only one form of data to address the research problems with. It is more practical in two senses: it gives the researcher a free hand to use all necessary methods to address the problem, and helps to analyse the research problem both in numbers and in words (Creswell and Clark 2007).

This approach helped me to minimize the weakness of each method by adopting the strengths of the other method, because both methods supplement each other’s strengths and weaknesses (Jayaratne and Stewart 1991; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Neuman 2000; Johnson and Turner 2003; Leckenby and Hesse-Biber 2007; Creswell and Clark 2007; Cresswell 2009). The combination of both methods enhances the richness of data collected around the topic under study and creates a more viable understanding.

Harding (1987) did not give much consideration to data collection methods in feminist research; however, she does advocate the interview as the preferred method of data collection in feminist research (Smith 1987; Reinharz 1992) because interview provide ‘the principal means by which feminists have sought to achieve the active involvement of respondents in the construction of data about their lives’ (Graham 1984, p.115). Similarly Hesse-Biber (2014, p.190) and Byrne (2004) favour the use of the in-depth interviews in feminist research, because it allows direct access to the voices of women.

The quantitative data gives a general sense of the participants’ responses. The qualitative data, gives more detailed participant responses (Creswell and Clark 2007; 2008; Miner et al. 2012). Given the mixed methods study design, I employed a structured interview schedule and in-depth interviews (Creswell 2009). As described in the next section.
6.4. Data collection methods

I adopted two different methods of data collection, in-depth and structured interviews. Interviews increase the interaction between the researcher and the participants, which eventually helps the researcher to reconfirm any information provided during the course of the interview (Bloch 2004). These further enabled me to observe my respondents and build rapport with them (Adler and Clark 2008).

For the qualitative part of my study, I devised two in-depth interviews, one for the six NGO managers (Appendix 2) and one for the six women participants (Appendix 4). In-depth interviews are a very useful method by which to collect data from a small number of participants as it offers comprehensive information about their thoughts, experiences and behaviour towards the situation or program being studied (Boyce and Neale 2006). Such interviews are flexible in nature and facilitate the researcher by allowing for the clarification of information given, as well as encouraging the participants to speak more by probing for further information (Byrne 2004; Byrne 2012). On the basis of the merits of in-depth interviews, I chose this method in order to gain a clear and detailed understanding about the projects undertaken by the NGOs and their impact on women’s lives.

For the survey I developed a structured interview schedule (Appendix 3) for the 60 women participants of the project. Structured interviews are extensively used in quantitative research (Neuman 2000; Cargan 2007; Adler and Clark 2008) comprise a set of carefully structured and ordered questions that are asked by the researcher when interviewing each respondent (Bloch 2004; Cargan 2007; Phellas, Bloch and Seal 2012).

The researcher reads the questions to the respondent and then records the answers (Adler and Clark 2008). This method helps the researcher to gather focused, concise information from the participant because the researcher asks the questions referred to in a structured interview (Dunn 2010). Structured interviews are a very useful way to acquire specific information from the broader population, allowing the researcher to present the responses in the form of numerical data (Seal 2004). I used this component in the research so as to be able to present a broad picture of women’s experiences of participation in the projects. Thus, the specific and broad information
gathered from the survey, and the detailed data from the qualitative interviews, enabled me to conduct a comprehensive study.

In June 2013, I again went to Pakistan, for the data collection, I again met with NGO officials, to discuss their projects. This helped me devise both the in-depth and the structured interviews. Some of the NGO officials whom I had met on my first visit directed me to colleagues of theirs whom I had never met, or had only spoken to on the phone. I was given organizational brochures, pamphlets, pictures and some project reports, all of which, I analysed in order to better understand what the projects were about, and to help me drafting my interview questions. Both the conversations and documents were of great assistance to me in checking the suitability of the projects for my study. I then drafted the interview questions, passing them by my supervisors and after receiving their guidance via email, I finalized them.

McGuirk and O’Neill (2010) state that pretesting done with a sub-sample of the target population allows the appropriateness of the interview questions to be measured in regard to the study participants’ understanding and to the aims of the research, and thus improves the quality of the data. The interview questions were piloted on sample participants from both groups, before the formal data collection and some adjustments were made. I found the process of pretesting helpful in structuring the in-depth and the structured interviews. After many amendments, new questions were added and repetitive or vague questions were deleted. For example, I originally had a question about women’s control of income but then realized that I needed to clarify it, because the female pilot participants asked me whether I meant control of personal income or of family income. For clarity, I added the word ‘personal’. After final approval from my supervisors the formal data collection was begun.

In order to conduct the interviews, I selected the NGOs participating in my research through following way.

6.5. Selection of NGOs

This section explains the process of selecting relevant NGOs. For this, I used the internet to locate all those NGOs working in the women’s field in Baluchistan. I
found approximately 37 NGOs on the internet, all which were working in Baluchistan, and looked for those that were running projects in women’s economic empowerment. I then explored the websites and the publicly available information on these NGOs to get some idea of whether or not they were suitable for inclusion in my study. I contacted six NGOs by phone, informing them of my research, and four agreed to take part. Before applying for ethics approval, I visited Pakistan to meet face-to-face with the representatives of these four NGOs, and provided them with a detailed description of my research project, and asked if they would be interested in participating in the project. They in turn provided me with their permission letters (Appendix 1) in December 2012, which I later submitted, along with the ethics application, to the University of Western Sydney.

Subsequently, one NGO withdrew from the study, despite my frequent attempts to establish a reason. I continued my research work with the remaining three, the WESS, the SPO and the BRSP.

6.5.1 Profiles of the Three NGOs

The Water, Environment and Sanitation Society (WESS)

The Water, Environment and Sanitation Society was established in 1999 as a non-profit, non-political and non-government development organization, registered under the Societies Registration Act. It has carried out 70 different projects in 23 Districts of Baluchistan, funded by different donors. Projects have included activities for community development and empowerment, women’s social and economic empowerment, child rights and child protection, human rights promotion, education, sustainable livelihoods and natural resource management. WESS has also been involved in providing humanitarian assistance to people following disasters such as earthquakes. WESS promotes a participatory and rights-based approach in the implementation of all of its projects.

Its vision is a healthy and prosperous society where resources are equitably managed and sustained. Its mission statement is to bring lasting improvement in the quality of life of marginalized communities, especially women and children.26

26 For details http://www.wess.org.pk/testing/
The Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO)

SPO was established in 1987, a collaboration between Government of Pakistan and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). In 1994, SPO established its individual status and registered under the Companies Ordinance 1984. It is a non-profit, non-political, national organization, carrying out a wide range of projects in different Districts of Pakistan, with the financial assistance from various donors. Its four main program areas are: Democratic Governance, Social Justice, Peace and Social Harmony and Humanitarian Response. Projects have included women’s empowerment, development, livelihood, literacy and violence against women, under the program area of social justice.

Its vision is a democratic, socially just and tolerant society guided by participatory principles which realizes the full potential of its people and their aspirations for sustainable and self-reliant development.27

The Baluchistan Rural Support Program (BRSP)

The Baluchistan Rural Support Program (BRSP) was started in 1983 as the ‘Pak German Self-help Initiative’, a collaboration of the governments of Pakistan and Germany. It was implemented by the Local Government of Baluchistan with the collaboration of the German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ) advisory group, registered under a new organizational structure with the Companies’ Ordinance of 1984, as a non-profit organization. It has carried out several projects across different Districts of Baluchistan, focusing on education, health, water and sanitation, community physical infrastructure, community capacity building, livelihood enhancement and responses to emergencies, with the financial assistance of different donors.

Its vision is a prosperous Baluchistan where people, especially the poor and women, are provided with equal livelihood opportunities and are not socially and economically excluded.28

After selecting these NGOs, I then selected the projects and the sites where these organizations were running their projects. I wanted to concentrate on.

27 For details http://www.spopk.org/spo/

28 For details http://www.brsp.org.pk/index.php
6.6. Study sites

My study sites covered three Districts, Quetta, Pishin and Nasirabad in Baluchistan, with one NGO in each district, each of which was conducting women’s economic empowerment projects.

Table 1: NGOs projects and study sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Study sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WESS</td>
<td>Women’s Economic Empowerment: Baluchistan (WEE:B)</td>
<td>Quetta District: Suburbs of Hazara town, Nawa Killi, Samungli, Hudda, Killi Ismail and Sariab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPO</td>
<td>Livelihood Grants for Empowering Marginalized Women (LGEMW)</td>
<td>Nasirabad District: Tehsil Chattar and Union Council Shah Pur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRSP</td>
<td>Livelihood Enhancement and Protection (LEP)</td>
<td>Pishin District: Rod Mulazai and Killi Dilsora</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I selected these sites, because of the limited timeframe for the field work and the constraints of financial resources. In addition, these sites were considered relatively safe and accessible.

WESS has carried out projects in five Districts: Quetta, Mastung, Loralai, Zhob and Qilla Saifullah, but I chose Quetta, a District where projects were carried out in six sub-urban areas; Hazara town, Nawa Killi, Samungli, Hudda, Killi Ismail and Sariab.

Quetta is the provincial capital of Baluchistan, a metropolitan city about 1,690 meters above sea level. It shares boundaries with Ziarat, Qilla Abdullah, Pishin and Mastung Districts and has 2 Tehsils and 67 Union councils. It is a multicultural and multi-lingual area, the main ethnic groups being Pashtoon, Baloch, Brahvi, Persian and Punjabi. The infrastructure within the city includes transport, medical and educational facilities, rated as better than those in other parts of the province (Government of Baluchistan and UNICEF, Quetta 2011). Suburban areas are in proximity to the city but are not developed, and resemble rural areas, with no uniform style of housing. Some houses are made of bricks and

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29 District consists of Tehsils, which are further divided into Union Councils.
concrete, while others are built with mud and bricks on narrow streets. All have small, congested rooms, with two to four average rooms per home, their structure and size being as irregular as the outside appearance. The first entrance usually consists of a gate or a normal sized rusted door, covered with a cloth or chick\textsuperscript{30} made of bamboo material. Most homes do not have furniture, partly due to poor financial conditions and partly due to the very congested rooms. The floors of the rooms were covered with either a piece of carpet or with locally made sheets, and while sitting or walking on them, one could feel that the floor beneath was rough. Although there was electricity, gas and TV sets in their homes, the sanitation system was very rudimentary with open drains both inside and outside the homes. Most homes had a small water storage drum near the washroom or kitchen, although some had small water tanks on the roof.

The second NGO, SPO, carried out project in three Districts: Nasirabad, Bolan, and Ziarat. I selected Union Council Shah Pur located in Tehsil Chattar of District Nasirabad. Nasirabad is located in the middle of Baluchistan, sharing its boundaries with other Districts Dera Bugti, Jhall Magsi, Jaffarabad and Bolan. It has 4 Tehsils and 24 Union Councils, with a total area of 3,387 square kilometer and the major ethnic group is the Baloch (Government of Baluchistan and UNICEF, Nasirabad, 2011).

BRSP, carried out project in the four Union Councils of the District of Pishin: Ajram Shadizai, Rod Mulazai, Killi Dilsora and Kut, I chose to focus on Rod Mulazai and Killi Dilsora. Pishin is located in the north of Quetta, sharing its boundaries with Qilla Saifullah, Ziarat District and Afghanistan. It has 4 Tehsils and 38 Union councils. Its total area is 5,850 square kilometer and Pathan is the main ethnic group (Government of Baluchistan and UNICEF, Pishin, 2011).

The two Districts, Nasirabad and Pishin, are different from Quetta city, as the latter is a metropolitan city, whereas the former are not as developed, having inferior markets system and lower infrastructure. Both are predominantly rural areas and are similar in terms of infrastructure, their differences lying in their geographical position and the major ethnic groups.

\textsuperscript{30} Chick: a hand bamboo door covering woven.
The two union councils, Killi Dilsora and Rod Mulazai in the Pishin District, and Shah Pur in the Nasirabad District, are the remote areas. Most of the houses at these areas are made-up of mud and clay bricks, which are again coated with a thick layer of mud. The houses occupy a large plot and have big iron gates. Most homes have more than five rooms, also built with mud, and the house is surrounded by a long wall made up of mud bricks or mud stucco.

Figure 3: Participant home, exterior

Source: Researcher
The ceilings of the rooms are made of hollowed tree trunks filled in with plastic, bamboo and local dried grass, all tied up with rope or covered with hand-woven
bamboo sheets and plastic, and supported by planks or girders. The walls are made of un-baked bricks covered with mud stucco. The doors and windows are made of wood, with no iron grill in the windows, which are open during summer and covered by a woolen rug in winter. The mud brick houses are resistant to summer heat and the rooms are almost devoid of furniture, although the floors are covered with colourful old woolen rugs or chatai\(^{31}\) and one side of the room they keep a colourful shining bed quilt locally known as Razai\(^{32}\).

Some interviews were conducted in the winter season in Pishin, I discovered that there were no gas facilities. The floors were covered with the same, handmade woolen rugs, colourful but dirty, and in the center there was an iron stove with a metal tube on one side that ran to the roof and served as a chimney. A big steel kettle of black tea sat on the stove, continuously boiling, and every guest was served that tea. The older woman sat beside the wall and the young women, who could have been her daughters or daughters-in-law, along with their children, sat around the stove.

Sanitation in these rural areas was primitive; the waste system was very poor. Electricity cables were in place but I did not find evidence of electricity being used in these remote areas.

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\(^{31}\) Chatai consists of locally hand woven bamboo sheets.

\(^{32}\) Razai is made up of a silk or colourful velvet covering that is filled with cotton; local women easily sew it at home by hand.
The study participants were selected from the above sites where projects were implemented. The following section discuss about the participants of this study.

### 6.7. Study participants

This section gives detail about the participants involved in the study. As I was keen to learn of the effectiveness of these projects on women’s empowerment, I included two groups of respondents: NGO managers involved in the implementation of empowerment projects, and women were the beneficiaries of these projects. Managers were crucial part of these projects, they had initiated, managed and implemented the projects. I wanted to speak to the managers about their thoughts on the projects and their assessment of the impact of the projects on the participants. I included women participants to know about their experience regarding their participation in the projects. The inclusion of both sets of experiences helped me to understand the details of each project and provided me with a fuller insight into the impacts of empowerment projects. For the sake of consistency and clarity in this thesis, I have used the term ‘NGO managers’ for the participants working for NGOs.
and ‘women participants’ for the beneficiaries of the projects. I selected both groups through sampling process, as explained below.

6.8. Sampling process

I used two different types of sampling, one for the qualitative and one for the quantitative phase of my study. My samples consisted of 6 NGOs managers, 60 women surveyed and out of that 60, I interviewed 6 women, who were beneficiaries of the projects.

To select the 6 NGO managers, I used sampling technique that was purposive and criterion based. Purposive sampling is a technique; whereby the ‘researcher intentionally selects participants who have experienced the central phenomenon or the key concept being explored in the study’ (Creswell and Clark 2011, p.173). I devised two criteria for selecting the NGO managers as study participants. First, that they had been involved in the project from its inception to implementation and secondly, their willingness to talk to me.

I then invited two managers from each NGO to participate in the research. Purposive sampling select cases for a specific purpose, whereas quota sampling is to select a fixed number of cases (Neuman 2000). Limiting the number to six participants enabled me to conduct in-depth interviews with fewer participants, gathering more detailed information. A large number of participants may reduce the chances of collecting detailed information (Creswell and Clark 2007; 2011).

I selected 60 women participants in the three NGO projects, (20 from each project) to participate in a survey I devised that I administered to the women. I surveyed the women to provide some ‘quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population through a structured interview for data collection’ (Cresswell and Clark 2009-8, p. 12). I interviewed 20 women from each organization. The criterion for selection was that the women had been continuously engaged in the NGO activities for more than a year. Among them I, randomly selected the participants for study to give an equal chance to each individual to be selected as a participant (Creswell and Clark 2007). I specifically employed a simple random sampling technique to select 20 women participants from each organization for survey. As explained here,
The WESS organization has set up rooms as temporary training centers in the homes of their female sales agents (FSAs). Manager has shared their addresses with me. I visited these centers, met with the women participants, introduce myself and shared my research purpose with them. I then invited them to participate in the study. I had a list of names and from that I used the simple random sampling technique to select 20 women participants, by putting all their names on small pieces of paper and then randomly picking 20. The women, who gave their consent, gave me their name, home address and times when they would be available for interview. All of them preferred to be interviewed in their own home.

The second organization, SPO, had an established literacy center in their target area, where all women gathered for their project meetings and training. I visited that center, told them about my research and again adopted the simple random sampling method, selecting 20 women participants and repeating the process as described above.

The last organization, BRSP, did not have a training center, so I asked for the list of names and addresses of the women they worked with, a list including approximately 26 names. I selected 20, using the same process as above. I visited their homes in order to receive their consent to interview them.

After completion of the 60 survey interviews, I conducted a further six in-depth interviews with the women participants of the project, using purposeful criteria sampling for their selection. The criteria were that those women who were more vocal and showed more interest in sharing their experiences about the project would be my participants. In order to achieve equal representation, I decided to invite two participants from each NGO that is 6 women from the 60 already interviewed. These 6 women, selected during the course of survey interviews, also gave their consent to conduct in-depth interviews later on. Here, I explain the steps through which I collected data.

6.9. Steps in the data collection

The study was carried out in one phase, with three consecutive steps, over 6 months, from July to December 2013. I first interview two NGO managers from each NGO, with a total of six being interviewed. All interviews were conducted at their offices in
Quetta city at a time of their choice and, with their consent, were audio taped. There are advantages to audio recording it helps the researcher to be a more attentive listener. However, it makes an interview more formal in which a participant may feel uneasy; yet with the passage of time, as the interview progresses, participants may feel comfortable (Dunn 2010). This was my experience.

I then administered a survey, to 20 women participants from each NGO, totaling 60. The interviews were conducted in their homes at a time of their choice, and their responses were recorded in writing on the survey form by me.

I then interviewed two women participants from each NGO; these 6 were selected from the 60 women who had already been surveyed. Their responses were also recorded in audio. However, in some cases during the interview, when women were not comfortable, I stopped the recorder and instead wrote down their responses. I found this was the most appropriate way to continue with the interview, as suggested by Dunn (2010).

Table 2: Diagrammatic summary of the research process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO Name</th>
<th>Participant’s Position</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>No. of participants in study</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Sampling Method</th>
<th>Interview Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WESS 2009-2011</td>
<td>NGO Manager</td>
<td>1 male</td>
<td>6 (2 from each NGO)</td>
<td>Quetta office</td>
<td>Purposive criteria</td>
<td>In-depth Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPO 2008-2012</td>
<td>//</td>
<td>2 male</td>
<td>//</td>
<td>//</td>
<td>//</td>
<td>//</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRSP 2011-2014</td>
<td>//</td>
<td>2 male</td>
<td>//</td>
<td>//</td>
<td>//</td>
<td>//</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WESS SPO</td>
<td>Women project participants</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60 (20 from each NGO)</td>
<td>Suburban Quetta Nasirabad Pishin</td>
<td>Simple random sampling</td>
<td>Structured Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRSP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WESS SPO</td>
<td>Women project participants</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>6 (2 from each NGO)</td>
<td>Suburban Quetta Nasirabad Pishin</td>
<td>Purposive criteria</td>
<td>In-depth Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRSP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.10. Conducting the interviews and data analysis

This section explains the mode I conducted the interviews and started data analysis. The study was conducted in suburban and rural areas where some could understand and speak the national language, Urdu, while some could not. I have conducted all the interviews with managers in Urdu, while with the women, some were conducted in Urdu and some in their local language (Balochi, Brahvi or Pashto), with the help of an interpreter. After data collection, I listened to the recording of interviews at least twice before transcribing it into Urdu. I then translated all the interviews into English. I read the transcripts many times in order to familiarize myself with the data. By doing so I was able to identify common, interesting, noticeable and unique responses.

Before I formally initiated the analyses I shared the transcripts of interviews with the managers for their verification over the phone. I was aware beforehand that women participants would not be able to validate their transcripts in any such way. To address this issue, when I conducted interviews with them, at the end of each interview, me or my interpreter provided summaries of their completed interview for the purpose of their validation.

I carried out a thematic analysis of collected data. ‘The term thematic analysis refers to the process of analysing data according to commonalities, relationships and differences across the data set. The word “thematic” relates to the aim of searching for aggregated themes within data’ (Gibson and Brown 2009, p.127). The process I adopted for this was the Matrix Display Method (Miles and Hubberman 1994). The findings were presented in a raw data matrix where I wrote the responses of all participants to the key questions in rows or columns. I then looked for both frequently repeated and unique responses, in the rows and columns of the table, combining those responses that overlapped or were similar to each other, while keeping the unique responses separate. I called these responses ‘codes’. According to Seidman (1998, p. 107) the process of noting interesting responses, labeling and putting them into appropriate files, is called coding or classifying. Coding helps in reducing and organizing the data in a more sophisticated way to analyse it and make easy to identify the differences and commonalities in data (Cope 2010).
For the survey data collected through interview schedule, I also did the coding which includes giving numbers to each interview and coding the responses of open ended questions. ‘Categorizing the qualitative replies to open-ended questions in a structured interview is one way of turning quality into quantity so that patterns can be detected in data analysis’ (Seal 2004, p 312). I organized the data from the 60 interviews by entering it in an Excel sheet in terms of each project then I further categorized it into tables, which were designed in Microsoft Word. This method helped me to have full understanding of my data on the basis of which I pull out the themes and did further analysis.

6.11. Ethical considerations

The researcher applied to the Human Ethics Committee of the University of Western Sydney for ethics approval, which was received with the protocol H10088 on 14th May, 2013. A copy is included in Appendix 5.

I had two different groups for the interviews and so two information sheets and two consent forms were devised: One for the NGO managers and the other for the women participants. The information sheet clearly described the objectives of my research, as did the consent forms for the participants, so as to ensure their free and informed participation in the study. Before conducting formal interviews, the information sheet (Appendix 6) and the consent forms (Appendix 7) were given to the NGO managers, for their information and consent. Before conducting formal structured interview schedule, I discussed the information sheet (Appendix 8) and consent forms (Appendix 9) with the 60 women participants of my study. Similarly, when I did in-depth interviews again with the six women, I informed them by means of an information sheet (Appendix 10) and recorded their consent with consent forms (Appendix 11). For those who were not literate, either the interpreter or I read out loud the contents of the forms to the participants, before obtaining their formal consent. In the case of the non-Urdu speakers, the interpreter read both forms and received their consent. In order to ensure confidentiality and free consent, it was clearly stated, both verbally and in the information sheet and consent forms, that the participant’s identity would not be disclosed at any stage of the research. It was also made clear to the participants that their involvement was entirely voluntary, so they
could withdraw from the research at any stage. Pseudonyms were used for all participants so that they would remain unidentified.

6.12. Limitations of the scope of the study

One limitation on the scope of this study was the prevailing security situation. The original areas selected in which to conduct the study, prior to data collection, had to be abandoned during the data collection phase, due to unrest within the region. However, alternative project areas were selected for each NGO, so this did not affect the data collection, since the focus of the research was mainly on the projects. It did mean however that it took a little longer to collect data. Furthermore, I only entered these areas when advised by the NGOs that they were safe.

Another limitation was the local language. As a native of Baluchistan, I have a fair understanding of all the local languages but do not speak them fluently. For this reason I hired a local female interpreter for women participants who could not speak Urdu. She was with me during the interviews, and this helped me to gain a better understanding of my participants and the topics discussed.

Since I was aware that both sets of participants might think that my research was an evaluation of their project, I assured them that this was definitely not the case, as it was purely an academic study, an attempt to understand the NGO projects and the way they were affecting women’s lives. I endeavoured to ensure that my interview questions reassured them about the nature of my study, thereby enabling them to share their experiences about the projects in which they were involved.

I acknowledge this research is specific to a particular point in time but I did not have the resources necessary to a longitudinal study. Certainly any assessment of project sustainability would profit from a longitudinal study, but my intention in this thesis is to explore women’s experience of project participation, and their assessment of the extent to which they have benefited, both materially and in terms of their self-perception and self-esteem, from that participation.

Of course, in making any assessment of benefit, there is always the possibility that informants will tell the researcher what they think she wants to hear, particularly if they perceive the researcher to be connected in any way with the project agency and
its managers. This is a well-known field work dilemma. However, I was not only relying women’s words: I also had written observations of their households, and I had discussions with NGOs officials as well. Observation was particularly important. For example, one participant, Bibi, aged 64, had opened a shop in one of her rooms at her home. That room had two entrances, one in the home and the second on the other side of the room. This entrance had a wooden door with an opening outside to the street. During the course of the interview, I found women or children visiting the shop through the inside entrance. Bibi was directly dealing with them. The other door was used by male customers, who she transacted with through her grandson. He opened the door to men, handed over the required items and took payment money which he then gave to his grandmother, Bibi.

This demonstrates that women who might not appear to have benefited from the project, in so far as they remained confined to the home, had devised strategies, apparent to the observer, that allowed them to reap some benefit. Bibi was still confined, and it was her grandson, not she, who sold the item, but she was the one who had control. The project could not change the cultural constraints nor did it improve the women’s mobility however it enabled an old lady to be economically active.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has laid out the details of the methodological framework that was adopted to collect and then interpret data from the field. I approached data collection and interpretation from a feminist standpoint and chose a mixed methods approach for a number of reasons. In the first place, I was aware, given my first-hand knowledge of Baluchistan society, that most women lead confined and constrained lives, but they are not entirely without agency. A feminist approach allowed me to recognize acts of agency, such as that of Bibi above, albeit within a framework of structural male domination. Secondly, as I could not conduct a longitudinal study, I conducted surveys and supplemented them with interviews in order to derive data that was both broad and deep. In the next two chapters, I will present and analyse the results of this method of data collection.
Following this research design I collected the data. The two chapters, seven and eight will demonstrate the detailed analyses of my empirical data. The next chapter is based on the information extracted from the interviews with the managers and with the women.
CHAPTER SEVEN: THE THREE PROJECTS

Introduction

This chapter follows on from the previous chapter, where I justify the research methodology undertaken to recruit the participants in this research, and describe how I conducted the survey and the interviews by utilizing the appropriate methods of data collection. This chapter offers an analysis of data collected in the field. Here I provide background information on the six NGO managers, the 60 women participants and the 6 interviewees, starting with a brief account of their demographic profiles and a comprehensive overview of the three projects. Furthermore, I systematically analyse the strategies of each NGO through which they imparted trainings and given resources to its participants. By exploring the experiences of the managers and women involved in these projects I give a detailed analysis of the difficulties they faced.

7.1. Demographic profiles of the participants

The following section provides the demographic profiles of the participants. First, I focus on the 6 managers, and then the 60 women surveyed, supplemented by more detailed information about the 6 women interviewed.

7.1.1. Demographic profiles of the six managers

This section focuses on the 6 managers, examining their work/job designations, gender, age, education, marital status, number of children and educational qualifications. It also includes the information about their family’s size, the main earning member and the decision makers in their family.
Of the six managers interviewed in this study, five were male and one was female. However, even though there was only one female manager, the majority of the field staff workers in these projects were female who directly interact with the women of the community. All of the managers were over thirty years of age and had local tertiary education.
Table 4: Tabulated presentation of the six managers’ demographic profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Children’s Education</th>
<th>Total people at home</th>
<th>Income earner</th>
<th>Decision Maker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rameez</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Completed education on job</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>Myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zahra</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Father-in-law</td>
<td>Father-in-Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iqbal</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 in middle school and one is infant</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mujeeb</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>primary to secondary</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>Myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naeem</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>primary</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azhar</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>infant</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the male managers were married with children. Most of the children were in primary or secondary school. The one female manager was newly married and did not have any children. However, in Pakistan the government and NGOs authorize three months maternity leave for their female staff, and so she could continue in her job after having a baby.

All the managers lived with an extended family, and in all cases decisions were made by the male head of family, the male who was most senior in age, He held authority over all women, children and junior men (see chapter 2). Two of the managers were the eldest in their families, so they were the decision-makers. Three managers reported that final decisions were taken by their fathers, while the one female manager said that it was her father-in-law.

In the next section I talk about the manager’s job description and their particular duties.
7.1.2. Description of managers’ duties

Among the six managers, three were senior and three were junior managers. Providing an overview of their duties help us to understand the ways the NGOs were managed and organized and the role these managers were playing in their respective projects.

The three senior managers were Rameez, from WESS, Mujeeb from SPO and Naeem from BRSP. They managed all the programs of the organization and maintained donor coordination. They hired the staff for specific projects, monitored work efficiency, provided guidance to the staff and gave final approval to the activities undertaken by the staff in specific projects.

As Rameez and Mujeeb explained:

I deal with all of the staff activities working in different projects; it includes their overall supervision and management as well as visiting the project sites. I provide technical guidance to the staff and resolve staff or project related issues. The reporting of projects’ progress is also my duty. (Rameez, manager)

I am looking after various project activities and monitor the progress of organizations and all related activities. I also maintain contact with the donors and am responsible for reporting the progress of projects. Occasionally I visit the field areas to monitor the project activities where project staff are carrying out their work. (Mujeeb, manager)

Their duties were to see that their staff was carrying out work appropriately, while they provided on-time guidance and support for smooth functioning. They also monitored their staff’s work and visited areas where the projects were taking place, to ensure the proper implementation of the activities by their staff in the targeted community. Being in charge of the programs in the NGO, they coordinated with the donors about the progress of their projects.

The three junior managers were Zahra from WESS, Iqbal from SPO and Azhar from BRSP. They were performing their duties with the guidance and supervision of their senior managers. They made regular visits to the work areas, coordinating and monitoring with their local staff, and were in direct contact with the local community.

As Azhar and Zahra explained:

I have been looking after this project with major supervision of my manager. My duties in this project are to provide assistance to my field staff, along with
them I arrange meetings with the community for their social mobilization. I identify beneficiaries, arrange training and distribute the materials to them provided under the project. I monitor and report all such activities undertaken to my senior managers. (Azhar, manager)

With my field staff I carried out social mobilization in the community. I was also responsible for identifying the beneficiaries, arranged trainings and visits for the FSA and women embellishers of the project. I also supervised FSAs’ work in the community and in exhibitions. My duty is to visit the field and prepare activity reports accordingly. I follow the instruction of senior managers. (Zahra, manager)

Their duties were mainly associated with their respective economic empowerment projects only. They were working closely with the community and involved in the implementation of these projects at the grassroots level. They carried out their project-related duties with the guidance of senior managers.

This discussion clarifies the differences between senior and junior managers. The senior managers looked after overall organization, including staff and maintaining donor relations, while junior managers were focusing only on one project and were totally involved in and responsible for managing and implementing the project in the community. The next section provides demographic information on the women participants in the projects.

7.2. Demographic profiles of the 60 women participants

This section profiles the demographics of the 60 women participants. It includes their age, education and marital status. It further provides information about their children, the children’s education, household financial conditions and the family structure.
7.2.1. Age

Table 7.2.1 Age of women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The age of the participants ranged from 25 to 65; among them 14 were from the age group of 25-35, 24 were between the ages of 36-45, whereas 15 from the ages of 46-55. The remaining 7 were in the 56-65 age groups.

7.2.2. Marital status

Table 7.2.2 Marital status of women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the 60 participants, the majority 39 were married while 12 were unmarried. Five were widows and four were divorced. The participation of mostly married women in NGO can be seen as indicative of their desire to improve the lives of their children, which they could not do with the meager resources available. This is compatible with the results of Faridi, Chaudhry and Anwar (2009) study conducted in Bahawalpur-Pakistan which demonstrated that it was mostly married women who participated in income earning activities because they want to share the financial responsibilities of the household with their husbands. This was often a deciding factor in gaining the husband’s approval to be involved in projects. Even though the financial care of women and children is seen as the role of the man, men can see the benefits of these projects for their family. The involvement of fewer unmarried
women indicates that their parents were more concerned about their marriage and they were deemed as responsibility of their parents, therefore were less likely to get permission to be part of these projects. The participation of four divorced women and five widows suggests that they were more vulnerable; these women were often seen by their male relatives as a burden. The benefits gained from the projects enabled these women to look after themselves and their children.

7.2.3 Women’s children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow &amp; Divorced (1-5)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 25 married women along with five widow and four divorced had children between 1-5, while 14 had between 6-10. The 12 unmarried girls did not have children: having a child out of wedlock is strictly disapproved in both local religion and culture.

7.2.4. Women’s education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matric</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As expected, the literacy level of the women was low, with 40 who had never been to school, 10 who had completed only primary education, and 6 who had passed middle school. Only four completed matriculation\(^33\).

\(^33\) Schools in Pakistan have classes from 1 to 10: classes 1-5 are called primary school, 6-8 are middle school and 9-10 is Matriculation. Schools are also classified on this basis as primary, middle and high schools, respectively.
7.2.5. Women’s children’s education

The 31 women’s children were attending school; as presented above each woman had different number of children who were studying from primary till matric. The children of 7 women did not have any schooling as they have crossed their school age, while 10 women children were infants. Twelve women were unmarried and so did not have children. Comparing the education of the women participants to that of their children, data demonstrates that the rate of literacy of the latter is higher. +

Apparently it seems that now women have a say in their children’s education due to their earning capacity as demonstrated later in this chapter. Indeed a study in Baluchistan by the CIET International (1997) found that children in households where the mother had a say in children’s education were more likely to get enrolled at school than those where women had no say in the educational matters of children.

7.2.6. Male earning members in women’s families.

Table 7.2.6 Male earning members in women’s families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male earners</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father-in-law</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother-in-law</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sons</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all women’s families, the male members were the earners who provided some income for the expenses of their families. In 24 cases this was the husband, in 10 families it was the woman’s father-in-law, in 9 households it was the woman’s brother, and in 7 cases the woman’s father. For 4 of the women, the income earners were their uncle, for 2 it was their brother-in-law, while 4 said that their sons were the main income earner.
7.2.7. Earning sources of male family members

Table 7.2.7 Earning sources of male family members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male earners</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily wages</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual jobs</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkers</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The poor financial condition of these women was the basis for their selection as participants in the projects; they all came from households that generated little income. Males were earning through various means: 18 were working on daily wages, 28 doing casual jobs at different public and private places, such as office boy, cleaner, driver, and waiter at local hotels; 14 worked as hawkers. This demonstrates that their work and income were unreliable and very low.

7.2.8. Women’s families’ structure

Table 7.2.8 Family structure of women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of members in extended families</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Household income was often not sufficient to meet the needs of the large families. As the data shows, all the women were living in extended families. The 29 women said that they were living in a family consisting of 10 people; 26 reported 11 to 20, and 5 stated that more than 21 people were residing in their homes. Faridi, Chaudhry

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34 Daily wages’ means no permanent job. For some people involved in local work, the payment is decided on the basis of the amount of work done within a day. This type of income depends completely on the availability of work, which varies from day to day, and usually the income is very low.

35 Casual jobs’ are those jobs that do not require any experience; nor do they require any particular educational qualifications, and so the salary is very low.
and Anwar (2009) also calculated from her study’s result that women belongs from large households are more likely to take part in earning activities to look after their large family needs.

7.2.9. Decision makers

Table 7.2.9 Decision makers in women’s families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision makers</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father-in-law</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother-in-law</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All 60 women reported that major decisions were made by male members of their family. For 21 women it was their father-in-law, for 15 women their husband, for 11 their father; 8 mentioned it was their brother who took the decisions. The uncle made decisions for 3 women’s households, while 2 relied on their brother-in-law. All these decision makers were the most senior male members in the family.

The next section provides the in detail information about the six women who were selected from the broader survey of 60 women to participate in the interviews.

7.3. Demographic profiles of the 6 women participants

All the qualitative data reported in this section is drawn from the six in-depth interviews.

7.3.1. WESS Participant: Nazish

Nazish lived at Killi Ismail, a suburban area of Quetta city. She was 43 years old, a married woman with five children, three daughters, aged 14, 11 and 5 years, and 2 boys, aged 7 and 12. Nazish had never attended school and was illiterate. Four of her children were at school. The eldest daughter, after completing class 8, stayed at home to help her mother. Nazish was living with her parents-in-law and three unmarried siblings of her husband, a total of 12 people living under the one roof. Her husband
was the only income earner and was responsible for looking after the needs of this big family. Her father-in-law, as head of the family, made all decisions.

7.3.2. WESS Participant: Rubina

Rubina resided at Nawa Killi, a suburban area of Quetta city. She was 42 years old, and had four children: 2 boys aged 17 and 15, and 2 girls aged 13 and 11. She had never attended school, and was illiterate. All her children were at school. Her husband had lost his job because of an illness that affected his eyesight, and was unable to leave the home. They lived with her husband’s family, including his two unmarried siblings. Her father-in-law was the only income earner for the household of ten and, being the most senior, he also made all decisions pertaining to the family.

7.3.3. SPO Participant: Uzma

Uzma resides in the Union Council Shah Pur, Tehsil Chattar, District, Nasirabad She was 25 years old, married, with no children. She had had ten years of schooling. She was living in her in-laws’ home with her husband, her parents-in-law, her husband’s three married brothers, with their children, and one unmarried sister-in-law. In total, 18 people were living in the house. Her father-in-law was the head of the family and made all decisions pertaining to home matters. One brother-in-law was the main breadwinner of the family and earned considerably more than her husband.

7.3.4. SPO Participant: Tahira

Tahira lived at the Union Council Shah Pur, Tehsil Chattar, District, Nasirabad. She was 38 years old, divorced with three children, aged 8, 6 and 3. She had never been to school and was illiterate. Her son and one daughter was at school; the three year old girl was not yet of school age. She had been her husband’s second wife and he had four children from his first wife. Both his wives, and all the children, had lived in the same house. During the early years of marriage, Tahira’s husband was good to her, but then slowly he stopped paying her attention, instead focusing on his first wife. Two years ago she got divorced and then she returned to her parents’ home with her children where her parents along with two married brothers having their children were living. Thus a total of thirteen were living in one home. Her father was the head of family while her brothers were earning on daily wages.
7.3.5. BRSP Participant: Zartasha

Zartasha lived at Killi Dilsora, Pishin. She was 37 years old, a widow with three children, aged 15, 13 and 9. She had never been to school and was illiterate. Two of her younger boys were studying in school. Her eldest daughter has completed class 8 but then could not continue her study because high school was too far away.

It had been three years since she came back to her mothers’ home with her children, after her husband’s death, where her parents, unmarried sister and brother, along with one married brother, his wife and four children were residing. In total, 14 members were living together. Her brother worked for daily wages and was the only breadwinner of the family. He was the head of the family and made all the decisions about the family.

7.3.6. BRSP Participant: Bibi

Bibi lived in Killi Dilsora, Pishin. She was a 64 years old women, married with seven children, none of whom were educated. She had never been to school and was illiterate. Her children were not of school age and were married. Her three sons, with their wives and children, were living with Bibi and her husband, making a total of 15 in one home. Her three daughters were married and living with their husbands at home. Her husband was the head of the family and made all the decisions. He was quite old, did not do any particular work and mostly stayed at home. Her three sons worked for daily wages, not a permanent source of income. However, one of them always found some work, and so he was considered the main income earner of the family.

The next section provides an overview of the three NGO economic empowerment projects.

7.4. Overview of the three projects

This overview provides details of the three projects, run by the Water Environment and Sanitation Society (WESS), Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) and the Baluchistan Rural Support Program (BRSP).

This overview outlines the duration, location, and aims of the projects, intended to improve the lives of disadvantaged women and their families.
I look at how the NGOs worked with the local communities, how women were recruited to the projects and how the training, the services and resources were provided. Also explained is how women participated and utilized the training, services and resources to get benefits. The description of three projects offers an understanding of the different strategies adopted by each NGO, according to the requirements of the different communities.

The details of the NGO projects are drawn from the data collected during my fieldwork, data from the interviews, conversations with the managers, and from the surveys and the interviews with the participants in the projects, supplemented by reports and documentation available on the NGO websites.

First are the details about WESS project. This is followed by a discussion of the SPO and BRSP projects.

7.4.1. Water Environment and Sanitation Society (WESS) Project

The WESS project ‘Women’s Economic Empowerment: Baluchistan’ (WEE:B) commenced in 2009 and was completed in 2011. Its aim was to strengthen the economic position of women by giving them training and facilitating their access to markets. It was carried out in six suburban areas of Quetta District: Hazara town, Nawa Killi, Samungli, Hudda, Killi Ismail and Sariab. Its target beneficiaries were only those women who already had sewing and embroidery skills.

Working with the community and setting up the project

The first stage of the project was to introduce the project to the community, utilizing the techniques of social mobilization. The purpose was to create an enabling environment for implementation of the project. Initially the male staff members visited the selected target areas, where they spent some time meeting with key people and the local community. During these meetings, WESS staff introduced the WEEB project and explained how the project would work with female staff to assist the women in the community to build on their embroidery skills and facilitate their selling of these products. Once the community leaders had given their approval and agreement to support the project, the female staff went door to door, briefing them about the project and its benefits and mobilizing the women to participate in the project.
Identification and recruitment of potential beneficiaries

The NGO female staff, through their frequent door to door visits in each area and their meetings with the women, identified those who could potentially take part in the project as an FSA. The women identified were briefed about the role of FSAs: that they should have sound knowledge of embroidery, should be able to visit the market and attend training at the NGO’s office, and should also be able to provide a room of their home for training or meeting with other women. Among those who showed their willingness and were able to fulfill the criteria, were selected as Female Sales Agents (FSAs). NGO female staff also identified women in the community who had embroidery skills and wanted to improve their financial conditions, but were home bound. These women were then briefed about the project’s benefits for them and invited to participate in the project activities.

Female NGO staff invited them to gather for a meeting at a preselected nearby house at a particular day and time that was convenient for them. When all the women were gathered, staff organized them into groups, each having 15 to 20 women; these were called Women Embellishers (WEs). Each FSA became a group leader and was held responsible for her own WE group. Most of the WEs were home bound and were not allowed by their family members to visit markets, while the FSA, were allowed some mobility by family members. Because they could access the market, were able to move around the community and were able to participate in the project activities, each FSA was responsible for representing her group and facilitating their training in skills enhancement, getting orders from the market and selling the embellished products.

Nazish spoke of the first contact she had with the NGO, a visit from a female staff member:

*One day a woman from NGO visited my home and briefed me about their project. I occasionally do embroidery work for relatives or friends but never thought of selling it. I liked the idea, so I decided to discuss it with my husband. I knew he would not allow me to visit market but to work from home I need to have his consent. I discussed with him and once he agreed, given that I work from home I informed a female NGO staff member that I was willing to participate in the project. She invited me to join a group of women gathering in a neighbour’s home a few days later.*

*Here the NGO introduced us to the project, explaining how they would work with us and introducing the FSAs. They then organized us into groups and called us WEs. I could not be an FSA as I was not allowed to visit markets or*
NGO offices for training. A few days later, an FSA visited my home and told me about the training. I went to her home and participated in it. NGO staff was also there while the FSA showed us how to make new embroidery designs with colour patterns meeting market demand, as well as keeping records of sales and income. (Nazish, participant)

Nazish was already skilled at embroidery, but as she was not aware of the market system and knew that her husband would not allow her to go out, she had never given a thought to utilising her skills to make money. Thus, when she was offered the chance to make income through the FSA without leaving home, she welcomed the idea and determined to seek permission from her husband before she finally participated in the project. Her husband allowed her to be involved in the project on the condition that Nazish would not go to market but would use the services of the FSA.

**Training**

The second stage of participation in the project was training. All FSAs gathered at the NGO office, where female staff trained them in basic business management and quality product design and development. Training focused on embroidery product design, while the development component included the designing and stitching of dresses, awareness of current market demands and fashion trends, selecting attractive colour schemes for the threads, and proper finishing of the embroidery. The basic business management training included the marketing of embroidery products, negotiation skills, record keeping on sales items and the costing/budgeting of each embroidery product according to the amount of work involved.

The role of FSAs was to manage their group and pass this training on to the WEs. Each FSA asked her group to gather at her home, which she used as a temporary training center. The women could easily visit the homes of the FSAs to attend training and for meetings, because it was in the local community. FSAs arranged training during mid-afternoons, when the women were able to participate. The female NGO staff also attended these training sessions, and facilitated and monitored the FSA’s work.
Market visits

In the next stage, FSAs were taken to visit the market to develop their market linkages, accompanied by those few WEs who had managed to get permission from home to visit the market. Before taking FSAs and WEs to visit the markets, female NGO staff had already done a market survey and identified appropriate shop owners. Staff took the FSA and WEs to those shopkeepers and developed their linkages, helped in identifying wholesale markets (where bulk supplies are purchased) and arranged buyer-seller meetings. During these visits FSAs and WEs also learnt which embroidery items the market demanded and shared their knowledge with other WEs who could not visit the markets.

Services utilization and earning

After visiting markets and establishing market linkages, the FSA took orders from markets for different items and then distributed these among the WEs of her group, who were unable to visit the market. When the orders were ready, she picked them from the WE’s home and sold them in the market. The market access problem of these homebound women embellishers was addressed through the FSAs. From the amount the FSA received, she gave 90% to the WEs involved in the preparation, while keeping 10% for herself, as payment for her work, which often extended beyond brokerage: for example, when some shopkeepers placed their orders, they also provided raw materials such as cloth, thread etc. However, if shopkeepers did not provide the raw materials then the FSA had to purchase all the items herself. When she sold the prepared embroidery items, she reimbursed herself the amount she spent on purchasing the required items, plus the 10% from the sale; the rest of the money was paid to WEs. Female NGO staff had set up an effective monitoring system and remained involved in all the activities, assisting all the project participants as and when required. The FSAs kept sales records for their group members, which they submitted to the WESS office in Quetta on a weekly basis for transparency purposes.

Nazish was not able to visit the market, and thus could not make direct links with the shopkeepers, so she had to wait several weeks for her first embroidery order from FSA.
She stated:

*The FSA brought me orders for embroidered dresses or products from the market after some weeks. She also brought cloth, threads etc. which needs to be used in preparation of those orders. I prepared the orders by using my new learning then I informed her and she come to my house to collect the finished articles. She sold them in the market on good price and gave me the money after deducting her 10% and amount which she spend on purchasing the raw material. In this way I started earning (Nazish, participant).*

The FSA was working as a link between the women and the market, due to women’s lack of access to the market and limited understanding of the market system. Nazish utilized her learning from training, worked hard on the orders she received, producing good quality embroidery work that earned her a good market price. She learnt new colour schemes from her training for instance, red combined with gold and velvet with light multi-coloured thread. The benefits she received from the training built on and extended her skills and knowledge of the latest trends.

The price of dresses, shawls, purses and wall hangings would differ, depending on the amount of work involved. Some light embroidery could be done in 15 to 30 days, while some items might take two to three months to complete.

*Figure 7: Embroidery front of dress*
*Source: WESS*
Figure 8: Embroidered wallet, purse and mobile phone cover
Source: WESS

Figure 9: Mirror embroidery work
Source: Researcher
Figure 10: Embroidery, mirror and beads work on wedding dress
Source: WESS

Figure 11: Embroidery work using beads and thread
Source: WESS
The different styles of embroidery she used showed not only her skill but also how her confidence grew through selling her work. As Jan and Hayat (2011) found in their study, training not only increased the skills of women but brought them personal as well as economic benefits with their income, as their self-confidence and independence increased.

**Exhibitions**

Exhibitions were arranged every 6 months in Quetta city, to promote the embroidery work of women embellishers; each FSA represented her WE group. NGOs sent invitations to these exhibitions to other NGOs and also put advertisements in newspapers to ensure a good turnout. For the exhibition, the NGO rented a hall, arranged display tables with stands and hangers. Some WEs also participated along with their FSA in the exhibitions. However, they could only stay at their stalls for short time, as they were not allowed from their home. The main responsibility for managing the stalls was with the FSA, who displayed the embroidery items prepared by her WEs. These hand-embellished products included various embroidery, designed dresses, bed sheets, curtains, sofa cover sets, cushion covers, young
children’s dresses, shoes, mobile covers and handbags. These exhibitions gave a platform to the FSA to market the embroidery work, showcase the high quality of the work of her group and receive more orders from the visitors to the stalls; this was a source of increased income for her as well as for her women group. Further, this gave her a chance to observe other groups’ embroidery work and to communicate this learning to her group members so they could produce further-improved and new designs. Hence, these exhibitions were beneficial for all the women, whether they visited the markets by themselves or worked from home. FSAs brought back new orders for WEs working at home, and the women who directly dealt with the market were open to new ideas for work and as a result received more embroidery orders.

Only four WEs also visited markets and established links with the shopkeepers; this reduced their dependence on the FSA.

Rubina managed to get the permission from her home and dealt directly with the shopkeepers:

*I had prepared the dresses to sell in the market, my brother-in-law or sometimes my younger son accompanied me there to sell these orders. The amount I received on selling these items was very good compared to before. I could see the benefit in this work so started working with them.* (Rubina, participant)

Thus, Rubina proved her ability to work independently by establishing a direct link with the market. These direct links with the shopkeepers benefited her in many ways. Her day to day understanding of the market increased, she developed new links with shopkeepers, which increased her sales. Her skills in negotiating with shopkeepers improved. The growing benefits encouraged her to continue working.

She stated that her brother-in-law or son accompanied her to the markets; this is the general pattern in women’s mobility in Baluchistan (Mumtaz and Salway 2005; Paterson 2008). Furthermore, after developing links with the shopkeepers, Rubina could also utilize the services of her brother-in-law and her son, to work directly with the retailers for future sales.

Twenty of the 60 women participants surveyed were from WESS and received training in embroidery product design and development, and basic business management skills. Out of the 20, 16 were not allowed by their families to visit the
markets, so they used the services of the FSAs, who brought embroidery orders from the market for them and on completion visited the women’s homes to collect the prepared items to sell in the market. With the help of FSAs these women were earning while working at home; however, the FSAs after selling the items, deducted 10% from the total sale. This was compensation for their labour in maintaining contacts at the market, travelling around markets and the women’s home to bring and sell embroidery orders. Although the women were the major beneficiaries, the 10% received by the FSAs motivated them to work hard to identify more shopkeepers. This in turn, meant more money for both the women and the FSAs.

The four women, who had negotiated with their male family members to visit the local markets, had developed their own connections with the shopkeepers. They were dealing directly with them by taking orders and selling embroidery items. As they were doing all the work themselves, they were able to save the 10% that the other 16 WEs had to give to the FSAs. These women were always accompanied by one of their male family members during their visits to market. As reported, these women also participated in the embroidery exhibitions, although their participation was limited. The male family members did not allow them to sit for the whole day at their embroidery stalls; they had to go back to their home after spending an hour or two.

Table 5: Tabulated presentation of WESS women’s training, services and benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainings</th>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 WEs trained in embroidery product design</td>
<td>16 women used FSA’s service for selling and purchasing their items.</td>
<td>Received 90% of total amount for selling their items, while 10% given to FSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and development and basic business management skills</td>
<td>FSA represented their work at exhibitions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through the FSA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 women visited markets and developed links with shop owners for selling their work. Directly participated in exhibitions.</td>
<td>Received full amount</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.4.2. Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) Project

The SPO project ‘Livelihood Grants for Empowering Marginalized Women’ started in 2008 and was completed in 2012. Its aim was to economically strengthen the marginalized women of the area by providing them with livelihood grants. It was carried out in Shah Pur Union Council of Tehsil Chattar in District Nasirabad. The target beneficiaries were impoverished women in the community.

Working with community and setting up the project

As a first step, the male NGO staff also utilised principles of social mobilization to ensure support from key people in the community. Staff arranged several meetings to create a favourable environment for project implementation. Key leaders in the community were informed about the need for this project in their area, as well as the working methodology of this project. The NGO also addressed any concerns of the community with regard to the women’s participation.

After securing community support, NGO female staff during their frequent visits to the community identified local women who were willing to work with them. These women were primarily teachers at the local school or health workers\(^\text{36}\). The female staff visited local schools and health units/centers, where they met the women and discussed their work. The NGO hired those who were willing to work on the project and paid them monthly wages. They were named as Local Resource Persons (LRPs). The LRPs were required to have good knowledge of the community, be willing to visit the SPO office in Quetta and be able to perform all duties assigned to them.

Identification and recruitment of potential beneficiaries

Female staff gave training to the LRPs in the literacy center, which the NGO had established for previous projects in this area, for community meetings, education and training. LRPs were trained by the NGO in identifying the women beneficiaries from the community, forming groups, organizing and managing training, and working with women’s groups. After training, female staff and LRPs, on their visits to community identified beneficiaries in the project: those who were the most vulnerable women in the community. During this phase female staff of the NGO informed the women about the project and mobilized them to participate. Those

\(^{36}\) Women appointed by the government who provide medical facilities, especially to pregnant women. They are also involved in polio campaigns within the area.
women who received consent were asked by the LRP to gather at a literacy center, where they were organized into a group of at least 10 to 15 women. LRPs, with the help of pictures enabled the participants in the projects to write their names, so they could have a bank account. This center was also used for project meetings and training sessions with the women. All of the LRPs, along with the NGO staff, identified the needs of their groups: some women needed sewing kits, while others required livestock.

Tahira, an SPO participant, explained how the LRP came to her:

*One day a lady health worker who had assisted me during my pregnancy and delivery visited my home with a female staff of NGO. She knew about my divorce and desperately weak financial situation. She told me that now she was also working with this NGO as a Local Resource Person (LRP), identifying needy women of the area so that the NGO could help them. The NGO lady then told me about their project and the benefits which I could receive by participating. I told her that I would have to ask my male family members, especially my father.* (Tahira, participant)

Tahira could see how involvement in this project would be beneficial to her and her family, so she decided to talk with her brother. She knew that it was difficult for her brother to look after her and her children and carry the financial responsibility for such a large family.

*Some days later when the LRP with a female NGO again visited my home, I gave them my consent. They asked me to come to the literacy center of the NGO. I asked my brother and on that day he accompanied me to the center. There I found many other women from my area. The NGO staff, along with the LRP enquired about our requirements. I asked for a pair of goats which I could rear at home. There were other women who also wanted goats and we formed a group.* (Tahira, participant)

In Baluchistan goats are valued highly and can be reared at home, and this was the reason why Tahira selected livestock. It is seen as a good investment yielding a good return. There were also some participants who required different resources from SPO. Uzma explained:

*My father accompanies me to the literacy center. LRP asked me about my requirements and I told them that I wanted to establish a center for embroidery and stitching. There were some other women too who were interested in the same thing. Thus, all 8 of us jointly formed a group based on similar interest.* (Uzma, participant)
Training

After identifying the needs of the women, training sessions were designed in goat rearing and in stitching and embroidery, according to the resources women asked for. LRPs, after receiving training from the NGO, replicated it to the women’s group, with the assistance of NGO female staff. In the embroidery skills training sessions, women were trained in different market styles of embroidery, a selection of vibrant colours, costing of embroidery items, negotiation skills and record keeping. In a livestock training session, women were provided with information about government-owned veterinary services in their area and the symptoms of livestock illnesses. The training took place at literacy centers that were within the community, during the day, so that the women could participate.

Resources utilization and earnings

The next step was to give resources to the women; to this end, each LRP was responsible for distributing resources to those in need. Female staff stayed in the District and worked with the LRPs to ensure that the resources were indeed given to the most vulnerable.

The women who asked for livestock were each given a pair of goats. Some used the milk at home or sold it to nearby residents. With surplus milk, yogurt or butter was also made, which was then sold to nearby women. When the number of goats increased, they sold them at the local market. Women dealt directly with the sales when they sold milk to nearby residents, but if they wanted to sell the goat at market, this was done by a male family member because those women were not allowed to go to animal markets. On their follow-up visits, the NGO checked with the women that the men had given them the amount they were due for selling the goats.

After receiving training, Tahira received a pair of goats:

At the literacy center, I received training from NGO staff and LRPs on livestock rearing. They gave us some tips on how to rear livestock at home and symptoms of illness etc. Afterwards I received a pair of goats, one was pregnant and soon after, I had two kid goats. Initially I used the goat milk for home needs, giving it to my children, but with the passage of time when the number of goats increased, I occasionally sold the milk in my neighbourhood. I also sold one goat and received a good amount. I have never been to the markets but I asked my brother and he took the goat there, sold it, and gave me the exact amount. (Tahira, participant)
The goat’s milk was used not only by Tahira’s children but also by her brother’s children. The livestock were beneficial not only for her but for all the family. It also helped them to save that amount that they would normally have had to spend on purchasing milk. Sometimes she sold the milk to neighbouring women who could visit her, but as she could not sell the goats at the market she had to accept her brother’s help.

The women who already had embroidery skills, asked for the sewing kits, and SPO established a skill development center for the participants who required help in embroidery work. The center was equipped with 10 sewing machines, raw cloth, scissors, an iron and other, related items. The NGO also opened a joint bank account for the women’s group, with every member being a joint signatory. In order to purchase the sewing kits, which included sewing machines, scissors, cloth, thread, needles and irons, a purchase committee was formed. It consisted of one staff member, one LRP and two women from the group who were willing to go to the market to purchase the kits. The purpose of this was to make the women aware of the process of checking market prices and purchasing good quality items from the market.

Figure 13: Women in a skill development center
Source: SPO
Figure 14: Women working with sewing machine
Source: SPO

One of them explained:

*The NGO staff, with the LRP, gave us training in the latest embroidery trends, identifying different colour trends, the costing of embroidery items, negotiation skills and keeping a record of sales. After training, the NGO established a skill development center which was equipped with sewing machines, a selection of fabrics, an iron, threads, buttons and other relevant material. I didn’t have any idea about the latest market fashion, nor had I ever thought of the pricing of dresses. But now in the center, I stitched dresses and did embroidery work for the nearby women who came to the center and placed orders for dresses with hand embroidery and stitching. They also brought the fabric with them and on completion they picked up their dresses and paid. The negotiation skills helped me to deal with the customers while fixing the prices of each item. Record keeping skills made me aware of my earnings and helped me to produce the most popular items. I also stitched my own and my family’s dresses at the center. This helped me to save money I could otherwise have given to a tailor. (Uzma, participant)*

The training, along with the sewing machines, helped Uzma work more effectively, the machines saving much time. The training not only enabled her to make new dresses and embroidery according to the latest fashion, but also taught her how to deal with customers and negotiate over prices. She was able to use the center facilities, not only to earn, but also to save money by sewing her own clothes and
those of her family. She went to the center during the day, spending the time required to work on the orders she received, but ensuring she was home before dark.

**Market visits**

The NGO arranged occasional visits to the Quetta city markets to make the women aware of the latest embroidery trends or dress designs. Female staff also took some of the women to the market in the NGOs vehicles with full security. On their return they shared their experiences with the rest of the group. The women in these centers received orders for sewing dresses and embroidery from local women. Further, they also made clothes for their families, thereby saving money.

Of the 20 participants, from the SPO, 12 received training in livestock rearing, while 8 were provided with training in embroidery and stitching skills. The 12 who gained training in livestock rearing received two goats: one male and one pregnant female. This meant that after a few weeks they had baby goats also. They used the goat milk at home and sold the surplus to a neighbouring woman. Women also sold their goats at the local animal market with the help of a male family member, as they were not normally allowed that access.

Eight women were trained in embroidery/stitching skills. The NGO established a skill development center for them equipped with sewing kits, and in their community, at locations that were accessible to the women. Local women visited the center to place orders for sewing the dresses and embroidery work which, when completed, they collected and paid for. The participating women did most of the work on the orders at the center because of the availability of sewing machines and other necessary items for stitching, which were not available in their homes. The amount of time they spent at the center depended on the number of orders they had received from their customers. Out of these eight women, four received permission from their male family members to go with SPO female staff on visits to the city market, to learn about the latest market trends. As outlined above, besides taking orders from nearby residents, women were also able to make their own and their family's clothes at the center. In this way, women were not only earning while working at the center, and without going to market, but were also saving the money which they would normally have paid to tailors to make their dresses.
Table 6: Tabulated presentation of SPO women’s training, resources and benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainings</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Financial Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 women trained in livestock rearing</td>
<td>Pair of goats</td>
<td>Used surplus milk at home and also sold to neighbours. Sold goat to market via males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 women trained in embroidery skills</td>
<td>Skill development center equipped with sewing machines etc. Out of 8 women only 4 went on exposure visits to city markets to get information on latest market trends</td>
<td>Sewing and doing embroidery on payment. Making own and family clothes to save money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4.3. Baluchistan Rural Support program (BRSP)

The BRSP project ‘Livelihood Enhancement and Protection (LEP)’, was initiated in May, 2011 and scheduled for completion in May, 2013. However, during the project’s implementation, six NGO employees were kidnapped, of whom two were killed, while four were set free after paying a ransom to the kidnappers. As a consequence, project activities were suspended for eight months, from November 2011 till June 2012. It resumed in July 2012 and was finally completed in April 2014.

The project’s aim was to empower the community (men and women) by involving them in economic activities that could improve or sustain their livelihood. It was carried out in two Union Councils of the Pishin District; Rod Malazai and Killi Dilsora. The target beneficiaries were those men and women who were particularly vulnerable. There was an equal gender distribution of participants in this project, 50% men and 50% women.

Working with the community and setting up the project

Before initiating this project, the NGO also implemented the principles of social mobilization. As in the other two projects, male staff met initially with the community leaders and the local community, to gain approval and lay the groundwork for the implementation of the project. Staff arranged several meetings with the community, informed them about the project details and how the NGO would implement the project. The community was also assured that female staff would work with the women.
Identification and recruitment of potential beneficiaries

After social mobilization, the male staff members conducted a poverty scorecard survey (PSC; Appendix 12) to identify the most vulnerable people in the community. This was carried out in each house located in the above-mentioned Union Councils. The most vulnerable people were identified as potential project beneficiaries, those who were living hand to mouth and living lives of extreme hardship. Female staff visited the homes of the women, while male staff worked with the men identified. The female NGO staff briefed the women about the project and invited them to participate. Later on, willing women joined the project and worked with female NGO staff to develop and finalize the LIP (Livelihood Investment Plan). In the LIP each individual beneficiary outlined the resources they required, as well as their plans for utilising these resources. The results of the LIP were shared with the donor of this project and then, following approval, training and resources were allocated to the selected beneficiaries.

Zartasha, a BRSP participant, eagerly narrated her story of participation in the project:

One day, a female staff visited my home; she briefed me about their project. I could not participate in this project, unless my brother allowed me to. I needed to convince him that this project was what I needed and that I would not go outside; he would be dealing with the NGO. I also told him that I would receive livestock from the NGO to rear at home. He was reluctant and unsure at first, but then he agreed. (Zartasha, participant)

Zartasha convinced her brother to enable her to participate, informing him that the NGO provide training and livestock to a male family member on her behalf. She assured him that she would stay at home and her brother would deal with the selling. Furthermore, without paying anything, she would receive a pair of goats and make money from them making it a very attractive proposal.

On the next visit of NGO female staff I placed the requirement of livestock because I could look after them at home, which was beneficial to me in many ways. As I was not allowed to go outside for training or receiving livestock directly from the NGO, my brother on my behalf received livestock rearing training from NGO staff and he shared his understandings with me at home. For example, he told me how I should keep their surroundings clean and be aware of the symptoms of illness in goats. A few days later, my brother received goats in my name and gave them to me. (Zartasha, participant)
Training

Training was given to the male family members of the women target beneficiaries according to the resources women selected for themselves; this included rearing of livestock, poultry farming and home based shop management. Livestock and poultry farming training included information about the available veterinary services in the area and looking after the animals’ health on a home basis. For home based shops, training was given in management and maintenance of home based shops and negotiation with customers.

The women were not able to leave home to receive direct training and resources, training and resources were provided to a male member of the woman’s family. He was then expected to train her and hand over the resources to her. In order to ensure that the women actually received the trainings and resources, the female project staff visited their homes and checked that this had happened.

Resource utilization and earnings

The women provided with livestock (a pair of goats) used them in a variety of ways. They used goat milk for home needs, or sold it to nearby residents. Products such as cheese, butter and yogurt were also made from the milk, and when goat numbers increased, one goat could be sold. 55 hens were given to each individual and again, eggs were either used at home or the eggs and chickens were sold. When selling items to nearby residents, women dealt directly with customers, but if these were sold in the market, this was done by a male family member. The women running their shops from home were provided with different general store items. On follow-up visits, female staff ensured that the women were receiving the correct amount from the males after the sales of livestock or poultry.

In order to purchase the livestock, poultry and general store items for home based shops the NGO initiated and managed a procurement committee, comprising 4 members; one was the male representing the women participating in the project, two were from the community leaders and one was from the BRSP. The NGO devised two ways to buy items. One was for the beneficiaries (man representing the woman) identify the vendor, check the prices and tell the procurement committee, who then checked their prices, purchased the item and delivered it to the woman’s home. If the
beneficiaries (women) found it difficult to check market prices and locate vendors, they requested that the committee to purchase and deliver the required items to them.

Figure 15: BRSP staff giving pairs of goats to men on behalf of women participants.
Source: BRSP

Figure 16: BRSP staff giving hens to a boy on behalf of woman participant.
Source: BRSP
After receiving training, Zartasha received livestock:

*The female goat was pregnant when I received the pair of goats and so soon I got two more baby goats. I used milk at home, and occasionally I tried to sell the milk or sometimes butter or yogurt, to nearby residents. I received a good amount when I sold one goat on the occasion of Eid. My brother took the goat away and put a nice sum of money in my hand.* (Zartasha, participant)

Zartasha used the resource of livestock in a thoughtful way. By using goat milk at home she saved the amount which she otherwise would spend on the milk. Although direct access to the market was not possible for her but she vigilantly used her knowledge of the local community and sold the milk and milk products to her neighbours, who gave her some return. While her brother used his market knowledge and sold one goat during Eid and as a result, she received a good profit.

![Goats in a participant's home](image)

**Figure 17: Goats in a participant's home**

*Source: Researcher*

Bibi, wanted to open a shop at her home. She relates how she set her shop:

*Before giving me the shop items, the NGO provided training in shop keeping, record keeping and maintenance of the shop to my son, as I was not allowed to leave the home. He received the training on shop management and then transferred his learning to me at home. I selected this room as it has one entrance from inside the home and another outside in the street. One day an NGO representative visited this room and handed over all the items to my son*
in my name. I am quite old and get tired easily so I set up this shop with the help of my son. After some weeks a lady from the NGO also visited my shop. I run the shop from home with the assistance of my grandson. Women from nearby home or children visit my shop to purchase things. This brings me some money every day. When existing stock runs out, I asked my son or husband to buy more from the market. (Bibi, participant)

Bibi opted for a home based shop because she could easily run it from home; she was elderly, and running a shop from home suited her. Bibi’s shop was the only shop in the local community. Therefore local women could easily visit her. Her husband, son and grandson were willing to support her to maintain the shop; they purchased new items and assisted her to run the shop.

Bibi prudently chose a room in her house that had two entrances. The entrance within the home was used by neighbouring women to come and purchase things and the entrance shop that opened onto the street was sometimes used by male customers. During the interview, I observed that a man knocked at that door and required a packet of lentils. Bibi looked at one of her grandsons who checked the door. He then picked up a packet and gave it to the man through the door, which was slightly ajar, took the money and shut the door again, turning to Bibi to give her the money. This strategy enabled men to buy items from her shop, abiding by cultural practices. Bibi was dealing with this with the help of her grandson.

Bibi has used her knowledge of the community and adapted her life to work effectively within it. The active role played by her grandson who, as her assistant, understands her every eye movement, is a perfect example of learning by doing. He was also witnessing the capability of his grandmother, a role model and how competently and efficiently she ran the shop.
Of the 20 women participants in the BRSP project, 13 received training in livestock and received a pair of goats (one male and one pregnant female) which they sold (via male family members) as the number increased. They used the surplus milk at home or prepared yogurt or butter from the milk, used it at home or occasionally sold it to neighbouring women who visited them.

Three women received poultry farming training and 55 hens each, some of which they sold (again via male family members) in the market. They used the eggs at home and also sold them to nearby residents.
In this way, they were not only contributing financially by working at home, but the household was benefiting by consuming eggs, milk or yogurt, which helped save money which they would normally have to spend on purchasing such essentials.

The other four women were trained in home based shop skills and management, and received general store items to keep in the shop. These women managed the shops in their homes, while the customers were mostly neighbouring women and children.
Table 7: Tabulated presentation of BRSP women participants’ training, resources and benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Financial Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 women trained in livestock rearing</td>
<td>Pair of goats</td>
<td>Use surplus milk at home or make yogurt, butter from the milk, used at home or occasionally sold to neighbours. Sell goats to market via male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 women trained in poultry farming</td>
<td>55 hens</td>
<td>Use surplus eggs at home and also sell to neighbours. Chickens and eggs also sold to market via male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 women trained in management of home based shop</td>
<td>General store items</td>
<td>Run shop from home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above details of three projects highlight the process involved in project implementation. They cover the procedures through which NGOs identified, recruited and gave training as well as resources to the participants in the project. This discussion also provides insight into how the women got involved in the projects, what training and resources they received and how they utilized those resources to gain benefits from the projects. I will now discuss the benefits from the involvement in the projects in more depth.

7.5. Benefits of training and resources for women participants

The training and resources received by the women not only gave them monetary gains but developed and strengthened their existing skills and knowledge and enabled them to develop new skills.

7.5.1 Training

As outlined above, all three NGOs provided training for the women participants, with the general purpose of developing their capabilities. Oxal and Baden (1997) with Fonjong (2001) state that women acquiring skills is one form of empowering themselves, because training is a means of gaining knowledge and improving skills. Livestock and poultry farming has always been one of women’s traditional domestic jobs, but when they received training it gave them a better understanding of nurturing and rearing livestock and poultry. They became more aware of the health issues prevalent in livestock, and the NGOs, SPO and BRSP, also gave them information about the veterinary services available within their area.
Similarly, embroidery is also traditional female work, but it is not normally made to market standards. The training helped women to build their skills by introducing different embroidery designs and combinations of colour, which improved their final product, which could be a dress, a decorative piece, a tablecloth, bed sheets, or sofa covers.

In addition to the above embroidery training, participants were also taught to keep records, as well as how to negotiate with customers and to manage home based shops. The record training included keeping track of sales and earnings, in order to identify the most popular items so that the women could focus on that work, and to introduce a variation into that particular embroidery design. Similarly for the women who had home based shops, it helped them to know which items sold well among the community, so they could keep more of them in stock.

The costing skills training helped women to have an idea about the price of each piece of embroidery. This was based on the amount of time each piece took and included consideration of the particular design and the quality of thread and fabric used in its preparation. The more embroidery, the better the quality of the thread and cloth, the value of the end product increased, which helped them to sell their items accordingly and receive the maximum return.

Being taught negotiation skills particularly helped those women who had direct dealings with the market and with women customers. It gave them confidence to negotiate with shopkeepers when selling their embroidery items to the market, or when selling from the skills development center to the local women. Learning these skills enabled the women to do better, with overall improvement in their knowledge and practices leading to earning more.

Knowledge being given in the form of training requires the availability of physical resources and subsequent services. It was because of these that the women participants were able to put their learning into practice.

7.5.2. Services and Resources

The resources and services provided to women enabled them to be paid for their own work whereas before, they had been unable to use their skills, because of the unavailability of resources or services. The resources afforded women participants
were based on their requests. The women understood their cultural setup and the restrictions it placed on their mobility, and chose ways of working within these restrictions, successfully improving their lives. This is reinforced by Kabeer (1994) and Murthy (2000, p. 180): cultural restrictions limit women’s choice of livelihood.

The following section looks at the strategies the three NGOs adapted to work within the community.

7.6. Strategies of the NGOs

In this section I examine the strategies adapted by NGOs to work within the community. I highlight the reasons for the different strategies utilized to sharpen our understanding, as well as to emphasize how these strategies helped the NGOs to implement projects.

7.6.1. Reasons for the three NGOs adopting different training and resource strategies

The differences in the three projects were mainly in terms of the location of the project and the different approaches and activities adopted by NGOs due to local needs, women’s potential, skills and patriarchal cultural constraints.

Among the three projects only one (undertaken by WESS) was carried out in a suburban area (Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan); the other two were conducted in very remote areas of Nasirabad and Pishin Districts. The location of these projects was one of the main reasons for their different implementation.

The SPO, with LRPs, and WESS, with FSAs, took some of the willing women participants from their homes to visit the city markets in their official vehicles. The aim was to give them knowledge about the latest designs and colour schemes so that the quality of their embroidery items could be improved and they could receive greater monetary return for their work. WESS wanted its women participants to develop their own linkages with the shop owners and deal directly with them for their work, whereas SPO only aimed to orient its women participants about markets, because the SPO project was in union council of Shaha Pur, a very rural area of Nasirabad District. The distance between Quetta city and Nasirabad is more than eight hours. These women could not travel to Quetta city markets because of the long distance, cultural restrictions, insecure and poor transport, and so could not make
direct links and earn on their own. Therefore, SPO established a skill development center equipped with sewing kits within the premises of women’s residences, where women could independently work on the orders they received from women nearby.

In the case of WESS, the market access was comparatively easy for women in suburban areas, in terms of distance and availability of transport, so WEs or FSAs could visit markets by themselves. However WESS placed an FSA to address the issue of WEs’ lack of movement. The arrangement of embroidery exhibitions in the city was also made possible by FSAs.

The reason for engaging the FSAs by WESS, and LRPs by SPO, was that they belonged to the same community. They had a better understanding of the socio-economic conditions of women in the community. Therefore FSAs and LRPs assisted home-bound women in receiving maximum benefits from the NGO projects, so they served as a bridge between the women and the NGOs. They replicated their learning from NGO training to their women groups. They were trusted, having acceptability among the women in the group. They encouraged and promoted the nurturing of community leaders, bringing women together through groups’ motivation and a developed sense of empowerment. The FSA in the WESS project however performed a unique role, and that was to sell the embroidery items prepared by the women’s group in the market, and also to bring back orders for embroidery work. This also saved WEs from market exploitation, because women who work from home do not have much awareness of market pricing. Therefore they would be at risk of receiving low prices for their work, but with the presence of an FSA, and assisted by the NGO staff, they were protected against being lowly paid. The NGO female staff also monitored the FSAs in their market linkages, order-taking and coordination with the women embellishers, to ensure that no one was exploited.

The SPO also gave livestock directly to some project participants, but BRSP was unable to provide directly the livestock, poultry and home based shop items to its women project participants because of strict patriarchal norms. Therefore, the BRSP adopted a different strategy, transferring these resources to women through their male family members.

SPO could deal directly with the women participants because SPO had already carried different projects in the same District in previous years, during that they had
established a literacy center there. On account of this SPO was already well known to
the local community; therefore, it was a bit easier for them to gather women in a
literacy center. However BRSP being new in the community, could not assemble
women at some place, and therefore had to provide indirect resources to women.

All three NGOs provided home based earning resources to their women participants.
This meant that women could stay at home while participating in income-generating
activities. This reflects the NGOs’ understanding of the cultural practices in the
community, the, socio-political and geographic context in which they designed and
implemented their projects. This understanding further ensured women’s
participation in the project and consequently helped them to achieve the aim of
women’s economic empowerment.

The NGOs implemented the projects after careful identification of potential
participants, and carefully through means of access to and delivery of services or
resources. Resources were given to beneficiaries according to their requirements, and
appropriate trainings were provided, with a view to making the women more
independent. All of the strategies adopted by the NGOs in allocating resources and
trainings addressed two aims: first it had to be in accord with the social context of
the community and second, it had to give women’s control over the resources.
Women utilized these resources in a variety of ways in order to gain the maximum
benefits for themselves as well as for their families.

The difficulties faced by managers and women participants during the project are
discussed in the following section.

7.7. Difficulties faced by managers and women

This section presents an analysis of the difficulties encountered by the six managers
during the implementation of the projects. The women participants, while endorsing
the projects, also faced difficulties. Security, weak infrastructure, perceptions of
NGOs, opposition from men and restrictions on women’s mobility were identified as
common hurdles by both the managers and the women.
7.7.1. Insecurity

The political instability had created an insecure environment for the inhabitants of Baluchistan and affected NGOs’ functioning. All six managers mentioned the serious threat to their activities.

Managing and implementing the projects involved frequent field visits for community meetings, organizing trainings and transferring resources. Managers emphasized that the dangerous environment posed threats to their staff and their projects, meaning that some of the activities planned could not be completed as scheduled. These projects were suspended due to security issues.

One of the BRSP managers shared a sad incident and its effect on the project:

*The rate of meeting set objectives was slow because of the sad event of our staff kidnapping. Among them two were killed; four were set free after paying a ransom to the kidnappers. The project was put on hold for 8 months, all project activities and contacts with community were shut off. A communication gap occurred between our staff and the community, which created further negative views about NGOs, claiming that we only paid lip service. When we restarted this project we had to reassemble many things and put in extra time and resources. (Azhar, manager)*

The worsened security situation caused delays in meeting the deadlines of planned activities, restricted staff movements in the field, and resulted in disconnection from the communities for prolonged periods. This situation badly impacted on the relationship of between the NGOs and the community. Therefore, NGOs had to put in extra efforts to reorganize the community and, to build an enabling environment for implementation of the project.

As Rameez explained:

*We faced security issues due to ongoing political instability in the region. Our one female rural facilitator during this project was targeted. Both she and the driver got badly injured due to shooting. Somehow the driver managed to drive to the nearest hospital. He recovered soon but she had to undergo a major operation. (Rameez, manager)*

Mujeeb also spoke of security issues as hampering their project activities:

*We could not perform timely different activities, due to dangerous civil and political uprisings, on time. We had to go for an extension of one year. (Mujeeb, manager)*
All the managers focused on security threats as one of the major difficulties they encountered during implementation; this impacted on their work. The NGOs were not able to complete their projects on time and their communication with the community was disrupted, leading to uncertainty surrounding NGO work. These security concerns clearly restricted NGOs’ operations in the troubled areas as compared to safe parts of the region, thereby obstructing the equal distribution of development benefits.

Managers however, were not exactly sure about the real cause for attacking the NGOs’ staff. For example, one manager from BRSP stated that:

*Well I cannot clearly state who the people who kidnapped and killed our staff were. They might be those extremists who do not like NGO work for women. They could be only kidnappers who did so to gain monetary benefits because generally people think that NGOs have foreign money.* (Azhar, manager)

Rameez was also unsure as to why they had been targeted:

*Our one female staff was attacked and I am not sure who those people were. They could be those extremists who do not accept women’s work so they conveyed a message to other women or NGOs not to work there. They could be just criminals.* (Rameez, manager)

Managers had theories as to the motives for attacking NGOs, while admitting that they were not sure. However, one overarching reason was likely to be the perception that they were foreign agents because of the focus on women’s empowerment; this is disliked by the extremist. Another reason was that the perpetrators of the attacks were anti-state activists who wanted to send a negative message to the international community so that foreign funding would stop and eventually NGOs would stop their work. They also suggested that perpetrators were kidnappers who kidnapped the NGO staff to demand high ransoms because, being internationally funded, these organizations were always in the limelight, being seen as having ample financial resources (see chapter 2). Any or all of the above reasons could be behind the criminal activities attacking NGO work. The NGOs had little control over this issue and thus, had to look for the safest way to carry out their activities. Another challenge was poor infrastructure as outlined in the following section.
7.7.2. Poor regional infrastructure

Managers highlighted that a poor road network, an unsafe and weak public transport system, along with the lack of basic facilities, such as reliable access to electricity were other challenges they faced.

Iqbal explained:

*In Baluchistan we don’t have developed roads, nor do we have proper safe transport for women. It is nearly impossible for them to travel on long ways and thus difficult for them to pay visit to Quetta city markets. (Iqbal, manager)*

Due to under-developed infrastructure, they faced difficulties in gaining women’s full participation in the project. The unavailability of safe transport and road network affected women’s ability to move; and as in the above example they were not able to visit Quetta markets easily.

Rameez highlighted how the weak infrastructure proved to be a barrier for the community in accepting social change:

*Due to low infrastructure people are unaware of the new developments and still attached to their norms. On account of this they did not allow women to fully participate in our project. (Rameez, manager)*

Poor infrastructure exacerbates isolation: men and women alike do not have the benefits of development and so are unaware of changes in the outside world. Thus, when any organization brings development projects for women to those areas, it is difficult for the community to accept them. This leads to slow acceptance and thus to slow social change.

*I do consider the patriarchal society as hurdle in women’s free movement but how can I ignore the instability in the region? And how can I leave the issue of better transport for the women? (Mujeeb, manager)*

It is clearly that women’s lack of mobility was not only an outcome of cultural restrictions but social and political unrest and lack of appropriate transport was also playing a part. These latter two factors were not under the control of managers. However in two projects of SPO and WESS, both NGOs provided vehicle for some
market visits. The issue of cultural restrictions could be minimized via mobilization and conducting dialogue with community or via adopting different strategies.

7.7.3. Male dominance, poor infrastructure and unrest in the region

13 women stated that their participation in these projects was limited and subject to opposition. They mentioned that, along with restrictions over their movement, current security issues and under-developed infrastructure had aggravated the situation for them and decreased their chances of full involvement in the projects. It was because men were already concerned about women’s safety, they further restrained women’s mobility during times of conflict, with the aim of protecting them from any mishap (see chapter 2).

Similarly, the poor transport system and the weak road network intensified women’s dependency on men, as they needed to be accompanied to the market or to visit community centers. The unrest and the poor infrastructure (roads, transport system) further decreased women’s mobility, leading to restricted participation in the project. This increased men’s dominance, and women’s subjugation as well as their dependency on men, and was a significant factor affecting women’s empowerment.

Male dominance was strengthened by the patriarchal cultural system, which restricts women’s activities. Women’s immobility, illiteracy and weak financial status also increased their socio-economic dependency on their menfolk. This dependency intensified with the factors of political instability and weak infrastructure in the region, which resulted in hindrances to their empowerment.

Uzma, observed that women’s dependency on men, along with the insecure political situation of the region, and the weak infrastructure was one of the difficulties women mentioned while participating in the project.

*We are dependent on men; whatever we do we have to ask them otherwise we cannot do anything. The transport is not good and we do not have higher educational institutions or job opportunities in our area. Now, due to the current unrest in our region there are more problems for women. Given this situation, how can our men allow us to go out of my area to Quetta city, when they know of the unrest and poor unsafe transport? (Uzma, participant)*

Uzma understood the complex situation of Baluchistan, where men’s control over women is increased, due to the lack of facilities for women and instability in the
region. These three factors combined to consign women to a weak position. As Leatherman (2011) argues, that insecurity affects girls’ education, and Kabeer (1988) further suggests that men restrict women’s mobility in order to protect them. Uzma specifically mentioned the issue of lack of educational institutions because, although she completed class 10, she could not continue her education, due to the non-availability of higher education in her area.

Zartasha, was also aware of the effect of three intersecting factors: men’s hold, unrest and poor infrastructure:

_We are what our men tell us to do. What can we do without their consent? It is only if they allow us that we can get an education, or do anything. The present situation has made life tougher for us. My brother did not allow my eldest daughter to attend high school as it is very far and the way things are it is not good to leave home. I know he is right._ (Zartasha, participant)

Zartasha acknowledge the extent of male control, the impact of the social and political unrest and infrastructure weaknesses on women’s lives in Baluchistan, due to which her brother stopped her daughter from attending school. She was actually in agreement with her brother’s decision, she also did not want to put her daughter’s life in danger. The absence of infrastructure services prevents women from receiving an education and finding a job; factors that are important for their economic independency (Buvinic, Gwin and Bates 1996). The importance of security is also maintained by Detraz (2012), who sees security as an essential factor for attaining empowerment.

Another hurdle was the general perception of NGOs among the community.

**7.7.4. Perceptions of the NGOs**

The perception that NGOs were foreign agents was another impediment confronted by the NGOs. This section examines the reasons given as to why the community perceived NGOs as foreign agents and resisted becoming involved in the projects.

All six managers spoke of opposition to their projects. They reported that they were seen as foreign agents promoting a western agenda in the community because of their focusing on women.
As Iqbal relates:

_The community didn’t like NGOs, working for the women. They opposed it that we were giving training and resources to the women._ (Iqbal, manager)

Zahra stated that:

_People asked why we were doing work with women. They said that women earning is the practice of Western countries not here._ (Zahra, manager)

NGOs were seen as promoting foreign or Western practices, encouraging women to work outside the home, just as in foreign countries women are free to work and can have free conversations with males other than family members. The community had an apprehension that if women get involved in earning activities outside the home, they would be in contact with males and may want to marry according to their own choice; this is against the traditional values in the patriarchal structure of Baluchistan. It threatens male authority over women, meaning that men would lose their power to control women’s actions (see chapters 2 and 5). For these reasons, NGOs are blamed for spreading indecency among the women, making them shameless (Jafar 2011). A study conducted by Iqbal (2006) also found that NGOs are viewed as Western agents, spreading Western culture, supposedly against the religious and traditional values of Pakistan.

Azhar spoke thus:

_When the community heard that we were transferring assets to the women then they opposed us. They claimed that our work was to bring women out or include them in earning, which is foreign ideology. The religious cleric at the local mosque even passed a Fatwa [religious decree] against us and declared that our project was Haram [prohibited by Islam]._ (Azhar, manager)

Religious clerics have an influential position in local communities. Being religious leaders they are well respected. They can use their influence to oppose projects by passing religious decrees. A similar case was reported by (Jafar 2011, p. 56): during her study in Baluchistan-Pakistan a local religious cleric passed a decree against NGOs declaring them ‘destructive forces that threaten Muslim identity’.

As Rameez explained:

_Religious clerics oppose NGOs because they feel threatened that if the NGOs create awareness among the communities then they may lose their influence._ (Rameez, manager)
Religious clerics are frightened that, due to NGO interventions, the community would become aware of the benefits of development and thus it would be difficult for them to maintain their domination. Managers, being conscious of these concerns, addressed this issue through the strategy of social mobilization, as explained in a subsequent section. Women also reported that male family members were against their involvement in NGO projects, because of the assumption that the NGOs were spreading a foreign agenda to influence the women with Western programs. (see chapter 5).

Rubina reported that this was one of the problems she faced while participating in the project:

*I talked with my husband about participating in the project, he refused as he disliked the NGOs and said they were not good and if I worked with them then I would have to go outside and talk with strangers. This is not acceptable in our culture.* (Rubina, participant)

The NGOs are considered by the general community to be spreading anti-cultural norms in the regions; this is why their work encounters resistance. Given that, due to the prevailing culture, people already ostracized women for leaving home to go to a job or for having free conversations with men. When they see that NGOs advocate women’s mobility and earning they condemn them, because they want to maintain cultural supremacy, which gives them power over women (see chapter 2).

Women generally faced opposition from their male family members while participating in the project; this is discussed in the next section.

### 7.7.5. Opposition from Men

The roots of Baluchistan society are deeply embedded in the tribal patriarchal structure where male dominance prevails and is sustained through cultural values (see chapters 2 and 3). Managers, as well as project participants, agreed that the hold of the patriarchal structure was the major obstacle in implementing women’s empowerment projects. Men rarely support women’s socio-economic independence or mobility; this leads women to be isolated and dependent on men (see chapter 2).
As Rameez and Mujeeb explained:

*The people of Baluchistan strictly follow the culture which approves male dominance. It does not allow female education, mobility, independence and decision making. It ensures male privilege as decision makers, excluding the women, who are obliged to follow the men.* (Rameez, manager)

*Males put restrictions on women in the name of culture. They don’t want them to be socialized and earn something, which means that the women remain dependent on men.* (Mujeeb, manager)

The managers agreed that men enjoyed unmatched authority over women in general, supported by patriarchal practices. These cultural practices have restrained women from gaining independence, instead depending on male family members. Women need the permission of the males to attain an education or leave the home for a job. For example, in this study women’s access to animal markets was highly restricted and they had to depend on men for the selling and purchasing of livestock or poultry. Gazdar (2002) named the patriarchal structure as a system of female disadvantage and male domination where women are deprived of education, rights, decision making. They are obliged to follow the men’s orders and mostly can only do that which they are permitted to. All these issues, as the managers well understood, are interconnected with each other; jointly, they exacerbate the hurdles to women attaining empowerment.

Zahra added that, according to the culture, men viewed women earning as a challenge to male honour:

*Men cannot tolerate if anyone says anything to them about their women, because in patriarchal structure women is a symbol of honour. Women’s, education, and earning are an issue of male honour in the sense that if women go outside then any one can talk about them.* (Zahra, manager)

Women undertaking paid work are considered as challenging male authority, because it shows men’s inability to feed their families. Weiss (2010) and Alavi (1998) that women leaving the house to work and support their family is considered shameful for a man by the patriarchal cultural norms (see chapter 2).

Indeed, 47 out of 60 women participants reported that their participation in the project was opposed by male family members. Weiss (2010, p. 20) found in her
study in Lahore-Pakistan that social values are a big constraint on women’s participation in earning activities.

Nazish emphasized that male authority is a major impediment to women’s empowerment:

*Men do not allow us to go outside for education or for work. This culture of Baluchistan gives importance to men. Until this culture recognizes us, how can we make decisions for ourselves?* (Nazish, participant)

Tahira expressed a similar view:

*Men’s attitude towards women is authoritative. They do not let us do anything for ourselves, and they want to control everything themselves.* (Tahira, participant)

This scenario illustrates the strong hold of patriarchy, which frames people’s mindset to act and behave in such a way which control women’s lives. Women emphasized that cultural restrictions make women dependent on male consent in respect of any decision needing to be made about them. She explicitly stated that culture benefits only men, because it gives men power to decide for women while women, not being decision makers, are relatively powerless. This is consistent with the findings of research conducted by Jalal-ud-Din and Khan (2008) in Mardan-Pakistan: that due to cultural constraint, women could not participate in earning outside the home.

Bibi spoke of the cultural restrictions that hold women back from participating in earning activities:

*The male-oriented culture disapproves of women earning because it is seen as the job of men. Women are made for home chores only.* (Bibi, participant)

Bibi understood her position within the cultural norms, which do not permit women to engage in earning activities. However, it is highly approved for women to stay at home and perform home chores, since this accord with patriarchal practices. Research by Naz and Chaudhry (2011) concluded that patriarchy, male dominance and socio-cultural restrictions on women were the dominant impediments to women’s empowerment. Participants (managers and women) also identified these factors as obstacles to women’s involvement in a project.
7.7.6. Restriction on women’s mobility

Women’s lack of mobility was highlighted by the managers as the major difficulty they faced in implementing the projects. Managers were aware that home bound women would not be able to participate fully in the project due to the restriction on their free mobility.

Managers pointed out the two major reasons for women’s restricted mobility: unrest and patriarchal ideology.

As Iqbal and Zahra emphasized, the prevailing unrest in Baluchistan affected everyone, making it even more difficult for women to leave their homes.

*The local community was quite concerned about the safety of the women, because when even males are not safe how could we even think that women could travel safely? Therefore they resisted women leaving home for visits.* (Iqbal, manager)

Zahra pointed out that:

*The prevailing political unrest, frequent strikes, bombs and kidnappings have made the situation worse. So it becomes more and more difficult for women to go outside and do something. This situation has hugely restricted the women’s mobility and therefore their empowerment.* (Zahra, manager)

Men objected to women leaving the home, because of the prevailing unrest. This has made life difficult for the whole community and posed a challenge to any development activities in Baluchistan. This situation threatens the safe movement of males also, and becomes even more sensitive when it comes to women’s mobility. It has impacted directly on women’s access to education, jobs and NGO’s activities which are essential components in gaining empowerment. Constraints on women’s movement are increased during times of conflict to protect them from any mishap (Kabeer 1988), because women are at risk of being harmed. (Leatherman 2011)

Naeem pointed out patriarchal restrictions:

*Female mobility was the biggest challenge for us; the community people resisted in giving permission to their women to come out from home to take part in project activities. On account of this we could not give direct training and resources to them.* (Naeem, manager)
Rameez added that men resist women’s mobility:

*Males do not allow their women to go outside and earn because it is against the social structure of the region. Therefore we had to arrange training within the local area. (Rameez, manager)*

Managers reported that in the patriarchal structure of Baluchistan, women leaving home are contested by male family members. Paterson (2008), during her study in Baluchistan, also observed restricted mobility as the main constraint on women’s participation in NGO activities, her study participants also reported family and community resistance.

60 women participants highlighted restricted mobility as a major problem they faced while participating in a project. The restriction on their free movement was a detrimental factor in selection of home based resources.

As Nazish pointed out:

*Women’s movement is an issue in our culture. My husband did not allow me to visit the market to deal with the shopkeepers. Therefore I accepted working at home but not visiting city markets. (Nazish, participant)*

Zartasha made a similar choice:

*In my area women do not move freely because men do not like it. I chose the livestock because I could not go outside but could rear them at home, as it did not require me to leave home. (Zartasha, participant).*

Women faced resistance leaving their homes. Therefore, they opted for those activities and resources which they could utilize at home in order to earn. The provision of such resources was vital to the implementation of these projects because it enabled women to work from home in the prevailing circumstances of restricted mobility. As Brohi and Kakepoto (2013) with Delavande and Zafar (2013), argue, illiteracy and weak financial positions are basically the outcome of immobility, which handicaps women to be empowered. Certainly this is also a fact that if they would have free mobility then they would have been in a position to earn more and be less dependent on their male counterparts. However, despite their initiatives such as social mobilization (see chapter 5) NGOs were not successful in completely changing the cultural restrictions imposed on women’s mobility.
Conclusion

All three of these projects were carried out with poor women who were restricted from stepping outside their homes. The purpose of these projects was to improve the livelihood of these women, albeit working within the cultural norms. The NGO managers appreciated the structural and organizational constraints very well, and were strategic in the ways they implemented these projects. All the training and resources were provided to women participants in such a way as to ensure they could participate with the permission of their male kin-folk. The women in turn utilized the training, services and resources provided by the NGOs to attain optimum benefits for them and their families. Managers, as well as women participants, highlighted the difficulties they faced during the project implementation. They understood and acknowledged that the regulatory effects of the patriarchal structure became stronger when aligned with the political unrest and the weak infrastructure of the region, causing difficulties regarding women’s participation in NGO projects.

The next chapter investigates, in more depth, the strategies devised and implemented by managers and women to overcome these difficulties. It provides an in-depth analysis of the projects and how the various projects impacted the lives of the women participants. It will also look at the suggestions for the improvement of future projects.
CHAPTER EIGHT: CHANGING WOMEN’S LIVES

Introduction

This chapter builds on the previous chapter, in which I gave a description of the managers’ and participants’ demographic profiles, the details about three projects and discussed the difficulties faced by managers and women while implementing the project and participating in the projects respectively. This chapter delves into the findings in more detail, focusing on the strategies adopted by NGOs and participants to deal with the difficulties. The analyses proceed to further understand the impact of the projects on the women’s lives. The last section deals with the analyses of managers and women participants suggestions to improve similar projects in future at Baluchistan.

8.1. Strategies for dealing with difficulties

The focus of this section is on the strategies implemented by the NGOs to overcome the challenges of security, weak infrastructure, and dealing with community opposition to the projects.

8.1.1. Dealing with security issues

In order to work effectively in this region, the NGOs had to deal with the security threats. The current political unrest in the Baluchistan region has seriously affected the overall development of the region. State police have been trying unsuccessfully, to control the insurgencies (see chapter 2). This interferes with and disrupts the work of the NGOs. In some instances, the NGOs were forced to with draw completely and move their activities to safer areas. The projects were often delayed because of unsafe conditions and deadlines were extended. In addition, the NGOs were compelled to appoint their own security staff to protect those working on and participating in the projects. These security measures were indispensable for NGOs to operate effectively in the region.
Zahra explained why they had to leave the high security zone areas and shift their project activities to a safe area.

*In sensitive areas, we were not able to arrange visits nor could we meet with women, so we had to drop it from our project activities as it was very risky for any of us. However we moved our activities to other, secure areas.* (Zahra, manager)

Mujeeb reported that due to the unrest, they had to extend the duration of the project:

*We could not carry out our different activities due to political unrest so we had no option except to extend our project duration.* (Mujeeb, manager)

When the situation settled down they were able resume their activities. BRSP had to stop their project activities for eight months. The project restarted after receiving an extension of around one year. In addition, the NGOs were compelled to organize their own security, as Rameez explains:

*We appointed a focal security person who keeps himself updated with the security alerts. He monitors the general security situation in our targeted project areas and approves the staff field visits. Staff is also bound to inform him of their movement.* (Rameez, manager)

This security person ensured the safe movement of staff working in the field. It was his job to check the security situation, put in place protection for staff and approves visits. This gave maximum protection to the field staff. This finding is consistent with the reporting of the European Commission (2006, p. 4) that NGOs are now investing in managing their own security by including security officers in their team to provide safe working conditions for their staff.

Women expressed their deepest concern with the deteriorating situation of the region.

Uzma told,

*If center would not be present, I would have not been able to participate in the project. I cannot think to go out to earn in such worsen security situation.* (Uzma, participant)

Nazish explained,

*I participated in training because FSA home was just near to my home. The unrest in the region can affect you any time. My family would have never
allowed me to participate, if training were too far. Besides, I too avoid going outside as don’t want to put myself in danger. (Nazish, participant)

Family members did not want women to participate, and given the security situation many women were also not willing to leave the safe boundaries of their home. This clearly shows that security concern severely impacted on the mobility of women and hence on their earning capacity.

They expressed that devastating security situation of region has handicapped them to move out, however with the availability of center and FSA’s home within their premises actually encouraged them to participate in the projects.

8.1.2. Dealing with weak infrastructure

The challenges posed by the conflict ridden situation, were exacerbated by the weak infrastructure; the NGOs also developed strategies to deal with this. In Baluchistan there is poor transport, underdeveloped road networks and a few community facilities which does effect on women’s mobility as well as their involvement in the project. To support the projects, the NGOs provided both transport and community facilities.

Mujeeb tells how they had arranged a vehicle to enable the women to visit the city market:

We know that it is nearly impossible for women to travel long distances from Nasirabad to Quetta when there is no better transport available. Therefore we arranged an organizational vehicle, in which we took the willing women participants along with LRP's and female staff to visit the Quetta markets. We ensured that women feel secure and comfortable while visiting the markets. (Mujeeb, manager)

Providing a vehicle resolved the issue of women travelling to the markets. In addition, providing female staff and giving security to women on the way to the city market, ensured that NGOs were conscious of women’s security, which enabled women to take part in the project activities.

To address the lack of community facilities, one of the NGOs established a skill development center.
We established a skill development center within the area where women could easily come to attend training or meeting without using any transport. (Iqbal, manager)

The other NGO utilized the home of their FSAs

By making FSAs home as training center for women participants we made it easy for women to attend trainings or meetings within their area. (Rameez, manager)

Providing much needed resources such as transport and community facilities, enabled the women to attend training and meetings within their communities. This center and FSA homes had long term benefits making a safe place available specifically for women, where they could gather.

Women stated that the availability of center and FSAs home within their locality not only addressed their security hazards but also made their access easy. The center or FSA homes were at walking distance from their dwelling so they did not actually require a transport. Furthermore provision of a vehicle to visit markets was another incentive for women to observe the new markets trends in embroidery.

Rubina admitted this,

I could visit market due to the availability of vehicle. Otherwise it was difficult for me to take a local transport to go market as it is not comfortable for us. (Rubina, participant)

In addition Uzma explained,

I never thought to travel from Nasirabad to visit Quetta market, because of poor transport and bad road condition. In well-conditioned NGO vehicle I visited market and equipped myself with market trends. (Uzma, participant)

Keeping in view the current situation of poor infrastructure, the availability of a vehicle indeed provided an opportunity for women to visit the market. In this way they learnt something about new fashions in embroidery work, which they were not previously aware of. Certainly, it has also contributed to improving the mobility of women, at least a little and for a short time. This is the way NGOs facilitate women to experience empowerment in their lives (Batliwala 1993; Kabeer 1994; Rowland...
1997; Werker and Ahmed 2007; Shaheen 2012; Ngo and Wahhaj 2012) however it requires women efficient work for themselves along with NGOs long term efforts.

The next section examines how the managers dealt with the prevailing misconceptions about NGOs among the community.

8.1.3. Dealing with misconceptions regarding NGOs

In order to deal work effectively in the community and overcome misconceptions about NGOs, the NGOs utilized social mobilization strategy, as outlined in Chapter 5. All managers agreed that social mobilization was an important strategy to address the misconceptions held in regard to NGOs.

As Mujeeb reports:

With the help of social mobilization we informed the community about the aim of our project and removed their misconceptions by discussing the apprehensions they had about NGOs. This helped us to lessen their resistance, increase their trust in our work and as a result we gained women’s participation. (Mujeeb, manager)

Through meetings and discussions with the community, they clarified their aims: that is, to improve the lives of women which, in turn, would have a positive effect on the whole community. They also provided many opportunities to discuss the details of the project. They assured the community that their work was not opposing the traditional norms of the region and tried to reduce the community’s opposition towards the projects. The community was reassured that the NGOs were not doing any anti-religious projects in their area, nor they were challenging traditional practices.

Azhar provided an example of how utilizing this strategy helped him to gain community approval to initiate the project:

When a religious cleric of the local mosque passed a decree against the NGO and our project, we arranged a number of meetings with him, along with other key members of the community. We gave them details of our project activities, also pointed to religious references which favour women’s financial role. As a result the scholar withdrew the decree and the rest of the community also allowed us to work. (Azhar, manager)

Azhar and his colleagues met with the religious leader and other key community members, discussed the project and clarified the nature of the women’s participation.
As a consequence, he withdrew his opposition and the NGO was able to work in this community. The managers focused on clarifying the aims of the project with the religious cleric and key people of community; because they knew that the general community is highly influenced by their views. Once they satisfied these key people, the opposition from the community was reduced. The NGOs then sent female staff to community women, not only to identify participants but also to mobilize women to become involved in the project.

8.1.4 Dealing with male opposition

The next hurdle to be dealt was the resistance from male family members, whose permission the women needed before they could participate in the project. The women dealt with this by adopting the following strategies.

Women themselves were convinced of the project benefits, as explained to them by the project’s female staff during their visits. They were motivated to take part in the project and therefore dealt with the opposition; consequently they were able to participate in the project.

46 out of 60 women, who participated in the survey, reported that they had put considerable energy into convincing their husbands, fathers, brothers and other male family members of the benefits that would come from participation in the project. They used the following arguments: the dire financial circumstances of their families; the ways their involvement in the project would benefit the family and children, while abiding by the local norms and that working at home required the least movement outside the home.

Nazish felt that the main reason her husband was against her involvement was that he did not want her to go to market. She dealt with this opposition, as follows:

*One reason why my husband was reluctant to give me permission was that he did not want me to go to market. I assured him that I would stay at home and work, would not go outside, as the FSA would sell the items for me. After several attempts I successfully convinced him that my earnings would support the precarious financial situation of our household. (Nazish, participant)*

She was persistent, feeling fairly certain that she could convince him on two main grounds. This shows that she was aware of her own position and so wanted to utilize the benefits of this project. First, she would be abiding by his restriction on her
leaving the home, and second, her income would support him in meeting the family expenditures. She knew that even by working at home she could sell her embroidery products in the market through the FSA and in return she would only give 10% of the total sale amount to her while, retaining 90% of that amount. This was better than not making any money at all. She had had many discussions with her husband, trying to convince him of the benefits. The NGO strategy of helping home-bound women through the services of an FSA was crucial to women’s participation in the project.

Rubina, who was successful in securing the permission of her husband to visit the market and make direct contact with it, had exceptional circumstances. Her husband was a blind man and was not earning, but he opposed her participation in the project and her moving outside the house.

*Initially he refused but I kept trying to convince him that it is necessary for our survival because how long would we be dependent on father-in-law’s income? I have to look after our children’s needs. I have skills and if I visit the market and sell my items then I will have more earnings, so going there was a way to maintain our livelihood. He realized this and gave me permission to join the NGO. (Rubina, manager)*

Rubina was in a different situation on account of her husband’s incapacity to earn. Even so, he raised objections to her participation. Rubina negotiated with her husband on the basis of recognizing her skills competency, pointing out that she could earn for the family. Weiss (2010 p. 23) has stressed, when women are aware of their own capabilities they can renegotiate their mobility and power with their male family members.

Rubina had stronger grounds to argue for market access, because her father-in-law was already responsible for his two unmarried children (see chapter 7). She also realized that sooner or later she would have to take on all responsibility for her children, as well as her blind husband. Furthermore, she knew that if she wanted to earn more she had to have access to markets. An additional consideration was that she did not want to lose 10% of her income, which she would have to give to the FSA if she was able to work at home. By using these arguments she convinced her husband that the NGO was just helping her and that access to markets would bring more income into the home that could support their family.
Fourteen women participants out of 60 reported that their family members had visited the NGOs’ sub offices and training places, to gain certainty about the NGO’s work; and allowed their women to participate. For example, Uzma’s father had resisted her participation in the project but after, he visited the center, gave his permission. She recounted:

My father initially didn’t allow me but through my continuous efforts, with my mother’s support, I worked through this opposition. I talked with my father and convinced him that going outside was my right and I wanted to use my skills to benefit the family. My mother suggested to my father that he visit the NGO literacy center. He partially agreed and used to go with me to the meetings and trainings and after three or four visits he realized that I was doing good work so he allowed me to participate. Afterward, he never stopped me rather he accompanied me in a way to center. I think this is a form of his support to me (Uzma, participant)

She persistently worked on convincing her father that going outside was not wrong and her involvement would benefit her and family. Uzma’s story is particularly interesting. She was educated yet she still had a major struggle receiving her father’s permission. Although education may give awareness about rights and may give courage to women, this does not necessarily mean that women can make their own decisions. As they are part of a patriarchal society they still have to abide by its prevailing practices.

The strategies the women adopted were realistic and logical ways to deal with the opposition; they were able to convince and successfully negotiate with their family members, to enable participation in the project. This shows another aspect of women’s empowerment, as pointed out by Rowland (2005, p.14): that empowerment is to change ‘negative social constructions so women can realize their capacities and influence the decision making’. The women in this study showed that they were aware of their present situation and with this they were willing to challenge negative stereotypes in regard to the capacity of women to work, and their earning potential. Over time, the men gradually extended their support to the women. The involvement of women in the projects brought benefits to the family and impacted on their status at home and in the community, as demonstrated in the next section.
8.3. Impact of the projects on the women participants

This section focuses on the managers’ and the women’s accounts of the impact of participation in the projects on the women’s lives. The women spoke of their experience of earning and spending income, participation in decision making and also discussed about their mobility. In addition, women also reported increased self-confidence, improved social networking and feelings of ownership. I first look at the NGO managers’ responses, then present the voices of the women participants.

8.3.1. Earning and spending income

Managers spoke of two aspects: first women enjoyed the control over their income as they were spending it according to their free will, and second, they were focused on the well-being of their home and children. Iqbal clarified the significance of women’s earnings by comparing them with their previous position, when they were not earning:

*Women could not earn a single penny but now, as a result of participating in the project, they earn some rupees and spend it on home and children. Their earning has given them strength to utilize their income where they feel it’s necessary.* (Iqbal, manager)

This illustrates that women were earning, as well as enjoying control over their income; this is one of the signs of being economically empowered (see chapter 4). Further, their earning ability has empowered them to think for the welfare of their home and children; previously however they were not able to do so, as they were not earnings. Kabeer (1999) has identified that empowerment is the ability to make choices which one did not make before. Before participating in the project women were not earning anything, but now that they did earn and made their own choices.

51 of the 60 women surveyed reported that they spent their earnings on their home or on their children’s needs. Only 9 reported that they managed to save their income for a ‘rainy day’. It means any unexpected incident, such as accident and chronic illness. Sheikh (2010, p. 33) confirmed that women spend their earning mostly on their home renovations and on their children needs, such as education and marriage while few women save their earning. It is further affirmed by a study conducted in Kerala-India by Kalyani and Seena (2012) that most of the women spend their income on their
children’s education, food and clothing, while fewer manage to save in difficult times.

As Zahra explained:

Women are close to their children, home and family. They give priority to their home children’s needs. Women’s earning enables them to purchase something for their home, pay their children’s school fees and buy them books. (Zahra, manager)

Mayoux (1998) with Khan and Bibi (2011) affirms that women, being more concerned with family and children are likely to spend the most of their earnings on both.

This is further reinforced by Zartasha, who explained:

My earnings enable me to take care of the needs of my children, which lessen my financial dependency on my brother. I can serve my children with milk. The money I earned from selling goats, at least allows me to look after their health and contribute in household expenditures. (Zartasha, participant)

Rubina stated that she not only looks after her family’s needs, but also manages to save for the future:

Since I started earning I am capable now to take part in home expenditures and spending on children’s education, their fees and other needs. I also try to save some amount which I can use in any hard situation, such as accident. (Rubina, participant)

Women who are earning, spending income on home welfare and children’s education, demonstrates their direct concern for their family. They are able to do so because they have their own money, which gives them full authority to use it. This is confirmed in the survey data on children’s education, which shows that the rate of literacy was higher among the women’s children. The reason for this is that women were now investing in their children’s education. Women on the other hand were also aware of the importance of saving amounts for future needs, which shows their judiciousness. This finding is consistent with the results of a study carried out by Khan, Sajid and Rehman (2011) at Gujrat, which showed that the women’s extra income went to improving their children’s education, health and overall well-being.

Women’s earning and their contribution to the household income, overtime strengthened their individual status at home. Along with this, women also
experienced that their male family members were involving them in decision making at home.

8.3.2. Women’s participation in decision making

Women reported that they were consulted and involved in decision making as the consequence of their participation in the projects.

All 60 of the participants of this study confirmed that after their involvement in the project, they started participating in decisions about children’s and the family’s well-being. Women explained in detail during their in-depth interviews that their involvement in household decision making was due to their earning capacity whereas when they were not earning, they were not included in decision making of such matters.

As Rubina and Nazish reported:

*I feel now I have a better position in my home, my husband takes my opinion in family matters. Now I am earning and he acknowledges it. Before with his income we were barely making our livelihood but by the grace of God we are making our bread and butter through respectable means.* (Rubina, participant)

*My husband never discussed any home matters with me before but now he realize my efforts and so he consults me in making decisions about our children and home. It is because, now I contribute in home expenditures.* (Nazish, participant)

Women’s participation in the project played a vital role in changing their position. As mentioned earlier, men’s earning were not sufficient to meet the needs of a large household. With women’s earning, they realized that their home and their children’s health and welfare could be better. This is compatible with the results of studies conducted by Isran and Isran (2001), Hunt and Kasynathan (2001), Shoaib, Latif and Usmani (2013), Naeem et.al (2014) and Ahamad, Hemlata and Narayana (2015) who concluded that with women’s earning and contribution in family expenditures, men began to value the views of their women in decision making, which raised women’s status at home. Gradually, they came to understand the productive ability of women, as well as the important contribution they were making in their communities.
The managers made the similar observation. They reported that once women started earning, their status within the family changed and they were consulted by their male family members, which according to them is a change in men’s attitude towards women.

One manager explained the link between women’s earning and securing a decision-making position:

> Since women became an earning member of the family, the males were prepared to listen to the suggestions of women in matters like children’s health and education. The involvement of women in decision making was noteworthy because they did not have this status before. (Azhar, manager)

Another two managers mentioned that due to earning, women had secured a role in decision making relating to their children or to home matters.

> Men’s behavior towards women is gradually changing. They involved women in decision making particularly for the children and home matters, because women are now earning. (Rameez, manager)

> Now men ask women about their viewpoints in family matters and include them in decision making processes. If she decides to send her children to a school then her husband agrees with her because she is paying the fees. (Zahra, manager)

The managers observed that women’s income has given them a say in home matters. That is, because women invested their income in the home and children’s welfare, as a result men permitted them to participate in decision making related to these matters. The results of a study conducted by Jan and Hayat (2011) at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan also confirmed the change in men’s behavior because now men acknowledged women’s earnings by giving them due importance in household decisions regarding food choices, education of the children, and the family’s health. This is what, Törnqvist and Schmitz (2009, p. 9) confirmed that ‘economic empowerment puts women in a stronger position and gives them the power to participate, together with men... and to make decisions that promote their families and their own wellbeing’. The woman’s role in decision making is a sign of having respect at home (Osmani 1998; Hunt and Kasynathan 2001; Husain, Mukerjee and Dutta 2014). Khan and Bibi (2011) from there study in Baluchistan asserted that the earning status of women positively affected men in accepting women’s role in
decision making. However they equally contended that socio cultural environment and men’s friendly attitude are vital, even compulsory, to project success.

As reported by Subramaniam (2006, p. 7) the ‘Economic sphere involves both earning and controlling earnings in terms of decision making’. The women of this study were earning as well as having control over their income which leads them to be involved in decision making at home. However on the other side, the responses of managers and women also clearly indicated that women were involved only in those decisions of family and children where they were spending their income. It shows that women did not involve in those matters in which they were not financially contributing. It means women were not having control on their family income and men were still the main decision maker in most financial matters. This is consistent with the finding of study conducted by Husain, Mukerjee and Dutta (2014) in India, that most of the women had control on their earning but not on the family income. Women participants control on utilizing their own income is however encouraging compared to when they did not have income nor control and neither they were in position to make any decision.

In the next section I look at the impact of these projects on women’s ability to move around.

8.3.3. Women’s mobility

This section examines the effect of project intervention on women’s mobility. Mobility is described as the freedom of physical movement within the area of residence as well as outside (Uteng 2011). I took this definition as the standard form of mobility. If a woman can go, frequently or occasionally outside from home without having prior permission from family members, can go alone, can move within her vicinity and can move to other areas. Then she will be attributed as mobile. If a woman does not enjoy this freedom then she is not classified as mobile. However, between these two extremes, if a woman may go outside with permission, accompanied, and may move within her vicinity or occasionally outside the area, I categorized her as of low mobility.

The women participants of this research tended to exhibit wither low mobility or no mobility even after participating in the project. With the detailed analyses of mobility trend in three projects it is safe to say that projects could not effectively improve
mobility among its participants, yet some few women did experienced some change in their mobility.

The collected data showed that all participants of one NGO, BRSP did not show any mobility, whilst some participants of SPO and WESS showed low level of mobility with high number of non-mobility cases. It is compatible with the results of the study conducted by Khan and Bibi (2011) in Baluchistan who ascertained that there was almost no link between the markets and women. In their study, they found that only 6% women accessed markets through their male family members. They mainly quoted three reasons for this, ‘cultural rigidities, social exclusion and poor institutional capacities of women’ (p.142).

Now I compare the mobility trends among three projects of three NGOs and will also analyse why some participants did experience increased mobility whilst most of them could not. I measured the women’s mobility trends as per their participation in three stages of projects, training, working and selling the items. Participants who showed mobility on any one or two stages of project, I assigned them a category of low mobility. The participant who exhibits their mobility to market, I placed them in moderate mobility category.

**Table 8: Tabulated presentation of level of mobility among WESS participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Selling items</th>
<th>Nature of work</th>
<th>Level of mobility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 women trained within their vicinity</td>
<td>20 work from home</td>
<td>16 secure new orders and sold ready items via FSAs</td>
<td>Embroidery</td>
<td>Low mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 visited markets and involved in direct sale and purchase</td>
<td>Embroidery</td>
<td>Moderate mobility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This depicts that after participating in a project 16 women showed low mobility as they only participated in training which was arranged in FSA’s home. At second stage all of them worked at home. However at third stage of project, only four women visited markets, made their links at market and dealt with all matters pertaining to sales of their products. These four women showed the moderate
mobility as they not only participated in training but also managed their direct dealing at markets.

The reason for 16 women’s low mobility was mainly the patriarchal restriction which constraint their free movement to markets. Second was the security concern: as most of the bomb blasts and target killings have occurred in Quetta and so in reaction strikes and processions are also being held in Quetta. This can result in blocked roads and lack of transport. Family members of women were afraid to send them to markets and they were also not willing to accompany their females. Another reason was that women wanted to work from home without altering their daily routine life. Besides the fact that all 20 women belong from the suburban areas of Quetta city then why only four women showed moderate mobility? In the specific context of this project, it clarifies that mobility does not always link with the location, it can be affected by other factors. First, these four women explicitly mentioned that every time they travel to market they were accompanied by their male family members while 16 did not. Another reason of their mobility could be of their individual circumstances.

As indicated by Rubina;

*I think my husband illness was one of the main reason due to which he allowed me to visit markets and directly deal with selling and purchasing. He knows that he could not earn and at the end I will be the one who has to take care of all.* (Rubina, participant)

With the fact that husband being head of family look after all expenditures but if due to any illness he could not, then he is compelled to depend on his wife. It is because he knows well that his wife is the only one who could look after their children better than any other family members. In this case, he was not left with any choice except to allow his wife to visit market because in this way her wife was earning more than depending on FSA’s help. Therefore, it can be argued that patriarchal restrictions could be negotiable in some circumstances, as men are compelled due to any unforeseen situation.

The SPO project was also not much successful in improving mobility trends among its participants, yet some women showed low mobility. As depicted from the following table.
Table 9: Tabulated presentation of level of mobility among SPO participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Selling items</th>
<th>Nature of work</th>
<th>Level of mobility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 women trained at literacy</td>
<td>From home</td>
<td>Males selling goats at market</td>
<td>Rearing livestock</td>
<td>Low mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 women trained at literacy</td>
<td>From skill development center</td>
<td>Selling embroidery items from center</td>
<td>Embroidery and stitching</td>
<td>Low mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>center Out of them only 4 women did exposure visits to city market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As presented in the table, 12 participants who received livestock went from their homes to literacy center to participate in the trainings, so they are placed in low mobility category. They did not show any further mobility in later two stages of the project. The reason for this is that rearing of livestock is a traditional work carried out by women at home (Mohyuddin, Chaudhry and Ambreen 2012). Further, women prefer to choose livestock as it supports their notion of being at home and performing duties. However, due to the male oriented nature of markets, women cannot sell the goats by themselves in market. It reflects that nature of work could also be one of the reasons of women’s non mobility. On the other hand, 8 women who selected to work from skill development center also showed low mobility. I assigned them this category because they moved from their homes to literacy center to attend training, then they worked and sold embroidery or stitching items from skill development center, but none of them established direct contact with the city markets. Therefore, I did not put them in a category of moderate mobility. Out of these 8 women, four travelled three times to markets at Quetta in the vehicle provided by SPO along with security. Afterward women could not visit again to Quetta markets because of the security concern and non-availability of safe and appropriate transport. Furthermore, women also reported that their family members were not willing to accompany them on the way from Nasirabad to Quetta as the trip took usually seven hours or even more.

The reason for low mobility among the cohort of 8 women was the availability of fully equipped center within the premises of women’s residents.
As the manager explained:

*Women could not attain complete movement; however, men realize women are earning and now center is accessible too, so to some extent they allow them. At least women go to a skill development center to work and earn, within their area, with any of their male family members.* (Mujeeb, manager)

Little improvement in mobility among women was the consequence of their involvement in the project, women started earning and men had realized that this benefited their home and children. Another reason was that men could accompany the women on the way to the center, which reduced their apprehensions regarding women’s safety. A third reason was the accessibility and availability of the center within the local area, which made it easy for women to go to work without depending on transport.

Uzma further explained:

*My father allowed me to work at the center, because he was now satisfied with the NGO work and most important the center was located near to my home. It was safe for me to go by walking. Further, he knows that he or my brother can pick me up from and drop me at the center.* (Uzma, participant)

As mentioned earlier her father initially opposed her, since the home is considered the safest place for women, and traditionally men do not allow them to leave (Keddie, 1990). Uzma’s father was also obliged to ensure his daughter was safe at all times. However, he allowed Uzma as he himself visited the center. She acknowledged that the availability of a center within her area where she could go on foot was one of the main reasons for her mobility. In addition she made the point that if any male family member agrees to accompany the women outside the home, then this can increase opportunities for women’s movement. The participants from WESS project also identified this as one of the core reasons of their access to the market. This is aligned with the study of Paterson (2008), who ascertained that accompanied movement is the standard form of women’s mobility in Baluchistan.

Women experienced low mobility after participating in the project demonstrates that the patriarchal restrictions can be reduced when men assures that women are secure and they have access to infrastructure services.

Third NGO, BRSP was not successful even in bringing the low mobility among its women participants, as demonstrated in the following table;
Table 10: Tabulated presentation of level of mobility among BRSP participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Selling items</th>
<th>Nature of work</th>
<th>Level of mobility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 women indirectly</td>
<td>From home</td>
<td>Males selling goats</td>
<td>Rearing livestock</td>
<td>No mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trained</td>
<td></td>
<td>at market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 women indirectly</td>
<td>From home</td>
<td>Males selling</td>
<td>Poultry farming</td>
<td>No mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trained</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 women indirectly</td>
<td>From home</td>
<td>From home</td>
<td>Home based shop</td>
<td>No mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trained</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As presented in the table, the 20 participants of the project did not show any form of mobility on any of three stages of the project. They received training from any of their male family members, as women were strictly prohibited to go out from their homes. All of the women performed work at home, however matters pertaining to the trade of livestock and poultry were controlled by the male family members because of the male oriented market structure. The same trend is also followed by the SPO participants, who received livestock. Four women who were running home based shops were also dependent on their male counter parts to bring them the shop items from the main market. The reason for this was the restrictions on women by men, due to cultural barriers, as mentioned before.

Manager expressed;

*Even we tried a lot to directly indulge the women in every step of project, but the opposition from men against women’s mobility was so strong. Therefore as an alternative we gave women indirect training through their men folks (Azhar, manager).*

With persistent efforts of BRSP, male reluctantly allowed their women to participate in the project, as long as the women remained at home and the men under took training and obtained resources on women’s behalf. Participants working from home achieved the status of income earner in the family. Thus present research demonstrates that income does not necessarily link with mobility and women can earn without leaving their home. However, greater mobility did increase income earning opportunities.
Bibi expressed that;

*Man has control over everything we do, so our movement from home is also under their control (Bibi, participant).*

The women participants of this project could not achieve even low mobility; they were under strict restrictions of men’s authority. Another reason was that men were concerned with women security as men’s honour is at stake. So to control women’s mobility is an indirect way to ensure men’s control on women. Furthermore, BRSP did not have any center within easy reach where women could gather and learn training skills. This further reduced any chance for an improvement in women’s mobility. Unlike the participants of previous two projects (WESS and SPO) they did not explicitly mention the issues of, transport or infrastructure because men have already confined their women to homes.

While concluding the above discussion of projects impact on women’s mobility it is clear that women mobility is the out-come of several factors and the provision of only one or two factors cannot improve this altogether. Therefore Uteng (2011) affirmed that ‘the daily mobility of women in developing countries is guided by a set of complex hierarchies’. Mobility requires the simultaneous work of all factors such as patriarchal support, provision of infrastructure and security. In WESS case, despite a comparatively better infrastructure, the effect of patriarchal restrictions and security issues were so strong that mobility among majority of women did not improve. In case of SPO, men’s authority along with poor infrastructure and security threats were responsible, while in BRSP case the effect of patriarchal restrictions superseded the other factors.

After participating in the projects, both participants shared their reflections on the benefits of the projects, women received.

**8.4. How the women benefited**

Managers and women highlighted the further benefits that women gained, specifically: increased self-confidence, strong social networks, and achieving a sense of ownership towards the resources women received, in particular livestock and poultry.
Women were asked about the very change they feel after participation in the project. All women reflected that project brought changes in their lives. However, women mentioned prominent changes in their life.

8.4.1. Self confidence

This section analyse the responses of managers and women, about the self-confidence women achieved as a result of their participation in the projects. Managers observed the increased self-confidence among the participant women. The expressed;

*Women got confidence in themselves, once they realized their earning capacity. Their confidence further increased when they observed men supporting their work.* (Zahra, manager)

*Once women started earning, they gained confidence in themselves as they realized their abilities and got the trust of their male family members. Men used to think that women could not do anything besides household chores, but now began to realize they could actually earn even by staying at home.* (Iqbal, manager)

Managers reported that the participants built self-confidence because now they had the self-realization of their own abilities, of what they could perform effectively. Certainly they won the trust of their male family members, which was evident when men included them in decision making. This was further substantiated by different studies; such as Rowland (1998, p. 20) noted self-confidence among women as an impact of an NGO project in Honduras, Paterson (2008) acknowledges that women were confident as result of their involvement in project in Baluchistan. Similarly Kabeer, Simeen and Sakiba (2011) affirmed self-reliance among project’s women in Bangladesh.

Women’s participation in the project helped them to understand their hidden potential. When women earn on account of their own abilities, it gives them self-confidence. This grew further when they contribute to household expenditures, which increased their status at home and eventually improved their communication with their spouses about different matters (Idrees, Ilyas and Cheema 2012).

Women proved to their male counterparts that they were capable of doing work. This led them to earn male trust and, as a result, the men supported them in matters
concerning sales or purchases (explained in chapter 7). This gradually improved relationships between men and women, actually benefiting the whole community. This implies a changing scenario where the community starts to acknowledge the changed status of women.

25 women out of 60 also reported that their participating in the project made them confident. Bibi, who was 64 years of age, explained:

*I had never earned on my own. This is the first time that I am earning. I feel my self-worth has improved by doing something. I feel good that at this age I am productive and capable of lending a hand to run the home.* (Bibi, participant)

This earning status brought changes within herself, as well as in her position in the home. She was contributing to her family financially when most women of her age were not seen as making a productive contribution to the family. Women in Pakistan perform various unpaid home chores that go unacknowledged, but as soon as they begin earning; their contribution is noticed and seen as important. This makes women aware of their own worth and the significance of the work they do. Most importantly, their status improves, and they are seen as productive and important members of the community.

Another participant, Uzma spoke of how she gradually gained confidence in herself:

*I used to be shy but now I speak confidently, even with strangers. If I had not participated in this project I would not be speaking to you now. I never thought that I would have an interview with anyone like you. I used to keep quiet at home but now if I need to say something to my family, I talk with my husband and then we both share that particular issue with them. I have trust and the confidence of my husband and family, who say ‘Uzma knows best’.* (Uzma, participant)

Uzma clearly demonstrates that her participation in the project gave her confidence, which she also acknowledges. She explained that her confidence had impacted her at the individual level as well as at the family level. Women being shy and submissive avoid talking in front of the elders. The participation of Uzma in the project did not only give her benefits of earning but a platform on which to utilize her abilities. Her ability to earn gave her status at home, to speak and be heard, and other family members also recognized this by considering her opinion important. Uzma had an
incentive that she was educated and so education as well as earning contributed in raising her level of confidence. Young (1992) with Maslak and Singhal (2008) also endorsed that education can empower women because it gives them confidence, enabling them to debate with others (Noreen and Humala 2012). However, education could not be seen as only reason of gaining confidence. This data also demonstrates that another participant, Bibi, was not educated at all even though she expressed her change in behavior as confidence because of her new status of earning.

Social networking was another significant impact of empowerment projects that was highlighted by managers and women; I turn to this in the following section.

8.4.2. Social networking

This section examines the responses of managers and women, as to how the networking among women participants improved after they became involved in the projects. Providing the opportunity to meet and networking is significant for the women of Baluchistan, who are generally confined to their home. The NGOs organized gatherings of women in one place for the purposes of training and meetings. As Zahra explained networking as information sharing:

The organization of women into groups has improved their networking. It has given them a platform of information sharing and proved beneficial for those who could not visit markets or attend exhibitions. (Zahra, manager)

This provided the opportunity for information sharing, networking and building relationships. Networking is of vital importance for women because, as a general trend, women only make visits to their relatives’ homes and these gatherings are mostly of an informal nature, held on social or religious occasions. The projects provided an opportunity for women to meet with other women in groups, which are different from the usual family gatherings. This enhanced their learning of group dynamics and helped them to gain knowledge from other experiences, through sharing. These networks provided knowledge about markets and exhibitions to those who could not visit there. Parsons (1991, p.13) affirmed that people can be empowered through group formation and network building because this provides them with an opportunity to discuss and then develop their skills, knowledge and support networks.
Iqbal spoke of the benefits of networking from information sharing to problem solving. He explained:

*Our project has organized women in a group that meets in the centre. As part of this group, the women started to interact with each other, building trust, discussing various matters and trying to resolve issues by having suggestions from their group members. This shows that their social networking minimized their isolation.* (Iqbal, manager)

He explained that networking is about building long term relations, where women build trust in each other. In groups, when women communicate and work together, this serves to build up relations. They discuss their day to day issues and receive suggestions from others to solve them; here, networking also becomes a source of emotional support to women.

The manager’s observations are validated by the findings of my survey, in which 22 out of 60 women stated that after participating in the project their networking had improved, in contrast to their previous social isolation. This was further substantiated by the women during the interviews. Nazish explained how improved networking benefited her: although she could not visit markets, she received vital knowledge about market trends. She explained:

*I could not go to visit the markets as my husband did not allow me. But because I was attending the training and meeting at FSA’s home it gave me an opportunity to learn things from the other group members who visited the market. They told me what the new, latest embroidery designs are in demand. Now I know many women of my area whom I never met before as we gather in FSA’s home.* (Nazish, participant)

Nazish now understood the value of social networking: first, because these gatherings were beneficial for her to gain knowledge of the market, as she could get information from other members. Second, these gatherings also became a resource for learning more embroidery styles, by observing each other’s work. Moreover, her circle of social acquaintances increased, as she met with other women with similar interests, who could perform more efficiently together. Rowland (1997, p. 14) termed this the collective dimension of empowerment: when women in groups get together and achieve more, as compared to doing things alone. Social networking helped to increase the women’s self-confidence because when they gathered, they gained knowledge and new information (Rowlands 1998, p. 20).
Rowland (2005) indicated that the organization of women into groups is an empowerment strategy, because this way they can support each other and learn from each other’s experiences and work. Hall (1992) argued that women’s mutual support is significant for both individual and social empowerment, because when women work together they support each other by sharing their experiences (Mohanty 1995). A study conducted by Idrees, Ilyas and Cheema (2012) in Mandi-bhaud-din-Pakistan also confirmed that as a result of participating in economic activities, women’s social networking improved.

The next section elaborates on the experience of women gaining a sense of ownership towards their livestock or poultry.

### 8.4.3. Sense of ownership

This section discusses the managers and women’s responses about the sense of ownership achieved by the women participants of the projects. Women participation in these projects bestowed them with resources and they also proved that they had the capability to manage and utilize effectively. Khan and Bibi (2011) affirmed that a sense of ownership is developed among the participants who get involved in the projects and according to them ‘is necessary for reduction in poverty on sustainable bases’ (p. 134). It means that women started owning the resources, they received from the project and by proper utilization they were improving their overall standard of living (Jan and Hayat 2009; Akram, Shaheen and Kiyani 2015).

Two managers recounted that women having livestock or poultry in their name, ensured their strong position at home. As Mujeeb and Zahra explained:

*Women’s participation in the project has given them ownership of the assets. They can sell the livestock or product as per their will. This makes them responsible. It is a fact that due to our market system they have to depend on their males but at least now they own it. Men give women the amount after selling it in the market, as we confirmed through female staff. (Mujeeb, manager)*

*Livestock or poultry were given to the women; this gave them a sense of ownership. However, we gave this via their male family members but the men clearly knew that it belongs to the women. Generally, women do not have assets in their name but this project has strengthened their position in the family, because now they are owners of livestock or poultry etc. Women cannot take part in direct selling so men do this and hand over money to their*
women. On follow-up visits we were assured this was the case. (Azhar, manager)

A sense of ownership among women was highly valued, and acknowledged by the managers. This project however, by giving them assets, made them owners. They were able to decide about selling and how to utilize the benefits. Being owners they became responsible for their livestock or poultry, which increased their performance in utilizing these resources. As explained earlier, women were using milk, eggs, chickens at home, also selling them to neighbours for income. However, they were largely dependent on their menfolk to sell them in animal markets, because these were completely men’s markets and were located in very distant places. Men sold items and gave the women the correct amount. Managers also highlighted that NGO projects gave this ownership to women at the home level; however, this could not change the market structure, as this was beyond the scope of these projects.

The managers’ responses were further verified by the women during the survey; 13 women participants reported that after having resources in their name they felt ownership of these resources. As Zartasha and Tahira explained:

*The goats are mine and I can use them the way I like. My family members help me to sell them in the market, whenever I ask them.* (Zartasha, participant)

*Now I have my own money and my own assets in my hands. I have control of my assets but as I never went to market I listened to my brother’s advice. Following his advice and with his help, I sold one goat at Eid, for a very good price because at that time the price of goats was high.* (Tahira, participant)

Women also acknowledged a sense of ownership because now they were not only rearing the livestock but controlling it, and the way it would be used was at their discretion. However, women also realized that they had to rely on males for sales; because they had less information about the market system on account of their low mobility, compared to men who possess more (Paliwala 2000, p. 49). This is the reason that in case of Tahira, her brother knew that one of the good times to sell goats in the market is at Eid. Hashemi, Schuler and Riley (1996) also found that as a
result of participation in economic activities, women acquired a sense of ownership. Indeed, women acquired a feeling of ownership of the livestock, while admitting that they were dependent on men for sales and purchases. On the other hand, this also shows men helping women, meaning that men’s mindset is gradually changing. Men started acknowledging women’s ownership of their own earning activities, provided support and also used their market knowledge to help them, in order to increase their benefits. This would eventually affect the general community, as they would see that men working with women, benefiting the whole family.

8.5. Suggestions to improve future empowerment projects for women

In this section I first look at the suggestions made by managers for improving future economic empowerment projects. Then I examine the suggestions made by the women participants during the survey and the in-depth interviews.

8.5.1. Managers’ suggestions to improve future women’s economic empowerment projects

Managers realized, from their recent economic empowerment projects, that women were more likely to participate in those earning opportunities that they can carry out at or close to home. The managers suggested that new projects should provide training and allocate more resources.

Two managers from WESS suggested the provision of raw materials for embroidery to individual women:

*I suggest that in new projects NGOs should provide embroidery kits to each individual woman which they can use at home level. This will be helpful for women because they are poor and find it difficult to visit markets. However, NGOs should also continue to give them relevant training and built their links with markets. (Zahra, manager)*

*Provision of embroidery frames, threads and raw cloth would increase the women’s productivity and automatically their earning. (Rameez, manager)*

Their suggestions clearly reflect two things on which they would like to focus in their new projects. First, their previous project was successful, and on the basis of their experience, they wanted to build a new project using the same approach: providing training and services for market access. Second, by providing resources
such as embroidery frames, raw cloth and threads in bulk, they would increase women’s earning. This shows that in new projects they would still be addressing the issues of women’s movement and safe travel; therefore, they would plan to provide resources at the women’s doorstep.

Four other managers suggested that NGOs should diversify and provide earning opportunities in kitchen gardening or pickle making:

Beside livestock or embroidery NGOs should provide different types of earning opportunities to women such as kitchen gardening, pickle making. For this we should provide them training, resources and give them proper access and links to the market. This would increase women’s choices to earn. (Azhar, manager)

We should provide women with kitchen gardening kits or pickle or jam making knowledge. The assistance should also be given to them for market access by arranging vehicles. It will broaden the number of women beneficiaries who do not want to be involved in embroidery or livestock activity. (Iqbal, manager)

This recommendation shows that managers were broadening their vision and thinking, to extend earning opportunities for women in new projects. It also shows that in new projects they wanted to address the issue of weak infrastructure and the inaccessibility of markets for women. Therefore, they suggested that for selling jams or pickles in the market, NGOs should provide vehicles that collected products from the beneficiary’s home and then supplied them to the market. This new income generating activity would also be beneficial to those women who did not have particular skill (for example, embroidery) or who did not want to do livestock or embroidery work.

Managers agreed on the need to build on and initiate new projects for women’s empowerment because they realized that embroidery and livestock/poultry projects were proving to be beneficial for women. In addition, this would address the issues of women’s free movement, safe transport and underdeveloped infrastructure. Therefore, they suggested new income-generating activities that would increase the number of women beneficiaries of the new projects, and thus would improve their lives.

Women, in agreement with the managers, gave several suggestions for new empowerment projects, which I analyse as follows.
8.6. Women’s suggestions to improve future projects

In this section the suggestions for improving future women’s empowerment projects made by the participants during the survey and in-depth interviews, are discussed.

Consequently, they required more of these resources to achieve more benefits. Women had far more suggestions that were interesting and creative. Suggestions included provision of more livestock/poultry, more raw materials for embroidery, more items to stock homes based shops and a provision of a generator. Other suggestion included the arrangement of local area exhibitions to show case their achievements.

8.6.1. Provision of more livestock / poultry

The 28 women participants who had received a pair of goats (12 from SPO and 13 from BRSP), along with three women who received 55 hens, suggested that the provision of more livestock and poultry would yield greater benefits. A pair of goats was a good initiative but, from the income-generating point of view, the provision of more livestock would help to increase earnings. More hens would produce more eggs and chicks, while an increased number of goats would produce more milk, which could be sold and could also be used for making yogurt or butter, to be sold to neighbouring houses. This would bring more cash to them and eventually it would minimize their financial problems. Further, the value of livestock, is quite high and the average amount paid for one goat is between 15,000 to 25,000 Pakistani rupees (150 to 250 $AUD) or more.

Tahira spoke of the benefits:

*NGOs should give 6 or more goats to women as this would be more useful for them. More goats mean more milk or more baby goats which would rapidly increase the earnings.* (Tahira, participant)

Her suggestion providing of more goats showed her clear understanding of the benefits of having livestock. The provision of fewer resources enabled them to earn something and to attain a better status at home, comparatively, so they were of the opinion that more resources would strengthen their position. More goats would increase their income; milk could be used at home and/or sold locally. Similarly,
more baby goats would mean more goats could be sold, which would certainly mean more financial profit.

8.6.2. Provision of raw material for embroidery

The 11 women participants from WESS who did not receive any physical resources suggested that the NGO should distribute a reasonable supply of threads, embroidery frames, raw material/clothes, with which to start production. It is because their meager resources did not allow them to purchase those items from the markets.

Rubina’s proposal for a future new project was:

\[ \textit{NGO should provide us with the bulk of raw material required for embroidery. With the fabrics, embroidery frames, threads, iron and other necessary items for embroidery and stitching we would produce more products. (Rubina, participant)} \]

The provision of embroidery items covers two important ways of enabling women to earn money while working at home. First, it would address the fact that they are not allowed to go to the market to purchase embroidery items. Second, the fact women are not able to afford purchase the bulk of raw material, including the cloth, threads etc. If these items are provided to women it is easier for them to initiate work at home and to start earning. Furthermore this would also increase their productivity and increase the quality of the embroidered dresses because of good quality material is being used in its preparation

8.6.3. Provision of more general shop items

The four BRSP women who established home based shops suggested that, along with small general store items, the NGO should also provide items, such as flour and rice sacks, etc., in greater quantities, to keep in the shops. The more stock they have the more they can sell.

Bibi suggested that NGOs should provide more items for home-based shops.

\[ \textit{NGOs should provide big items, such as sacks of flour, rice, sugar, big cans of cooking oil etc. in more quantity. This would increase our sales. This way, we would be able to save more money in order to buy new goods afterwards on our own. (Bibi, participant)} \]
This recommendation reflects her understanding of business, which she learned after participating in a project. Bibi could see how the home based shops would help women who traditionally have been denied equality, to earn from home, and to provide for their children. Based on her own experience, she suggested two measures that she felt would increase the income of home based shops: providing big items such as flour and rice and increasing the number of goods to be sold, would both further increase the turnover and would in turn enable the community women to purchase a new range of items. The increase in sales would lead to an increase in income, which would positively affect the overall well-being of the family.

Analysis of the above participants’ suggestions demonstrates that all women were agreed that the project activities were beneficial for them. Therefore, they wanted more resources for new projects so that they would be able to get maximum advantage.

8.6.4. Provision of generators to provide electricity

The four women from SPO suggested that NGO should provide a generator in the skill development center, to increase work efficiency by overcoming the regular power failures. Women mentioned this because the skill development center was equipped with all the necessary items required for undertaking embroidery and stitching. When their work of embroidery and stitching was affected by power cuts, they realized that they should have some alternative resource, to deal with this.

One participant, Uzma, explained that generators in the skill development center could be even more beneficial for women:

*NGOs should equip these skill development centers with generators because sewing machines rely on the electricity, but it often cuts out for hours. Generators would increase work efficiency.*  
(Uzma, participant)

Since it was impossible to rely on electricity in Baluchistan, given the regular power cuts, the electric sewing machines would all stop in the middle of their work. Women worked in this center on the orders for embroidery or stitching that they received from nearby women but, on account of the power cuts, could not complete the orders. A generator would get around this problem and allow more work to be completed on time.
8.6.5. Arranging local area exhibitions

The four women from SPO and nine from WESS proposed that NGOs should arrange exhibitions more frequently in the local areas. These should be for women only to visit and buy from and the stalls also should be managed by women. This would increase women’s participation from both sides, sellers and buyers, as the cultural barriers restrain women from interacting with men. The exhibitions should be arranged in their own communities to increase the chances of approval from the male community members, ensuring participation and increased income. If exhibitions were held in other areas and were open to the general public their participation would be difficult, as they would not be allowed from their homes.

Nazish recommended a strategy for new NGO projects for women’s economic empowerment:

*NGOs in the future should arrange women-oriented local area exhibitions and stalls for women involved in embroidery projects. Since many women are not allowed to go far from their home. This would allow them to participate. This would also help us to promote our work and improve sales. (Nazish, participant)*

Her suggestion for future projects reflects the knowledge and understanding she had gained through participating in the project. Women-oriented exhibitions in local areas would attract more women participants as well as women visiting from other cities. This would directly promote the work of participants, as they would receive more orders and thus earn still more without leaving their home area. It would also address the issue of women’s movement, because if an exhibition could be arranged within the locality, this would ensure the participation of more women.

The suggestions they put forward reflect that the resources they were provided within the projects were tailored to the traditional setup and were beneficial for them. Women realised that they could earn and make their place at homes without direct confrontation with men’s authority. Further, they emphasized home-based assistance, reflecting that women want to be active family members, even by working at home to earn, rather going outside. These women were well aware of their traditions, and the possibilities of working within these constraints. Also the women understood the current unrest in the region, and the lack of infrastructure which do not support their safe and easy mobility, so working at home was a safe option to continue earning.
Conclusion

This chapter has provided an analysis of the NGO’s managers’ and the women participants’ strategies to overcome difficulties they confronted during the projects. All of the strategies were effective in gaining the participation of women in their projects. The projects made a noticeable impact on the lives of women interviewed for this research. They started contributing to the family’s income, which raised their status at home. As a result they reported an increase in confidence, expressed improved networking and appreciated their sense of ownership. Men who initially opposed the projects were now supporting these women, for example, helping them to sell their products in market and accompanying them on the way to the market or center. The women who participated in this research acknowledged the changes in their lives, even if these changes were but small steps. Scholars argue that understanding the reality of empowerment is different for every one depending on their socio-cultural background and individual characteristics (Mosedale 2005; Pettit 2012).

The changes women experienced in their lives are not only because they participated in the projects but it is also because they understood their position, capacities and the worth of this opportunity. Therefore, they put their optimum effort into utilizing the resources they received (Mosedale 2005). This is what scholars (see for example Rowland 1995; Townsend 1999; Mosedale 2005; Weaker and Ahmed 2007; Shaheen 2012; Ngo and Wahhaj 2012) argue that NGOs can only assist in the facilitation of empowering women, clearly, it is the women who have to understand their situation and use the opportunities provided by the projects to explore further ways to use their potential.

However, women did not report the improvement in their mobility; this is because the entrenched patriarchal restrictions are exacerbated with the insecurity and poor infrastructure. This clearly indicates that the NGOs project were not so successful in molding the behavior of people with regard to women’s freedom of mobility which is an essential component of empowerment. Without freedom of movement, it is difficult for women to gain empowerment in the form of personal autonomy. Although the women interviewed for this research experienced little changes in their
lives while the pace and amount were slow and limited. The next chapter will provide the concluding discussion on the main themes appeared during the analysis.
CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to analyze the impact of empowerment projects on women’s status in Baluchistan by examining the responses of NGO managers and women participants in the projects. This chapter discusses three significant themes identified in the course of data analysis. The first theme is the constraints placed on women by patriarchal practices that circumscribed them from getting involved in development projects. This intersects with the poor infrastructure and political instability, which further strengthen women’s subordination and men’s domination. The second is the empowerment strategies utilized by NGOs in the implementation of their projects. The third theme involves analysing the overall impact of these projects on the women who participated in them. The analysis clearly indicated that projects could not completely modify the restrictions imposed on women by patriarchy nor were they particularly successful in improving the mobility patterns among many of the participant women.

9.1. Constraints on women’s empowerment

9.1.1. Patriarchal structure/Male dominance

Patriarchal structures and male authority in Baluchistan have framed the lives of women for decades. This system is strengthened by the cultural practices put in place to control women in all spheres of their lives (Daly 1978; Learner 1986; Walby 1990; Cohn and Enloe 2003; Ward 2005; Leatherman 2011; Sultana 2011; Rawat 2014). Women, in respect of their education, health, employment, mobility and marriage are bound and controlled by the decisions of male authority (Isran and Isran 2012; Habiba, Ali and Ashfaq 2016). Normally, any activity that promotes gender equality receives resistance even income-generating projects are heavily resisted because they threaten the control of men, who enjoy a disproportionately large share
of power, according to the principles and practices of classic patriarchy in Baluchistan.

Managers, as well as the women who participated in this research, pointed to the fact that men did not like women having the opportunity to create a shift in their status within the levels of Baluchistan society. Men largely disapproved of women’s employment and mobility, because these were seen to be against the cultural norms of the region (Awan 2012). In such patriarchal systems, women are excluded from the financial responsibility of the family, which means they are also excluded from taking part in employment and are confined to the home. Women therefore become totally dependent on the authority of men and their earning capacity, or lack thereof (Rowbotham 1973, Leo 1973; Curthoys 1988; Kabeer 1999; Isran and Isran 2012; Butt and Shahid 2012).

The patriarchal structure in Baluchistan’s society has had a strong hold in the region; men follow strict traditional cultural practices. From beginning till the end of each project, each step showed the grip of patriarchy. For example, drawing on the empirical data presented, it was found that projects were designed to address the barriers of traditional patriarchy. All training and resources were valuable for the women, but they could only work when the men extended their permission to the women (Awan 2012). Women themselves reported that they had to seek permission from their male family members by assuring them that their work would be to the benefit of home and, in any case, they would be abiding by the orders of their male family members. Further, women also realized they needed the support of their men-folk in selling or purchasing products in the market, because of the constraints placed on their movement as well as due to the male-oriented markets. Women highlighted the importance of their own work by measuring the change in men’s attitude towards them. This clearly demonstrated that the NGO managers, as well as the participating women, were careful not to confront or challenge the restrictions of patriarchal rule but were able to work within the prescribed practices. Hall (1992) suggests that only when women understand and acknowledge the complexity of social structure can they devise ways to gain autonomy.

As a native of Baluchistan, I have an understanding of the local culture, the patriarchal structures and of the male authority that has completely shaped and
dominated women’s lives. I have firsthand experience of the social limitations placed on women; this empirical knowledge has informed my research. Yet the limitations caused by the ongoing political unrest and lack of infrastructure were unexpected.

The data collected for this research shows these were two further major factors that contributed to thwarting the freedom of movement of women in Baluchistan. The following section examines the impositions and restrictions women faced due to political instability and weak infrastructure.

9.1.2. Restrictions arising from political instability and weak infrastructure

In Baluchistan the population in general is massively constrained by the fact they live in an insecure region with antiquated and inadequate infrastructure; altogether these factors are hugely destructive to everybody. Buvinic, Gwin and Bates (1996) agree that the unavailability of infrastructure services is a great obstacle to ensuring women’s participation in development activities and in development generally.

Clearly, patriarchal restrictions control all aspects of women’s lives, but the security threat and weak infrastructure specifically restrict women’s movement and aggravate women’s plight (Detraz 2011; Brohi and Khattak 2013; Shah 2014). Women are deemed to be weak and are believed to be more prone to facing violence in conflict-ridden areas; therefore, men confine them to the home to save them from experiencing any critical situation. The infrastructure, including underdeveloped road networks, insufficient and inaccessible educational, health and vocational institutes, further discourage women’s movement. Kabeer (2012) and OECD (2012) suggest that to facilitate women’s empowerment, consideration should be given to improving the transport system and road networks, which can affect their ability to move. Similarly, the construction of well-equipped and safe schools in local premises can increase their education (OECD 2012).

The results of this study illustrate that mobility of women in Baluchistan is restricted not only by male authority but also by the political insecurity and poor infrastructure; this prevents women from participating in education, seeking employment, or enjoying social engagements. All in all, this results in gender isolation and inequality and women’s powerlessness to create social change. However, the findings of this
study demonstrate that even with the restriction on mobility, women still participate in earning activities and trying to improve their networking with other women, by taking full advantage of their limited freedom of movement.

It was found in this study that political instability was the greatest threat to the success of NGO development projects, and was the reason NGOs pulled their programs out of Baluchistan. Political instability caused significant delays in NGOs’ activities and these in turn caused uncertainty between the NGOs and their beneficiary community. The severity of political instability is more menacing than the patriarchal restrictions because NGOs, as demonstrated in this study, have put in place strategies to cope with this by mobilizing the community and designing projects that fit in with the patriarchal society (see empowerment strategies below).

However, to deal with issues of political instability and for their own survival, NGOs are not left with any feasible solution except to leave insecure areas or postpone and prolong their projects. If this situation prevails for long, then certainly most of the NGOs will completely shut down their activities and leave the region. This is mainly due to two reasons; first, it requires extra funding from the donors, and donors may not likely to invest in such risky areas; second, it would be difficult for NGOs to employ people to work in such areas and risk their lives. Thus, the evacuation of NGOs from the region would increase marginalization in the general population and specifically, in women.

9.2. Empowerment strategies: ensuring women’s participation in projects

All strategies that were adopted by the NGOs to secure women’s participation in the projects were empowerment strategies. To bring a sustainable change in the status of women, their participation in development activities was inevitable (Parvin 2005; Jan and Hayat 2011; Pettit 2012; Kaiser, Doullah and Noor 2014). Therefore, strategies were required that would ensure for a tangible and flexible path to women’s empowerment.

The managers in this study conscientiously implemented the projects. They utilized their knowledge of the social context to implement their projects; vital in the process
of empowerment (Oxal and Baden 1997; Pettit 2012). The aim of each strategy was to address the constraints placed on women’s participation without conflicting with the dominance of the patriarchal structure, and ensure women’s active participation by approaching the hurdles in a tactful way (Buvinic, Gwin and Bates, 1996; Aguiar 2012). Gosh (2009, p. 485) suggests that power relations can be changed without creating conflict; however, this requires a specific understanding of the social situation and the provision of acceptable alternatives to the community. This is clearly seen in the case of these NGOs, who operated within the system and brought about subtle changes in power relations and social practices.

Their strategy of collaborating with the community through social mobilization was to make the community environment conducive to project success. During this process the NGO staff met with the key people in the community and, after these people express satisfaction, they then worked with their targeted beneficiaries. They engaged marginalized women in the projects gave leadership roles to local women, and used their knowledge and understanding to work in the community while assisting them through their staff. Further, to become aware of the situation of project beneficiaries and to ensure the impact of their projects, NGOs conducted follow-up visits. All these strategies show that NGOs adopted a bottom up process to empower powerless women which, Rowland (1995) suggests, is an effective way to promote empowerment. A study conducted by Panda (2007) shows that the NGOs work successfully with the communities by employing similar bottom up strategies.

Similarly, through all of their other strategies, such as sending their female staff to communicate with the women of the community, organizing the flexible participation of women in exposure visits, arranging training within the community, providing home-based free-of-cost resources, the services of middle women to bring orders and purchases to market, establishing skill development center within the locality and transferring training and resources through male family members, the NGOs gained the trust of the community, reduced misconceptions about them and secured participation and support from the community. Through utilizing these strategies the NGOs have done all they could within the limitations of the patriarchal structure of Baluchistan, to address the men’s concern.
It was also found that the NGOs’ strategies not only addressed patriarchal practices but also addressed the security concerns, as well as the issue of poor transport. For example, women received resources and training within their homes and, in one case women received training and resources through their male family members, while women who were permitted to visit the markets were facilitated in this by the use of the NGO’s vehicles. This reduced the risk of women being exposed to political unrest and unsafe transportation.

An interesting aspect of the findings is that the thoughtful provision of resources and the ability of the NGO representatives to facilitate appropriate services on the women’s doorstep, provided grounds for women to negotiate with their family to participate in the projects. This strategy enabled women to have direct control over product and produce, which made them direct beneficiaries and the owners of such resources: for example, livestock, poultry, home based shops and embroidery items.

Having considered the situation closely in order to devise and deploy appropriate strategies, the NGOs were able to reduce the resistance they expected to face: First from the strict patriarchal practices and secondly in regard to the ‘foreign agent’ perception NGOs often attract. The success of the women’s participation was a key to paving the way for future NGO programs to work in these communities because overall, they earned the trust of the local community. The NGOs provided a process to empower the local populace’s women and their communities, to enable them to realize their own strengths to achieve a better way of life by giving them knowledge, skills and confidence (Javed, Luqman, Khan and Frah 2006; Binder-Aviles 2012, p. 49; Akram, Shaheen and Kiyyani 2012).

The findings indicate that freedom of movement was still the most striking problem for the women. For most of, movement was very restricted. However, a number reported accompanied mobility on their way to market and to the local NGO centre as a result of participating in the projects. The NGOs were not able to bring changes in the pattern of women’s mobility, within the context of local socio-political restrictions. As explained earlier, restrictions on mobility were strong, due to the intersecting factors of patriarchal practices, the prevailing political instability and the unreliable infrastructure. NGOs, while being successful in improving women’s social
and economic standing at home, were not in a position to deal with the security and infrastructure issues.

Scholars such as Townsend (1999), Page and Cuzba (1999) and Rowland (1995, 1997), Fonjong (2001), Mosedale (2005) and Islam and Sultana (2005), suggest that NGOs facilitate the women’s empowerment by providing assistance. However, women have to come forward and experience change in their lives by involving in such activities. This in turn gives them a sense of independence and understanding of their own capabilities (Akram, Shaheen and Kiyani 2012). When women participate in such projects then they become able to take responsibility for their choices and decisions. Eventually, they put more effort into proving the significance of their decisions, which gives them a greater sense of empowerment (Jan and Hayat 2011).

9.3 Impact of projects: the scope of empowerment for the women of Baluchistan

The third most important theme of this study was to analyze the impact of these projects on women’s status. The women participants in these three empowerment projects were economically vulnerable. NGOs implemented these projects with the aim of empowering the women, because access to economic opportunities is an important way of achieving empowerment (Fonjong 2001; OECD 2012).

The involvement of poor women in the NGOs’ activities brought considerable changes to their lives but, as argued by Batliwala (1994), empowerment is different for different people, because it depends on the individual socio-economic, cultural and political position. Women in rural areas of Baluchistan are bound by the local practices as well as by the hardships of political instability and infrastructure; for them, taking part in politics, earning a higher educational degree and gaining freedom of movement, are far more complex to achieve. For the women in this study, empowerment was more about their increased role in decision making within the family unit, their control over their personal income, improvement in their self-confidence and their increased networking. In addition, they came to realize their own abilities and gained negotiation skills; all this was achieved after participating in NGOs projects. Women identified these changes as their involvement in the NGO projects increased and in turn, changed their status at home.
Women experienced change in themselves as well as a change in the behaviour of their family members. On the individual level, women achieved a sense of self sufficiency, which Rowland (1997), Mosedale (2003) and Moser (2005) and term ‘power within’: the realization of their own capacities, which bestows a sense of self confidence on them. Most of the women became the first female members in their family to have an earning capacity. Indeed that was a significant achievement that they proudly pointed to during their interviews. Women who were previously socially isolated realized their strengths and capabilities: that they could participate in NGO projects and perform competently, even with meager resources. At the family level, women’s ability to earn an income enhanced their status at home (Sen 1999; Khan and Bibi 2011; Naeem 2014 et al.). Women mentioned that they had earned the trust of their families and that now they were entitled to participate in decision making. Similar points are made by Moser (1993), Batliwala (1994), Rowland (1995) and Akram Shaheen and Kiyani (2015), who confirm that empowerment is also the ability to make decisions, because it shows that women have self-confidence in their understanding and knowledge, as well as control over their lives. Fonjong (2001, p. 225), called this real empowerment, ‘when women gained control over themselves, resources, factors of production and decision making, be it at home or in the public arena’.

A further impact of these projects was also noticed: on participants’ children. Women reported that they were very concerned about the well-being of their children, particularly their health and education. Women realized that by educating their children, they would be making a difference in their lives, something they were unable to do before. This means that women are transferring the positive effects of these projects by investing in the future of the upcoming generation. Similarly, many studies such as (Mehra 1997; Walsh 1998; Kabeer 2001; Fonjong 2001; Morison, Raju and Sinha 2007; Jan and Hayat 2011; Khan, Sajid and Rahman 2011; Dufloo 2012; Ngo and Wahhaj 2012) report the fact that women spend almost all of their earnings on their family’s welfare, especially on children’s education and family health.

Participants in these projects attended training that was building on their existing skills. The training visibly improved their skills in embroidery. Women were able to
make new embroidery designs with new colour combinations, which resulted in increased sales. Similarly, women receiving training in livestock or poultry became more aware with regard to the rearing of livestock. This is consistent with Kabeer (2012, p. 49), who states that ‘training allowed women to move from unpaid domestic work into paid employment’. From this vantage point, Fonjong (2001) and Aguiar (2012) extended that training equips women with skills on account of which their efficiency of work increased.

Women who had been contained by patriarchal boundaries were now prepared to manoeuvre and use the influence of any benefits that came their way for the betterment of their families. This is described as women’s empowerment by Mosedale (2005), because women themselves are locating their possibilities of progress in restricted situations, making the most of the available resources. For example, once they realized that their participation in the projects would be beneficial, they had the poise and belief to be able to convince their male family members by using their own negotiating skills. Similarly, they used the resources provided by the NGO projects in multiple ways to get the maximum benefits: women who worked in the skill development center were not only stitching or doing embroidery on orders, but also stitching their family’s clothes, to save money they used to spend. In the case of a home based shop, the Bibi was not allowed to deal with men, so she found alternative solutions by seeking the assistance of her grandsons. In a similar vein, women who received livestock made yogurt etc. from milk and sold it to neighbouring houses. Women put all their efforts into proving that their involvement in the projects was highly beneficial to the whole family, and eventually they were empowered. Hall (1992) identifies that to be empowered, women have to ‘believe that it is possible’, because only then do they make the effort to achieve emancipation. To put this in another way, the social and economic worth of the NGO projects helped women gain control over their own lives, by acting on issues the women themselves defined as important. This process fostered power in people to use in their own lives, which then extended into their communities and into society.

For these women empowerment was slow, a gradual process, step by step that led to financial and social benefits. Kabeer (2000, p. 38) affirms that the empowerment
processes brings about change in two aspects; firstly, in the equal distribution of resources and opportunities and secondly, in the value system that restrains women from acquiring gender equality. I am not arguing that women, as a result of participating in NGO projects, gained full autonomy and gender equality; however, I am making the point that the process of that change has begun. As Hall (1992, p. 6) argues ‘empowerment is a means to achieve many different kinds of changes that will enhance the quality of life’. The shift in power due to resources being made available to women and their men folk equates to the realization of the women’s capacity and strength to implement progressive changes in their communities, because empowerment means to achieve.

Certainly, the implications of these changes will be long lasting for women in Baluchistan: the knowledge, skills, understanding and above all, the practical benefits they achieved as a result of their participation, will progress with time. Mosedale (2005, p. 244) suggests ‘empowerment is an ongoing process rather than a product. One does not arrive at a stage of being empowered in some absolute sense’.

The participants interviewed for this research were managing to gain some control over their lives, meaning that women would gradually become more powerful in other aspects of their lives.

9.3.1. Changes in men’s behaviour

These projects have not only impacted on women’s lives but, as a consequence, have brought about change in the behavior of the men in their families. For instance, men have become involved in caring for and selling livestock or poultry for their women. Some of the men were ready to accompany their women to the markets and even to the skills development center, and some men agreed to purchase products for the women’s home stores.

Men supported the women in the NGO projects because they were also motivated to enjoy the privilege of an extra income, which would be favorable for the whole family. Researchers such as Hashemi, Schuler and Riley (1996), Kabeer (2001; 2005) and Velmurugan, Veerapan and Kalaiselvan (2013) also reveal situations where women came to share economic responsibilities and thus reduced the economic burden of men. Therefore, men allowed women to take part in decision
making which has positively affected their status at home (Isran and Isran 2001; Shoaib, Latif and Usmani 2013; Ahmad, Hemlata and Naryana 2015). The change in men’s attitude is also due to their realization that women were not actually challenging their authority; they were seeking their permission, which shows that women were respecting men’s authority. Malhotra (2004, p. 55) says that ‘women’s empowerment can be achieved within the existing social order without any significant negative effects upon the power of the powerful’. Khan and Bibi (2011) emphasized that supporting attitude of men is one of the essential component in promoting women’s empowerment because they cannot be empowered ‘until the patriarchal mind set of the society changes,’ (Awan 2012, p. 455). Participating women well know that if men approved their involvement in projects, this would also be a sign of their willingness to change. Rowland (1997) and Connell (2011) argue that men resist women’s autonomy because of the fear of losing their authority.

This is one reason that scholars such as Moser (1993), Batliwala (1995) and Kabeer (1999) emphasize that women acquiring autonomy and independence do not necessarily want to take the power from men but want a more socially equable position where women can be respected and have confidence in their future well-being.

The data demonstrated some change in men’s attitude towards women. However, at the same time it is also evidenced that men continued to exercise ultimate authority. Women were still confined within the boundaries of patriarchy and looked towards men for their approval before doing anything. Project intervention could never alter the centuries old traditions within a period of few years. Yet these projects are the source of bringing nuanced changes in some aspects of participants’ lives. All the women participants of these projects were to various extents economically active and were contributing in the lives of their families. Instead of challenging the rule of authority the women were trying to achieve changes through their aspirations for a better way of life for the entire family.

9.4. Sustainability of the projects

NGOs winding up of project after completion could not lessen the impacts of their projects which they have struggled to implement over considerable period of time.
The sustainability of the projects does not solely depend on the project duration but mainly on its long term effectiveness. The project effectiveness is determined by the way it addresses the local needs of community, the level of participation it secures and the way it alters the participant’s attitude or status. The impact of currently studied NGOs projects are expected to be sustainable.

The strategies through which each NGO has implemented their projects are one of the symptoms of sustainability in projects. The strategies as explained earlier, include mobilization of community as project initiative, women to women interaction and working within patriarchal practices. As result of project participation women beneficiaries were able to take the benefits of income, experiencing the change in their family’s behaviour and realizing an uplifting in their socioeconomic status at home. In a similar vein, another way of project sustainability is that, these projects did not create dependency among its participants. Rather they imparted the relevant training to develop the skills of its women participants in order to make them self-sufficient. The beneficiaries would be effectively using these skills to sustain their empowered position.

Furthermore, results indicated that women were transferring the benefits of their income to their family and children. They were investing their income on their children’s education and well-being. It means that the impacts of the projects are transferring to the next generation that will bring a positive change which is another significant sign of projects sustainability.

Most importantly, once the beneficiaries have achieved the benefits of projects then they are unlikely to revert to their previous status. The start of behavior change among men in the communities is also an achievement that will continue and contribute towards the sustainability of project objectives.

Last but not the least, the sustainability of such projects are also evident by the fact that development practitioners have been reporting several women empowerment projects around the globe as well as in Baluchistan (Paterson 2008; Khan and Bibi 2011; Akram, Shaheen and Kiyani 2012; Gulistan 2014; Naeem et.al 2014; Shah et.al 2015) which is itself a sign of their significance. It is evident that the impact of previous projects has paved a way for the implementation of such new projects
which is itself a form of sustainability. However, sustaining women’s empowerment in Baluchistan requires continues support from organizations because Baluchistan is a difficult area of work due to its strong patriarchal culture (Gulistan 2014).

This study has found that these projects could not make a major but little difference in women's lives; the women were able to achieve personal fulfillment even within the social constraints imposed on them by a patriarchal society. The NGOs carefully planned each activity by using their grassroots knowledge, showing their ingrained potential to empower women, and for their part, the women were enthusiastic about the changes in their lives. This demonstrates how empowerment projects can only be measured solely by those who were disempowered (Kabeer 2001). Women were utilizing the training and resources in every possible way, despite their normal day to day activities, this form of empowerment has allowed them a more active role, rather than living a silent and passive existence. This depicts women were well aware of their own situation and the opportunities they gained in the form of projects. They strived to get the maximum benefits from these projects by learning new skills and becoming an earning member of their families. The women who took part in these projects were leading different lives, compared to those in their area who could not participate.

I conclude that the empowerment of women in Baluchistan is still possible even in a persisting patriarchal structure that intersects with political instability and poor infrastructure: however, the process requires three inevitable elements: an understanding of the socio-cultural and political context of an area, carefully thought-out and designed strategies and finally, the motivation of one’s own self to be empowered. Moreover, the benefit of empowerment also reaches beyond the individual woman, to her children and into her household and into the community.
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APPENDICES
Appendix 1: Permission letters from NGOs

To Whom It May Concern

Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) is an autonomous not-for-profit organization and one of the leading organizations working in the province under the aims to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of the rural poor by harnessing the potential of people to manage their own development through their own community institutions.

BRSP adopts the social mobilization process as a primary mean for supporting the rural men and women in their efforts to alleviate poverty. The essence of the process of social mobilisation is encouraging men and women to form groups at community, village and Union Council, known as Community Organization (CO), Village Organizations (VO) and Local Support Organizations (LSO). These Community Institutions are the forums for empowering people to take an active role in the management and execution of local development initiatives.

Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP) is pleased to assist Miss Huma Zafar, scholar of PhD at school of social science and psychology, Bankstown Campus, University of Western Sydney (Australia) in data collection for her topic “Impact of Women’s Economic Empowerment projects by NGOs on Women’s Socio-Economic status in Baluchistan-Pakistan”.

As a Manager of the section on the behalf of BRSP wish Miss Huma Zafar very good luck for her research.

Warm Regards

Naimatullah Jan Miryani
Manager HRD/SM & Livelihood
Balochistan Rural Support Programme,
To Whom It May Concern

WESS is pleased to facilitate Ms. Huma Zafar, a scholar of PhD at the school of social science and psychology, Bankstown Campus, University of Western Sydney (Australia) for her research on “Impact of Women’s Economic Empowerment projects by NGOs on Women’s Socio-Economic status in Balochistan-Pakistan”.

WESS is a non-profit, non-political, non-government development organization dedicated to bringing lasting improvements in the quality of life of the poorest communities in Balochistan.

Women Economic Empowerment is one of the core program areas of WESS. We have been implementing Women Economic Empowerment projects for the last 8 years in different parts of Balochistan, Pakistan. We are pleased to assist Ms. Huma Zafar for the collection of primary data as the secondary data is available and can be utilized for her research.

We provide her ample opportunity to complete her research and wish her best of luck!

[Signature]
Pervaz Iqbal
Chief Executive

Field Offices:

Harnai:
WESS Field Office
Sanjari Road, Near Tareen Petrol Pump, Harnai.

Chaman:
WESS Field Office
1st Floor College Road,
near Eden Public School Chaman

Killa Safullah:
WESS Field Office
Punjabi Mohalla,
Killa Safullah

Loralai:
WESS Field Office
Jail Baghicha Beside
Levis Line, Tahol Road
Loralai. (0824) 410362

Dalbandin:
WESS Field Office
Klli Wazir Khan
Dabandin, Chaghi.
To Whom It May Concern

The organization Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) is pleased to assist Miss Humna Zafar, scholar of PhD at school of social science and psychology, Bankstown Campus, University of Western Sydney (Australia). The topic of Miss Humna Zafar is "Impact of Women's Economic Empowerment projects by NGOs on Women's Socio-Economic status in Baluchistan-Pakistan". SPO is currently working on Women Empowerment projects in Baluchistan (Pakistan). It is our honor to facilitate the scholar in all the relevant fields, especially in the collection of primary data. Furthermore, the secondary data will be shared with the scholar that is relevant to her research.

I myself as Regional Head (RH), on the behalf of SPO wish her very good luck for her research.

Muktia Ahmed Chhagari,
Regional Head,
SPO, Regional Office
Quetta (Baluchistan)

QUETTA OFFICE
Hl 56-A, Near Pak Japan Cultural Center Jinnah Town, Quetta. Tel: 081-2863701 - 2863702 Fax: 081-2863703 E-mail: quetta@spocpk.org

<table>
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Appendix 2: In-depth interviews for NGO managers

Interview Date: NGO Name:

Questions about demographics and social life

Q 1. Name of participant
Q 2. Designation
Q 3. Gender
Q 4. Age
Q 5. Education
Q 8. Marital status
Q 9. Number of children
Q 10. Children’s education
Q 11. Total number of people live at your home
Q 12. Who is the main breadwinner?
Q 13. Who takes the decisions in your family?

Questions about working life

Q 14. Have you done any volunteer work? If so then how long and where?
Q 15. Can you tell me about the work you do for this NGO? Your's job description?

Questions about the project

Q 16. Tell me about the women’s economic empowerment project that you have worked or are working on in your organization.

Name of project
Duration
Location
Aim of project
Targeted beneficiaries
Details of project implementation
Q 17. What were the difficulties you encountered during implementation of this project?

Q 18. What strategies did you adopt to overcome them?

Impacts of project on women’s economic status

Q 19. Do you think that after participating in the project women started participating in decision making at home?

Q 20. Did you notice that women had control over their income?

Q 21. Did you notice changes in women’s mobility after participating in your project?

Impacts of projects on women’s social status

Q 22. In what ways have women’s lives been changed by participating in this project?

Women’s empowerment in Baluchistan

Q 23. What are your suggestions for improving future NGOs women empowerment projects in Baluchistan?
Appendix 3: Structured interview schedule for women participants in Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization name</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview Date</td>
<td>Serial No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic information

Q1. Name of participant
Q 2. Age
Q 3. Marital status
Q 4. How many children do you have?
Q 5. Your’s education?
Q 6. Children’s education?
Q 7. Who is the main breadwinner at your home?
Q 8. What is the job of the breadwinner?
Q 9. How many people live at your home?
Q 10. Who takes the decisions in your family?

Questions about the Project

Q12. What kind of training and services/resources did you receive by participating in this project?
Q 13. How was it beneficial for you?
Q 14. Has any one opposed your participation in the project?
Q 15. What sort of opposition did you face?
Q 16. How did you overcome that opposition?
Impact of projects on women’s status

Q 17. Do you think that after taking part in economic empowerment projects, you have started to participate in home decisions?

Q 18. Do you have control over your personal income? (If yes) Where do you spend your income?
   a. in the home
   b. saving
   c. on children

Q 19. Do you feel you have experienced change in your mobility after participating in the project?

Q 20. Did you feel any difference in your life after participating in the NGO project?

Participant’s suggestions for future projects

Q 21. How do you suggest NGOs improve their upcoming economic empowerment projects for women?
Appendix 4: In-depth interview for women participants

Organization Name:  
Area:  

Interview Date:  
Serial No:  

Q 1. Name  
Q 2. Age  
Q 3. Education  
Q 4. Marital status  

Q 5. Tell me about your involvement in this project? How did you come to know about the project? What training and services/resources did you receive and how have you benefited from them?  

Q 6. Tell me about any opposition, negative reactions to your involvement in the project? How did you overcome them?  

Q 7. Tell me about the impacts of this project on your life? Did you feel any changes in your life? If so what were they? What was your overall experience of the project?  

Q 8. What are your suggestions for improving future NGO women’s empowerment project in Baluchistan?
Appendix 5: Ethics approval

Our Reference: 13/002375 | H10088

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

14 May 2013

Associate Professor Mary Hawkins

School of Social Sciences and Psychology

Dear Mary

I wish to formally advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved your research proposal H10088 “Impact of Women’s Economic Empowerment Projects by NGOs on Women’s Socio-Economic Status in Baluchistan, Pakistan”, until 31 January 2014 with the provision of a progress report annually and a final report on completion.

Please quote the registration number and titled as indicated above in the subject line on all future correspondence related to this project.

This protocol covers the following researchers:

Mary Hawkins, Jane Mears, Huma Zafar

Yours sincerely

Associate Professor Anne Abraham

Chair, Human Researcher Ethics Committee
Appendix 6: General participant information sheet for NGO managers

Project Title: The Impact of women’s economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women’s status in Baluchistan, Pakistan

Who is carrying out the study?
You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Miss Huma Zafar, PhD candidate from the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, University of Western Sydney.

The research will form the basis for the degree of PhD at the University of Western Sydney under the supervision of Dr. Mary Hawkins.

What is the study about?
The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the impact and efficiency of NGOs’ economic empowerment projects on women’s status and to analyze the differences these projects make in women’s life.

What does the study involve?
The participant will be involved in in-depth interviews. The responses of participants will be audio taped.

How much time will the study take?
Each interview will take thirty to sixty minutes to complete.

Will the study benefit me?
This study will benefit you and you will help bring about improvements in upcoming economic empowerment projects by your NGO, which will affect women’s status positively.

Will the study involve any discomfort for me?
This study should not involve any discomfort. As a participant you can withdraw at any stage of the interview if you feel any discomfort.

How is this study being paid for?
The study is being sponsored by University of Western Sydney.
Will anyone else know the results? How will the results be disseminated?
All aspects of the study, including results, will be confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. A report of this study may be submitted for publication but individual participants will not be identifiable in the report. The results of the research will be disseminated through publication of research articles.

Can I withdraw from the study?
Participation is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to be involved and if you do participate you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any consequences.

Can I tell other people about the study?
Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator’s contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?
When you have read this information, Huma Zafar will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Supervisor, Associate Professor Mary Hawkins on +61 2 97726352 or e-mail M.Hawkins@uws.edu.au and Huma Zafar the Principal Researcher on +61 2 9470056477 or e-mail 17362351@student.uws.edu.au.

What if I have a complaint?
This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is [14H0088]. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.
Appendix 7: Participant consent form—NGO managers

Participant Consent Form

Project Title: The Impact of women’s economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women’s status in Baluchistan, Pakistan

I………………………………….., consent to participate in the research project titled ‘Impact of women’s economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women’s status in Baluchistan, Pakistan’.

I acknowledge that:

I have read the participant information sheet and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to participate in the interview which will be from thirty to sixty minutes and it will be audio taped interview.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

Signed: ____________________________

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

Return Address: Miss Huma Zafrar, School of Social Sciences and Psychology, Bankstown Campus, University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag 1797, NSW 2751, Australia.

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee.
The Approval number is: [H10088]
If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uow.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix 8: Participant information sheet (survey participants)

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services

University of Western Sydney

Participant Information Sheet (General)

Project Title: The Impact of women's economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women's status in Baluchistan, Pakistan

Who is carrying out the study?
You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Miss. Huma Zafar PhD candidate from the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, University of Western Sydney.

The research will form the basis for the degree of PhD at the University of Western Sydney under the supervision of Dr. Mary Hawkins.

What is the study about?
The purpose is to investigate and analyze the impact and efficiency of NGOs economic empowerment projects on women's socio-economic status and to analyze the difference which these projects brought in women's life.

What does the study involve?
The participants will be involved in structured interviews.

How much time will the study take?
Each interview will take thirty minutes to complete.

Will the study benefit me?
This study will benefit you in a way that your response will bring required changes in upcoming economic empowerment projects by NGOs which will effect the women's status positively.

Will the study involve any discomfort for me?
This study should not involve any discomfort. As a participant you can withdraw at any stage of interview if you feel any discomfort.

How is this study being paid for?
The study is being sponsored by University of Western Sydney.
Will anyone else know the results? How will the results be disseminated?
All aspects of the study, including results, will be confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. A report of this study may be submitted for publication but individual participants will not be identifiable in the report. The results of research will be disseminated through publication of research articles.

Can I withdraw from the study?
Participation is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to be involved and - if you do participate - you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any consequences.

Can I tell other people about the study?
Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator’s contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?
When you have read this information, Huma Zafar will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Supervisor Associate Professor Mary Hawkins on +61 2 97753832 or e-mail M.Hawkins@uws.edu.au and Huma Zafar the Principle Researcher on +61 2 0469082753 or e-mail 17382351@student.uws.edu.au.

What if I have a complaint?
This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is [H10088].

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0228 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.
Appendix 9: Participant consent form (survey participants)

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services

University of Western Sydney

Participant Consent Form

Project Title: The impact of women’s economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women’s status in Baluchistan, Pakistan

I,........................................, consent to participate in the research project titled 'Impact of women’s economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women’s status in Baluchistan, Pakistan'.

I acknowledge that:

The participant information sheet have read to me and I have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to participate in the interview which will be of thirty minutes.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

Signed: ____________________________

Name: ______________________________

Date: ________________________________

Return Address: Miss Huma Zafar, School of Social Sciences and Psychology, Blacktown Campus, University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag 1797, NSW 2751, Australia.

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee.

The Approval number is: 0110088
If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix 10: General participant information sheet

Project Title: The Impact of women’s economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women’s status in Baluchistan, Pakistan

Who is carrying out the study?
You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Miss. Huma Zafar PhD candidate from the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, University of Western Sydney.

The research will form the basis for the degree of PhD at the University of Western Sydney under the supervision of Associate Professor Mary Hawkins.

What is the study about?
The purpose of this study is to look at the impacts of NGO’s women economic empowerment projects. It will study the socio-economic changes in your lives after participating in the project.

What does the study involve?
The study involves discussion about your experiences as the participants of NGO’s women economic empowerment project. The information will be taken through in-depth interviews; your responses will be audio taped.

How much time will the study take?
Each interview will take thirty to sixty minutes to complete.

Will the study benefit me?
The study will be beneficial for you as the NGO’s upcoming empowerment projects will be able to focus on your needs more cautiously on the basis of the information that will be provided by you.

Will the study involve any discomfort for me?
This study should not involve any discomfort. As a participant you can withdraw at any stage of interview if you feel any discomfort.

How is this study being paid for?
The study is being sponsored by University of Western Sydney.
Will anyone else know the results? How will the results be disseminated?
All aspects of the study, including results, will be confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. A report of this study may be submitted for the publication but individual participants will not be identifiable in the report. The results of research will be disseminated through publication of research articles.

Can I withdraw from the study?
Participation is entirely voluntary; you are not obliged to be involved and - if you do participate - you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any consequences.

Can I tell other people about the study?
Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator’s contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?
When you have read this information, Huma Zafar will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Supervisor Associate Professor Mary Hawkins on +61 2 97729352 or e-mail M.Hawkins@uws.edu.au and Huma Zafar the Principle Researcher on +61 2 646982753 or e-mail 17382351@student.uws.edu.au.

What if I have a complaint?
This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is [H1(008)]

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanities@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.
Appendix 11: Participant consent form

Project Title: The Impact of women's economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women's status in Baluchistan, Pakistan

I, _______________________, consent to participate in the research project titled "Impact of women's economic empowerment projects by NGOs on women's status in Baluchistan, Pakistan."

I acknowledge that:

The participant information sheet have read to me and I have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to participate in the interview which will be from thirty to sixty minutes and it will involve audio taped interview.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher now or in the future.

Signed: _______________________

Name: _______________________

Date: _______________________

Return Address: Miss Huma Zafar, School of Social Sciences and Psychology, Bankstown Campus, University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag 1797, NSW 2751, Australia.

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee.
The Approval number is: H10088
If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix 12: Poverty Score Card (PSC)
Baluchistan rural support program

NOTE:
1) USE BLACK BALLPOINT
2) IN EACH BOX FOR DIGITS WRITE ONE DIGIT ONLY

FAMILY NO:_________
FORM NO:_________

DATE:______________

A. Basic information
District: _____ Tehsil: ______
Union council: _____ Village: _______

Full name of family’s head:
Identity card number of any member of family:
Total number of family members:
  a. Males _______  b. Females _______  c. Children_______

B. Household questionnaires
Poverty indicators: mark valid answer with “X”
1. How many family members live and eat together (do not include guests)
2. How many family members are below 18 or above 65 years of age
3. What is the academic qualification of the head of the family?
   □ Never attended school
   □ Primary or below primary
   □ Passed sixth or tenth standard
4. How many family members between 5 to 16 years of age attend school
   - No family member is in 5 to 16 years range
   - Every family member in the 5 to 16 years range attends school
   - Some of the family members between 5 to 16 years attend school
   - None of the family members between 5 to 16 years attend school

5. Number of rooms family members are accommodated in (specify living rooms only, do not include bathrooms, lavatory, kitchen or shop).

6. What type of lavatory family uses
   - Lavatory is attached to public sewerage for drainage
   - Dry latrine or trench in the ground
   - No latrine located in house

7. Does the family own a refrigerator, fridge or washing machine?
8. Does the family own at least one air conditioner, air cooler, geyser, or heater?
9. Does the family own at least one burner, cooking range, or microwave oven?
10. Does the family own one of these engine-based means of transport?
    - At least one car or tractor and one scooter, motorcycle
    - At least one car or tractor, but no scooter or motorcycle
    - No car or tractor, but at least one scooter or motor cycle

11. Does the family own at least one TV?
12. Does the family own livestock?
    - At least one buffalo or bull and at least one cow, goat, sheep
    - At least one buffalo or bull, but no cow, goat, sheep
    - No buffalo or bull but at least one cow, goat, sheep
    - Neither buffalo or bull nor cow, goat, sheep

13. Area of land owned by family for agricultural purpose
    - Area
    - Unit of measurement

C. For office use

Name of person filling out the form

Designation

Signature
Name of person validating the form

Designation

Signature

D. Status of information filled in the form

Complete

Incomplete

Cancelled

No-one present in the house

Family could not be located

E. Certification

Name of person providing information

Thumb impression or signature