



The Impact of Joint Family System on Women Autonomy: A Phenomenological Exploration

Haji Ur Rahman¹, Shahid Khan², Fakhr Ud Din³ & Shakeel Ahmad⁴

¹Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Hazara University Mansehra, Pakistan,

Email: hajirahmanburki@gmail.com

²Graduate Scholar, Department of Social Work, University of Peshawar, Pakistan,

Email: shahidkhan.socialwork@gmail.com

³Graduate Scholar, Department of Sociology, Hazara University Mansehra, Pakistan,

Email: sociologistfakhar1995@gmail.com

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Hazara University Mansehra, Pakistan,

Email: shakeel.sociologist@hu.edu.pk

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: January 12, 2025
Revised: February 23, 2025
Accepted: February 25, 2025
Available Online: February 27, 2025

Keywords:

Women Empowerment, Economic Dependency, Extended Families, Patriarchy, Mobility

Corresponding Author:

Fakhr Ud Din

Email:

sociologistfakhar1995@gmail.com



ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of the joint family system on women's autonomy in the Hazara Division of Pakistan using qualitative methods and a phenomenological research design. Through purposive sampling, in-depth interviews were conducted with women experiencing the constraints of this system. Findings reveal that patriarchal norms significantly restrict women's decision-making power, financial independence, mobility, and social participation. Senior male family members predominantly control household decisions, limiting women's influence over critical matters such as education, employment, and financial management. Economic dependence further diminishes autonomy, as many women are discouraged from working or lack control over their earnings. Additionally, mobility restrictions, often justified by family honor, curtail their independence. Despite these challenges, some women resist by pursuing education and employment, facing resistance from elder family members. The study recommends legal reforms, awareness campaigns, and community engagement initiatives to challenge restrictive norms and promote gender equality. Encouraging women's education and economic participation is crucial for their empowerment and broader social progress.

Introduction

Joint family system is a kinship structure common in many parts of South Asia, Middle East and some African societies. It is a family configuration of a few generations, like parents, children, and their offspring like grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins who all stay together under a roof, sharing work and resources (Hasan et al., 2025). This system is deeply ingrained in cultural and religious traditions that prioritize collectivism, clan loyalty, and reverence for the elderly. The joint family system may provide social and economic security, yet it also institutionalizes patriarchal structures and gendered power relations that impact women's autonomy and rights.

In these traditional joint family homes, patriarchal norms and rigid social expectations restrict women's autonomy (Shenk et al., 2024). broadly defined as the ability to make independent choices over personal, social and economic decisions. In these families, authority is often centralized among older men, especially the father or grandfather, with power over household decisions, finances, and social life. Daughters-in-law, in particular, are assigned status as their sons' wives that requires them to adhere to traditional gender roles, preventing them from being involved in decision-making and economic activities (Brass, 2024). Married women in joint families exercise less decision-making autonomy at individual and household levels than their counterparts in nuclear families.

The most common restriction on women autonomy in joint families is restricted mobility. Many women however have social and cultural norms that impede their traveling alone, attaining higher education or engaging in formal employment away from home without the approval of male (Sanderson, 2014). This restricted freedom severely limits their access to various economic and educational opportunities, making them increasingly reliant on their male relatives. According to research conducted by Dyson and Moore (1983) when the extended family dominates in a society, women's work force participation is low as the norms for gender division of labor remain. In particular, the restraining of women through economic dependency arises through the male elders keeping financial control within the family, which reduces women's income access and restricts their decision-making control over personal resources (Das Gupta, 2010).

Despite its drawbacks, results from the survey suggest the joint family system is not entirely disadvantageous to women empowerment. In some cases, it offers a safety net that allows women to pursue career opportunities while carrying out family responsibilities, such as becoming a breadwinner or obtaining an education. They are able to take up professional jobs or pursue efforts to gain some higher form of education due to the support provided by older female members of the family, who could be mothers-in-law or grandmothers, who help look after the children and perform regular household chores (Brass, 2024). Also, there is no uniformity in autonomy with respect to joint families, which varies with education, socio economic status and generational shifts of gender related attitudes in progressive joint families, educated women tend to negotiate for greater independence as well as inclusion in household decision-making (Shenk et al., 2024).

The effect of the joint family system on women's freedom is multifaceted and influenced by various factors such as education, financial independence, and changing gender norms. It is often used as a tool for enforcing patriarchal norms that limit women's independence, but at the same time, it can provide them with a community of support to help them work through personal and professional obstacles. The Importance of this Dynamic: The impact of western ideas upon individual women and the individual woman caste within the context of traditional masculinity is

important for the formulation of policies and interventions that benefit traditional feminism. Further research may focus on balancing family kinship with gender equality among women in joint families in making independent life decisions.

Problem Statement

The Hazara division has witnessed a traditional Joint family system which is still the common social structure, many generations live together under one roof and share the financial resources, responsibilities, and household decision-making. Although this system serves to uphold a strong cultural legacy and assures economic and social stability, it also may serve as a tremendous constraint on women's autonomy, by reinforcing strict patriarchal mores. Besides, many joint families possess strong patriarchal structures which control women ability to make economic decisions, go out of the house and interact outside their joint families. Though there is growing awareness on women's rights and empowerment, the very hierarchical character of joint families makes women more vulnerable and subjects them to a status of not being heard or considered while making decisions. In many societies, women have to be homemakers and caregivers, and personal growth takes a backseat. This ability is further limited by the authority wielded by male elder members of their families, particularly fathers-in-law and husbands, which hampers women's decision-making ability when it comes to health care, finance, and social engagement. Bihar Asghar and Noureen Yashar have also contributed to the field, as researchers and scholars focusing particularly on women's right to autonomy in South Asian societies; still, there remains a gap on the literature that specifically examines women's lived experiences in joint families in the Hazara Division. To fill this gap, this study employs a phenomenological approach to explore the autonomy experience of women who live as part of families in joint households. This study aims to shed light on the structural and cultural barriers to women's independence by examining their lived experiences, challenges, and coping strategies. Furthermore, it seeks to explore opportunities for increasing women's empowerment in joint families, which could inform policies and social initiatives that address gender inequality in such family dynamics.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impact of the joint family system on women's decision-making.
2. To assess the link between financial dependence and women's autonomy.
3. To explore how mobility and educational restrictions affect women's empowerment.
4. To analyze changing gender roles in joint families and their impact on women's autonomy.

Literature Review

The section also presents an analysis of the implications of a joint family system for women's autonomy in terms of decision-making power, financial dependence, mobility, and gendered social expectations. It outlines the restraining and enabling factors, drawing on the existing literature to explore different perspectives. It also looks at the effects of socio-economic changes on the rest of the family and how they remind us of traditional gender roles in joint families.

The role of the Joint Family System in women's autonomy

One common type of extended family is the joint family system, which is a form where multiple generations of a family are living and working together, with South Asia is an area where this form

of cohabitation is widespread (Wheaton, 1975). This is one of the advantages of a system where the cultural tradition is to preserve those who belong to the family: it is highly collectivist as opposed to individualist, regardless of whether a working-age person in the family is able to work and support other family members. However, the traditional joint family system also embodies a hierarchy that often enforces and perpetuates traditional gender norms and restricts women's autonomy in decision-making, finances, movement and areas like education and employment.

Various scholars have explored the connection between the joint family system and women's autonomy and have offered both facilitative and limiting variables. Some research has indicated that women from joint family set up can get emotional and financial support (Nwanmuoh et al., 2024). while another research finding hints that joint families reinforce patriarchal family structure which restricts independence among women. This paper presents a literature review that reflects these nuances, drawing attention to salient topics such as autonomy in decision-making, economic reliance, mobility constriction and changing gender roles in joint families.

Joint Family: Who Has Decision-Making Power

Decision making power: The joint family system affects the autonomy of women by controlling decisions. In joint families, household decisions are usually controlled by elder male members, especially fathers-in-law or elder brothers-in-law. But most women, especially daughters-in-law, need to sacrifice their individual desires to the collective of the family unit. Consequently, they are often excluded from making decisions, limiting them from exercising agency over their own and their family members' lives. (2001) conducted a comparative analysis of women's autonomy in India and Pakistan, and the study revealed that women's decision-making power in joint families was significantly lower as compared to women in nuclear families. "Important household decisions, like finance, children's study and health, are mostly made by family men (Anfaara et al., 2024). patriarchal dominance in joint families was strengthened through cultural expectations of obedience and submissiveness among women, through which the women in these families were further disempowered.

But some scholars argue that women's ability to make decisions in joint families is not uniform and can vary based on education, employment and social capital. Malhotra & Schuler (2005) explained complacency amongst educated women who financially support the home in that they may be making bargains, negotiating sexual and family decisions in exchange for financial subsistence. In addition, support provided by old female members such as mothers-in-law may increase women participation in decision-making. Joint families typically restrict women's decision-making autonomy, but social and economic factors can change those dynamics, the findings suggest (Salinger et al., 2024)

Economic Dependency and Financial Autonomy

Financial disadvantage is another significant limitation on women's agency in joint family contexts. Financial resources are usually managed by male family members, limiting women's financial independence (Kabeer, 2000). Many women who don't work make little or no independent contribution to financial decisions, leaving them economically vulnerable. Because of this reliance, many companies find that their staff do not pursue higher education with them or any professional or personal development.

Studies have found that women's financial independence increases when they work for compensation. Women also had greater control over their earnings, which means independent financial decision-making. On the other hand, in several joint families, traditional gender roles and issues related to family honor forbid women to work outside (Schoon et al., 2021). This limit only lowers their capacity to achieve economic independence, leading to less autonomy overall.

Joint families can function as a financial support mechanism for women, especially in the cases of widowhood, divorce, or financial distress. This is when women do well from the financial burden being shared, and the help of extended family. This kind of arrangement may provide security, yet it does not extend to financial independence; women still find themselves reliant on male authority figures (Benson et al., 2003; Asghar et al., 2024).

Accessibility and Educational Opportunities

Another important part of women empowerment is freedom of movement and education. Cultural restrictions in many joint families restrict women from traveling alone or attending social functions or studying further without the consent of males. These limitations are frequently justified as being necessary to safeguard family honor and uphold traditional gender roles (Shah et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2024).

However, the educational achievement for women in joint families is lower than that for women living in nuclear families, as conservative social norms can restrict personal development in joint families, emphasizing domestic responsibilities over personal development (Shetty & Hans, 2015; Shah et al., 2021). Restricted access to education, in turn, has an impact on women's employment opportunities, thereby increasing their economic dependency and limiting their agency.

However, changing socio-economic conditions are beginning to modify mobility restrictions imposed by joint family structures. Sen (2000) provides a feminist reading by focusing on the ways younger generations of women negotiate greater mobility or access to education. Women in families that value female education are often afforded greater freedom, allowing them to pursue higher education and career goals. In addition, having supportive family members, especially mothers-in-law or elder sisters-in-law, assists women in accessing education and employment, subsequently challenging traditional restrictions to mobility (Berik et al., 2009)

Patriarchy and Societal Intrigue

The joint family system is deeply rooted in patriarchal structures that strengthen conventional gender roles. While women are expected to fulfil a social role of caregiving, household management, and deference to senior men in the family, it is the daughters-in-law who have to live up to the expectations of their in-laws. Such standards bind them down from making personal decisions in life or taking up something what they aspire.

The patriarchy controlling women in lives is not just a stuff that can be restricted within cultural contents, it also is an economic matter. Feminine economic dependency leads to promotion of restrictive gender norms as women facing economic dependency may not challenge these norms. likewise propose that women's autonomy improves with support from other female family members. In some joint families, progressive mothers-in-law fight for their daughters-in-law's rights so they can make better decisions and follow their careers. This illustrates that

intergenerational relationships play a significant role in establishing inequalities of gender in joint families (McKinley et al., 2021).

The Changing Role of Women in Joint Families

It is true that the joint family system constrains women, but there is some indication that their roles within it are undergoing change. However, socioeconomic changes such as improved access to education, urbanization, and evolving cultural attitudes are slowly transforming family structures. Recent studies observed that in- joint family's younger generations of women participate in higher education and work more than their mothers and grandmothers (Bhaumik & Sahu, 2025). This is partly a matter of economic imperative — soaring living costs mean shuttles of working families are needed to make ends meet — which is enabling women to enter the labor market in greater numbers.

Furthermore, the role of media and advocacy groups that have pushed for women's rights continue to shape this conversation. More families began to support female education and economic activity, due to legal reforms that promoted rights for women in marriage, inheritance, and employment (Sen, 2000). Consequently, a lot of women in joint families are negotiating more autonomy, while continuing to meet their familial responsibilities.

Research Methodology

A qualitative research method was utilized to ascertain the reproductive health autonomy in the context of joint family system, which enabled a deep understanding of the lived experiences of participants. The researcher utilized a phenomenological research design, which aims to understand the lived experiences of individuals within their social and cultural contexts. The data were conducted through an in-depth, semi-structured interview with women, lived in joint family house which led them to express their point of view freely. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who had direct experience with the phenomenon under investigation. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, where patterns and themes were reported to understand how a joint family structure act as a facilitator or barrier for women to make decisions, financial independence and social mobility. Trustworthiness and credibility were established through participant confirmation and peer debriefing (i.e., other professionals in the field looking at his work) of the data from the members to the researcher. This method gave rich insights into the constraints and opportunities faced by women in joint family systems.

Results and Discussion

This section shares key themes from the analysis and explores the implications of these themes for women's autonomy in the joint family system. Underpinned by literature, it examines how levels of decision-making power, financial independence, the ability to move and gender roles affect women's agency. The discussion weaves the findings into theoretical perspectives, emphasizing both constraints and avenues for change. The conclusion captures the key findings of the study, and the recommendations suggest policy measures and social interventions to improve the decision-making power of women in joint family settings.

1. Limited Decision-Making Power

In joint families, senior male members often hold the keys to decision-making, and women have little say in significant household and personal matters. This limitation is especially prominent in matters relating to finances, children's education, healthcare, and property. For women who seek to speak up, [they] are sidelined and/ or criticized, creating a cycle of powerlessness and dependence. Women may now be directly ss

“Decisions are made by my father-in law and my husband in my home. While I spend the most time with the children, I am not asked about their schooling, their healthcare. When my son struggled in school last year, I wanted him to go to another school. My father-in-law, however, was against it, because he had attended this same school and had done just fine. I attempted to debate, but was told that as a female, I was to follow, not to lead. It’s infuriating because I know what’s best for my children, yet I can’t make decisions for them.”

Another respondent added:

“When I got married and entered my husband’s joint family, I thought at least I would be able to make decisions about my own life. What came as a surprise was that I was supposed to obey, not participate. When I wanted to take an advanced sewing course so I could open my own boutique, my husband and in-laws told me I had no need to work. I begged, but was told that I should be focused on household responsibilities. It stung because I knew that between the two of us I had the skills that could help generate money, but I was in no way considering in terms of future goals.”

What emerges through the experiences shared by these respondents is the patriarchal structure of joint families, as they are exclusionary towards women, especially when it comes to decision-making. Even decisions that have a direct impact on their children, their health and their aspirations, their voices are disregarded or peripheral. The absence of agency creates frustration and emotional distress which hinders personal fulfillment for women. Indeed, their subservience to male elders is further entrenched by the expectation that they will acquiesce to decisions made by male elders without question.

2. Economic Dependence and Financial Restrictions

As joint families hold great influence over women’ autonomy, one of the most significant factors that curtail their independence is financial dependence. Women are either hindered from working or, if they work, have no power over their own earnings. Household finances are often handled by males, such as fathers-in-law and husbands, and women have little financial independence. The women become dependent on the money, which means they have to ask for permission to spend it on basic things, so they are made to feel that they cannot control their own life.

A respondent narrated:

“I loved the idea of being financially independent, but women in my family never work. My husband is responsible for all of the money, but I am not involved in the planning. If I want anything, even a bar of soap for personal hygiene, I have to justify my need for it. I remember once I requested some money to buy a book I was interested in, and my husband laughed and said, ‘What will you do with books, when your real duty is taking care of the house?’ It made me think that my wants and likes were completely worthless.”

Another respondent said:

“I am a schoolteacher, and I don’t have a say in my salary. Every month I pay my salary into my father-in-law’s account and he tells me how much I can keep. Usually, I give you a little bit Cap, just for basics. If I take more I am made to feel bad that I am being greedy to spend my own earnings. Sometimes when I wanted to purchase gifts for my own family, or save for my own needs, I was told that all financial decisions had to be made by the men in the family.”

Such narratives underscore the economic dependency women in joint family’s face, irrespective of their economic contributions. Their inability to have control over and access to personal or household finances then serves to further reinforce their subordinate status and to curtail their freedom to make autonomous decisions. Being required to ask permission to expend even for essential needs diminishes their confidence / self-worth. This economic disinvestment renders it impossible to plan for the future or invest in the development of self.

3. Restrictions on Mobility and Social Interaction

Women living in joint families are subject to severe restrictions on their mobility and their movements are strictly scrutinized by male family members. It is common here to request permission to do anything, even the most mundane moments, such as visiting a friend's home or shopping. This control is cloaked in claims of family honor and social expectations but deeply restricts women’s independence and socialization.

A respondent narrated:

“I could go see my friends and relatives freely before getting married, but once I came to live with my in-laws, that freedom was taken away. If I want to go anywhere, I have to ask, and even then, I am mostly taken with my sister-in-law or a relative. Where else would I have gone and why the hell is it taking so long if I am any longer than anticipated. Once, when a close friend got married, I wanted to attend, but my in-laws told me that a married woman should not socialize too much. I lost something that mattered to me simply because of archaic rules.”

Another respondent added:

“I was sick and had to see a doctor but my in-laws told me to wait until my husband was free to take me,” she said. Weeks passed before he finally had time for me, and then my condition had already progressed. When I complained I was told that it was unsafe for a woman to be alone at a clinic. It left me feeling helpless — I was too stressed to seek help, let alone act to improve my situation. This dependence is tiring, especially when I watch other women living happier lives.”

These narratives show how mobility restrictions deepen gender inequality in joint families. Women are often perceived as dependents who need to be given permission before they can engage in ordinary activities. Relegated to their rooms, this not only impacts these young men’s social lives, but also places severe constraints on their health and wellness. And the pressure of societal observation and family honor takes place over their own needs, leading to diminished autonomy.

4. Changing Gender Roles and Resistance to Tradition

In most joint families, traditional norms rule the roost, but few women are fighting back against this structure. Frustrated by strict traditions, younger generations are pushing back by seeking education, jobs and independence. But these initiatives are often met with opposition from older relatives and create familial tensions.

A respondent narrated:

“My in-laws were totally against my working after school. It should not a woman out of a home brings shame to the family. I had to pay to work, show that I could do both, and only then did they let me work. And of course, finally when they figured out it made financial sense, they agreed, but it was a several year battle. Even today, I am often criticized when I neglect household chores for my work.”

Another respondent said:

“I’m trying to raise my daughters differently, raise them with the mentality that they need to be independent and they need to be confident. But my in-laws push back a lot because they think girls should be raised to be obedient wives. I cannot buy into this mindset, even though it sometimes leads to fights. Don’t wait for the larger system to improve — the smaller-system needs to change first.”

These narratives indicate the slow transformation of gender roles in joint families, where certain women are challenging the status quo. There is resistance from older generations who worry that cultural values will disappear as they are replaced by new ones. But sources of patriarchal structures are slowly being challenged by the awareness of women rights and their financial independence. Women who break barriers inspire the generations to come, showing that change, though gradual, is attainable.

Discussion

This study uncovers that, the joint family system in Hazara Division substantially influences women's autonomy in terms of women financial independence, power to make decision, mobility and interaction with society. The very structure of the joint family system strengthens male control over women and deprives them of choices in their personal and household lives. In households adhering to strict gender roles, women are typically denied financial control – often their earnings, if they have any, go to male members of the household, limiting their economic decision-making power. This added up with similar studies, where they found that economic dependency is one of the biggest barriers to empowering women (Hasan et al., 2025).

Restrictions on women's mobility add another constraint on their autonomy, insisting they must seek the permission of male or elder members of the family before being able to move out of the household to even engage in critical tasks for their human existence, such as seeking health care or developing social networks. This limit is mostly due to social values that link the mobility of women with the family honor (Brass, 2024). A few of the respondents described how their mobility restrictions by family not only delayed access to healthcare but in fact negatively impacted their health, demonstrating the adverse impact of mobility restrictions.

So, amidst these challenges, some of the women in Hazara Division are challenging the conservative culture by raising voice for their rights, getting education and jobs. Although the efforts go against the grain of many older family members, who resist changing cultural practices because they fear any change would undermine established norms (Shenk et al., 2024). Patriarchal society thrives on generation set against generation on gender expectations, making it hard for women to stand on their own. Although modernization and education are slowly changing this perspective, the deeply rooted customs and traditions are still giving rise to the hurdles for women's empowerment.

This can only be achieved through societal with legal protections and increased educational opportunities, but more importantly, societal awareness programs. In addition to all of the above-mentioned motivations, (Das Gupta, 2010). women's empowerment in joint families falls under an important category of gender equality and is vital to the advancement of society and economy at large. Remedies in the courts will uphold women's rights for women to realize enough independence from their families by curbing the limitations imposed on their freedom of movement in such communities.

Conclusion

In the context of the Hazara Division, the joint family system is inherently restrictive, as it is based on patriarchal norms or traditional, moral values, thus bound to suppress women and their interests. This low status is evidenced by the inability of women to make decisions of any kind, a lack of financial independence, mobility, and participation in society. The women representing part of the younger generations — who have started to push against these conventions, still face opposition from family members, especially senior generations. These findings underline the importance of a cultural shift that embraces gender equality that empowers women to take a full role in decisions at home and in society. Until and unless there are structural changes and more awareness, the entrenched gender inequalities in joint families will continue to act as a barrier to women empowerment and holistic growth of the society.

Recommendations

- Create opportunities for women to work and start businesses and secure their right to their income and how to spend it.
- Enact laws that protect women's free will while upholding women's right to mobility, financial management, or household decision-making.
- Run awareness campaigns and training programs to sensitize men and family members on the need for the empowerment of women and inclusive dynamics in families.
- Provide Emotional, Social and Legal Support – Set Up Community-Based Women's Groups, Counseling Centers and Mentorship Programs
- Intensify Education and Awareness Campaigns – More emphasis on gender-equal and non-restrictive education and women literacy that can help women know their rights.

References

1. Anfaara, F. W., Amoak, D., Kye, N. O., Sano, Y., & Antabe, R. (2024). Exploring the link between household structure and women's household decision-making autonomy in Mauritania. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 56(5), 831-844.

2. Asghar, M. M., & Mumtaz, S. (2024). Socioeconomic Determinants of Divorce in Pakistan: A Case Study of Bahawalpur. *Zakariya Journal of Social Science*, 3(1), 11-20.
3. Benson, M. L., Fox, G. L., DeMaris, A., & Van Wyk, J. (2003). Neighborhood disadvantage, individual economic distress and violence against women in intimate relationships. *Journal of quantitative criminology*, 19, 207-235.
4. Berik, G., Rodgers, Y. V. D. M., & Seguino, S. (2009). Feminist economics of inequality, development, and growth. *Feminist economics*, 15(3), 1-33.
5. Bhaumik, S., & Sahu, S. (2025, March). Lived experiences of urban working mothers during pandemic: A matricentric exploration in the Indian context. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 109, p. 103067). Pergamon.
6. Brass, P. R. (2024). Elite groups, symbol manipulation and ethnic identity among the Muslims of South Asia. In *Political Identity in South Asia* (pp. 35-77). Routledge.
7. Das Gupta, M. (2010). Family systems, political systems and asia's 'missing girls' the construction of son preference and its unravelling. *Asian Population Studies*, 6(2), 123-152.
8. Dyson, T., & Moore, M. (1983). On kinship structure, female autonomy, and demographic behavior in India. *Population and development review*, 35-60.
9. Hasan, S. T., Bano, S., Imran, M., Ahmad, S., & Ayyub, A. (2025). Dual Impact of Family Structure and Parental Beliefs on Educational Access for Girls. *Journal of Asian Development Studies*, 14(1), 101-116
10. Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and change*, 30(3), 435-464.
11. McKinley, C. E., Lilly, J. M., Knipp, H., & Liddell, J. L. (2021). "A dad can get the money and the mom stays at home": Patriarchal gender role attitudes, intimate partner violence, historical oppression, and resilience among indigenous peoples. *Sex Roles*, 85(9), 499-514.
12. Nwanmuoh, E. E., Dibua, E. C., & Friday, E. C. (2024). Implication of extended family culture in African nations on youth development: Evidence from Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 10(2), 82-90.
13. Pande, R., Malhotra, A., & Grown, C. (2005, July). Impact of investments in female education on gender equality. In *XXV IUSSP International Population Conference, Tours, France*.
14. Salinger, A. P., Vermes, E., Waid, J. L., Wendt, A. S., Dupuis, S. J., Kalam, M. A., ... & Sinharoy, S. S. (2024). The role of self-efficacy in women's autonomy for health and nutrition decision-making in rural Bangladesh. *BMC Public Health*, 24(1), 338.
15. Sanderson, S. K. (2014). 11. Family Systems in Comparative Perspective. In *Concise encyclopedia of comparative sociology* (pp. 190-198). Brill.
16. Schoon, I., & Cook, R. (2021). Can individual agency compensate for background disadvantage? Predicting tertiary educational attainment among males and females. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 50(3), 408-422.
17. Sen, S. (2000). *Toward a Feminist Politics?: The Indian Women's Movement in Historical Perspective*. Calcutta: World Bank, Development Research Group/Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network.
18. Shah, M. N., Mumtaz, S., & Sibt-e-Ali, M. (2024). Nexus between Women Empowerment and Sustainable Development in Low-Income Countries: Insights from Panel ARDL Model. *Review of Education, Administration & Law*, 7(4), 383-393.
19. Shah, S. Z. A., Asghar, M. M., & Zulqurnain, A. F. S. H. A. N. (2021). Women Education and its Returns in Pakistan: A Case Study of Multan District. *Asian Social Studies and Applied Research*, 2(3), 468-474.

20. Shah, S. Z. A., Riaz, M. M. A. U., & Asghar, M. A. U. (2021). Role of education and labor force participation in influencing women empowerment in Pakistan: A case study of District Khanewal. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 5(4), 601-614.
21. Shenk, M. K., Naz, S., & Chaudhry, T. (2024). Intensive kinship, development, and demography: why Pakistan has the highest rates of cousin marriage in the world. *Population and Development Review*, 50(4), 1045-1090..
22. Shetty, S., & Hans, V. (2015). Role of education in women empowerment and development: Issues and impact. *Role of education in women empowerment and development: issues and impact* (September 26, 2015).
23. Wheaton, R. (1975). Family and kinship in Western Europe: The problem of the joint family household. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 5(4), 601-628.