



EMPOWERMENT STATUS OF HINDU AND MUSLIM WOMEN IN INDIA: MYTH V/S REALITY

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Abstract: Even though we Indian are overwhelmed to have a praiseworthy constitution which ensure every citizen the freedom of speech, expression, movement and also ensures equal rights irrespective of one's caste, creed, sex, religion but in reality, these rights and privileges are enjoyed by the male society and may be by a handful of women but for a large group of women it's still a fantasy. Even though this being the case but the whole world is realising the importance of women and the urgency of empowering them to ensure all round development of the society as well for the sustainable human development. Further we are also biased towards religions like Hinduism as compared to Islam when judging the status of women empowerment. Keeping all these things in view we have tried to measure the status of women empowerment of Hindu and Muslim community in a multidimensional framework using Sen's Capability Approach. The main findings which we observed is that the share of disempowered women was slightly higher in Muslim community as compared to Hindu community but the improvement was also at a higher pace in this community as well. And finally, more than half of the women belonging to either of the community were multidimensionally disempowered.

Index Terms: Women, Empowerment, Multidimensional, Capabilities, India.

I. Introduction

We Indians are privileged enough to reside in a country which gives every citizen all the basic freedoms like that of freedom of speech, expression, movement which are essentials for one's existence together with that our constitution also ensures equal rights to all irrespective of one's caste, creed, sex and religion. But the ground reality is not that exhilarating, all these freedoms, protections, rights, privileges are basically enjoyed by the male dominated society whereas for females it is in pen and papers only as they are still dependent on the male members of their family to enjoy these freedoms and rights. To be straightforward, women not only in India but also throughout the world and particularly in the developing countries are stereotype as the second-grade citizens who are born to entertain the male dominated society and have nothing to do with one's own happiness and freedom and are assured of their worthlessness. They are relatively more deprived in every walk of life as compared to their male counterpart. The tragedy of 'missing women' as pointed out by Sen (2000) is a very lively example of the treatment which they receive. The concept of

‘missing women’ basically refers to a terrible phenomenon of excess mortality and artificially lower survival rate of women in many parts of the world. At present in India, near about 63 million women are missing of its population and around two million go ‘missing’ across age group every year because of abortion of female foetuses, disease, neglect and inadequate nutrition. In this connection, Sen has remarked that ‘Inequality between women and men afflicts and sometime prematurely ends-the lives of millions of women and in different ways, severely restricts the substantive freedom that women enjoy’. Women are in true sense excluded from the main stream and thus remain an underutilised resource since long. So, in order to develop the nation, it is potential of, there is an urgency to utilise these unused resources. Now, the term ‘development’ according to Sen is basically a process which expand the real freedom of people which they enjoy. He emphasised on expanding the freedom which we enjoy because according to him ‘it not only makes our life richer and more fettered, but also allow us to be fuller social person, exercising our own volitions and interacting with – and – influencing – the world in which we live’. UNDP has also realized the importance of women and gender equality in the development process and have presented it as the 5th goal among the 17 vital goal for the sustainable development in Agenda 2030. The term ‘gender equality’ is basically related to women empowerment as they are the suppressed lot as already mentioned. Now regarding empowerment, Sen (2000) has rightly pointed out that it adds ‘force to women’s voice and agency’ where agency implies the ability to do and achieve anything which they consider to be important. By empowering women not only they become self-dependent and self-confident but the society too becomes the beneficiary of the positive externalities they generate as they indirectly improve the standard of the society and most importantly, they gain enough potential to transform their siblings into a responsible youth, hence enabling a strong nation. Together with that if they are educated, there is ample possibility that they will help their family financially, providing a greater scope to escape the vicious circle of poverty they are caught under since ages. Keeping in view all the miseries the women face in a country which is renowned for worshipping female goddesses, whereas on the other hand considering all the positive sides in empowering them, we can precisely say that women empowerment is the need of the hour be it to protect them or to develop the nation.

Now, let’s come to the issue of religion, when we talk of women and empowerment, we are accustomed to explore their religious background because according to many, religion acts as a constraint for some community whereas in case of others it acts as a strong supporter of women empowerment. By exploring some facts, it was traced that neither religion suppresses women of their ability nor permit anyone to do any kind of act which will violate their dignity rather every religion be it Hinduism or Islam or anything else gives women equal status like that of a man. These discussions are evident from the fact that in some Upanishads like the Devi Upanishad, Devi Mahatmya and Devi Bhagvata Purana, it has been clearly mentioned that the women are the most powerful and empowering force. Rigveda too declares feminine energy as the essence of the universe. On the other hand, in the Islamic ideology i.e., Sariah and Hadith it has be given that the women are allowed to participate in day-to-day life activities and declares education as the basic fundamental obligation for every woman and man. According to Dr. Gustawali, “Islam has brought a comprehensive development in the cultural and social position of women. The Quranic laws of inheritance are more in favour of women compared to the laws of Europe and others.” These things very much explain the purity and gender

unbiases of the religion. So where is the fault? If we take a deep look, we will observe that due to lack of proper knowledge as well as misinterpretation of the laws and order of the respective religion, the society is so developed that gender inequality is rising and the patriarchal society is flourishing. Now, if we compare between Hindu and Muslim women it is further accepted by many that the Muslim women alone is the suppressed lot and Hindu women are far better than them in terms of empowerment as because Hinduism gives very much power and freedom to women than what Islam gives.

Capability Approach for Multidimensional Analysis of Women Empowerment

Up till now we have emphasised on the importance of women empowerment and have realised that empowering women is the need of the hour. But now the question comes how do we conceptualise the term women empowerment and measure it? The concept of empowerment had been formulated since 17th century with the legalistic meaning “to invest with authority” but after 1980’s it gained its momentum. This ‘women empowerment’ concept can be conceptualised on the basis of two broad approaches namely ‘economic growth approach’ which is basically a traditional approach whereas the other one is the ‘capability approach’. Keleher (2007) in her doctoral thesis has very well summarised that empowerment according to economic growth approach is restricted to market and education, democracy, health care is valued as instrumental goods and only to the extent that they result in the increase in the GNP. On the other hand, empowerment, according to capability approach is sought in every sphere of life- public and private- and education, democracy and health care and are valued as both as instrumental freedom that allows individual to do and be the thing they value, and as valuable for their own sake. To be precise, capability approach facilitates individuals as human being and not simply as human capital or resource as considered in economic growth approach. The capability approach was systematically presented by Prof. Sen followed by Martha Nussbaum. Sen’s capability approach is basically a moral framework which proposes that social arrangements should be primarily evaluated according to the extent of freedom people have to promote or achieve functionings they value. He emphasised on individual agency to address any sort of deprivation experienced by human beings and have pointed out that the freedom of agency of the individuals are constrained by the social, political and economic opportunities available to them. But ensures that freedom enhances the ability of the people to live that kind of life, they value and have reason to value. He had focused on the well-being or the ill-being of women and have considered it to be important because “the relative deprivation in the well-being of women were and are certainly present in the world in which we live and are clearly important for social justice including justice for women” (Sen, 2000). According to him, the concept of capability and functionings are very much essential in understanding a person’s well-being because it may be the case that a resource rich person is poor in terms of capabilities and functionings. He too remarked that ‘limited role of women’s agency seriously affects the lives of all people – men as well as women, children as well as adults’ (Sen, 2000).

Keeping in view the conceptual framework of capability approach we discussed above basically that of Sen and allied issues we have tried to construct a multidimensional framework for measuring women empowerment. It will help us to capture different features of a women’s lives and allied issues. Moreover, the capability approach will further help us to divert our concentration from means of living to the actual

opportunities of living. Our focus will be on the ill-being of women rather than on their well-being i.e., on the disempowerment status of the women which is basically the deprivation of the basic capabilities they have reason to value.

Justification of the considered capabilities or dimensions:

Decision Making: To ensure a decent life or the life which she has reason to value, it is very much essential to have the decision-making power. In literature, the term decision making is used synonymously as women's status or women's position in society and in their house. Now, we have judged the capability of decision making of a woman on the basis of some functionings like:

- i. *If they can take decision regarding one's own health care.*
- ii. *If they can take decision on large household purchase.*
- iii. *If they can take decision on visiting her family or relatives.*

It is to be noted that we have considered that women alone or jointly can take decision on the above-mentioned functionings. This is also a kind of freedom on which Sen has emphasised which enhances the well-being of women. Now, since we will be dealing with the ill beings of women i.e., their disempowerment status therefore, we will be considering the deprivation in capabilities of the women to have the decision-making power.

Domestic Violence: Violence of any sort against any living creature is the most inhumane act. But when it comes to human being, we consider it to be violation of basic human right. United Nation have very well defined any gender-based violence as the arbitrary deprivation of liberty. In this connection, Indian government too enacted the Domestic Violence Act 2005 which was initially meant to provide protection from domestic violence for wives, female live in partners but later it was extended to all women living in a household including sister, widows or mothers. Martha Nussbaum too have laid emphasis on domestic violence in her list of central capabilities and have presented it as bodily integrity. Keeping this in mind we have considered the following functionings:

- i. *Whether the woman experienced emotional violence?*
- ii. *Whether the woman experience physical violence?*
- iii. *Whether the woman experience sexual violence?*

Freedom of Movement: Freedom of Movement is the last but not the least capability we will be dealing with in order to address the status of women's ill being. It is true that women and men are not identical based on their biological difference they are assigned different works to perform in order to run a smooth life and thus it does not make any sense to compare and treat then equally in every matter. But there are certain issues where differentiation does not make any sense like in case of the capability of moving out freely and lots more. If a woman is deprived in this case in the sense if she is not allowed to enjoy and carry on her basic work outside home alone then it will certainly affect her well-being together with that it will also create mental pressure on her. So, in order to explore whether the woman is empowered or not it is very much essential to give stress in this capability of her as well. Sen has laid stress on this freedom together with that Martha

Nussbaum too considered it in her list of central capabilities as 'bodily integrity'. To observe this capability of freedom of movement of the women we have taken into consideration following functionings like:

- i. Whether she is allowed to go to the market alone or not?
- ii. Whether she is allowed to go to the health facility alone or not?
- iii. Whether she is allowed to go outside village alone or not?

If she is deprived in these functionings then it will be considered as her ill-being based on which we will conclude about her disempowerment status.

Literature Review

Kabeer (May, 1999) in his theoretical paper broadly explained the technique and the emerging problem to measure women empowerment. Kesarwani (Feb, 2011) tried to examine the relationship between women's health and their empowerment across states of India using NFHS 3 data and found that women in different states are empowered in different indicators due to difference in conceptualisation of the term empowerment. Sonia et al (May 2019) examined empowerment durability and identified the characteristics and conditions that helped them to sustain their empowerment overtime and tested if empowerment has a diffusion effect. Amatul et al. (Jan, 2012) in his empirical work studied the empowerment of women in Pakistan and found bidirectional relation between women's overall development and women empowerment using time series analysis. NJoh et al. (May 2012) considered 88 percentage of Africa's Country to study the impact of religion on women empowerment and finds a strong link between the two. Ayevbomwan et al. (2006) examined the incidence, intensity and determinants of women empowerment of rural women in Nigeria and unearthed the determinants hampering women economic empowerment.

Motivation of the study

By going through the literature as well as the current thrust area of the globalised world i.e., development it has been realised that empowering women is the ultimate option to ensure all round development of the society and also for sustainable human development. Further, the perception of people regarding Muslim women to be inferior than Hindu women in terms of empowerment provoke us to study the status of Women Empowerment across these two religions. Additionally, numerous works were found which theoretically presented empowerment in a multidimensional framework but empirical works are few and hard to be found. Taking all these short comes into consideration we have taken an attempt to analyse the status of empowerment of Hindu and Muslim women in India using the multidimensional framework. At this backdrop, the main purpose of this study is to explore the status of empowerment of Hindu and Muslim women in multidimensional framework in India and also to analyse the determining factors for disempowerment of women in India.

II. Database and Methodology

Database: In order to fulfil the above stated objectives, we have used the *unit level data* from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 3rd and 4th Rounds. A total of 57023 sampled women from NFHS-3 and 55382

sampled women from NFHS-4 belonging to the Hindu and Muslim community were considered for the analysis. Although the NFHS program was initiated in 1990's but the reason behind selecting only these two rounds is that they have started incorporating data on empowerment from the 3rd round itself.

Methodology:

Estimation of Multidimensional Disempowerment:

A woman is said to be multidimensionally disempowered, if she is not empowered in at least one dimension.

Disempowerment matrix:

we obtain a disempowered matrix g^0 such that

$$g_{ij}^0 = 1 \text{ when } x_{ij} < z_j$$

$$= 0 \text{ otherwise, for all } z = 1, \dots, d \text{ and } i = 1, \dots, N.$$

Multidimensional Disempowerment Ratio (DR) is the proportion of the women (n) who are multidimensionally disempowered (q), i.e.,

$$DR = q/n$$

Multidimensional Intensity of Disempowerment (A) reflects the proportion of the weighted component indicators in which, on average, disempowered women are deprived.

$$A = 1/q \sum c_i$$

Where c_i is the disempowerment score of disempowered women

The Multidimensional Disempowerment Index (MDI) can be expressed as the product of DR and A, i.e.,

$$MDI = A \times DR$$

Ordered Logistic Regression:

The status of women disempowerment has been classified into three categories, viz. multidimensionally empowered, moderately disempowered and severely disempowered on the basis of multidimensional deprivation scores which are coded as 1, 2, and 3 respectively. The ordered logistic regression is being used to analyse the status of women disempowerment because the dependent variable (here the status of women disempowerment) is in ordered categories (Cameron and Trivedi, 2010). For individual 'i' with time 't' the model is specified as follows:

$$\triangleright y_{it} = x'_{it}\beta + u_{it}$$

Where i = number of women (57,023 in 2005-06 and 55382 in 2015-16), t = 2 (2005-06 and 2015-16), x is the matrix of regressors, β is the vector of coefficients and u is the vector of error.

The factors which we have hypothesised to influence the status of women empowered are age of the women, place of residence, education of the women, employment status of the women, religion, caste, wealth status, media exposure, financial independence, and marital control by partner. The summary statistics of the variables that determined the status of multidimensional women empowerment are presented in Table 7.

III. Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic Status of Hindu and Muslim Women in India

Table 1 presents the basic profile of women residing in India during 2005-06 and 2015-16. In India, near about 48 percentage of the population are female out of 138.7 crore population. Although the percentage of Hindu women residing in urban areas is less than the Muslim women residing there but apart from that in other socio-economic aspects Hindu women are far ahead of them. If we consider their education status, we will find that only 6 percent of the Muslim women have higher education in contrast to 11 percent of Hindu women whereas around 40 percent of the Muslim women had no education as compared to 30 percent of the Hindu women. If we look at the employed women than 13 percent of the Muslim and 26 percent of the Hindu women were employed in 2015-16. Considering the wealth index, we observe that the women belonging to low and middle wealth class are higher in Hindu community whereas women belonging to high wealth class are higher in Muslim community. By observing these statistics, we can predict that Hindu women must be very much empowered as compared to Muslim women as the percentage of Hindu women is much higher in case of literacy and employment which are considered to be the main determinant of empowerment. The following section will reveal the existing situation of women empowerment across religion specifically Hindu and Muslim in India.

Women Disempowerment Status

Table 2 executes the situation of Hindu and Muslim women basically their disempowerment status across each indicator for the year 2005-06 and 2015-16. We have also given stress to observe the change in the disempowerment status of the women of both these communities. The data reveals the fact that the percentage of disempowered women in terms of these indicators was slightly higher in case of Muslim community as compared to the Hindu community and the difference in the percentage of disempowered women across religion has reduced over the decade. In case of domestic violence there is negligible difference in the percentage of Hindu and Muslim women who were victim of emotional and sexual violence but if we look at the victims of physical violence that the percentage share of Hindu women is higher than that of the Muslim women in the year 2015-16. Looking into the change in the scenario of the disempowered women in case of both the communities we observe that there has been considerable reduction in the percentage of disempowered women but the reduction was at a higher pace in case of women belonging to Muslim community than in the Hindu community in case of six out of nine indicators. In indicators namely decision on health care, freedom to go to health facility alone and freedom to go outside village alone, the reduction was at a higher pace in case of Hindu community than its counterpart. Further the reduction in the percentage of disempowered women in case of both religions occurred in taking decision on large household purchase that is over the decade large share of women belonging to Hindu and Muslim community gained the power to take decision on large household purchase. It was further observed that more than one fourth of the women experienced physical violence and didn't have the decision-making power in the considered years but if we look at the freedom of movement than near about half of the women population residing in India are disempowered irrespective of their religious background. These facts and data very much highlights that

woman in India are disempowered in most of the considered cases irrespective of their religious background even though there is slight difference in the percentage share of Hindu and Muslim women and most importantly their situation is improving in the sense that there has been considerable reduction in the share of disempowered women.

Status of Multidimensional Disempowerment of Women in India

In order to measure disempowerment from multidimensional perspective, the indicators or the deprivation in capabilities of the women which is selected is based on the availability of the data is presented in Table 3. In the first column we have placed the three dimensions with which we will be dealing with namely decision making, domestic violence and freedom of movement. In the second column, we have presented the nine indicators which has been elaborately explained in the initial phase of the paper. Here we have given equal weights to all the dimensions. Similarly, equal weights are also given to each indicator as well. Finally, the third column executes the disempowerment cut-off of each of these indicators.

In the previous section we made a unidimensional analysis where we were dealing with a single indicator at a time on the basis of which we considered a woman to be disempowered or not. But the issue is that a single indicator is insufficient to declare a woman to be empowered or not because of its multidimensional nature as pointed by Sen as well as Martha Nussbaum. And if we consider the multidimensionality of the issue then only, we will be able to get the true essence of it. In this connection, we tried to present the multidimensional status of women disempowerment across religion in India as presented in Table 4. We have also tried to observe the change in the multidimensional status of Hindu and Muslim women over the considered decade using the methodology proposed by Alkire and Foster (2009). The data reveals the fact that in India, 52 per cent of the women belonging to the Hindu community and 60 per cent of the women belonging to Muslim community are multidimensionally disempowered and this percentage share was 11 percentage and 12 percentage point higher respectively over a decade ago. Even though there exist difference in the incidence of disempowerment across these two communities but the intensity remained the same which was 48 percent in 2015-16 and was around 52 percent a decade ago. Together with that, the MDI value remained 0.2 and 0.3 respectively for Hindu and Muslim community in 2015-16 which was 0.3 and 0.4 respectively a decade ago. Further, the difference in the incidence, intensity and MDI among these two religions reduced over the decade. Now if we look at the overtime change in the disempowered status, then we will observe that improvement has been witnessed among women in both these communities but the improvement in the multidimensional status of women was at higher pace in the Muslim community as compared to its counterpart.

Contribution of Indicators to MDI

In this section we will explore the contribution of each indicator in the multidimensional disempowerment status of Hindu and Muslim women. Table 5 very well explains the fact that most of the women didn't have the freedom of movement in both the considered years and specifically the contribution of the indicator named 'to outside village alone' was highest to the MDI implying that the women in case of both the community were deprived in going outside the village alone followed by going to health facility alone. On the other hand,

contribution of the decision-making dimension has reduced over the decade implies that women have gained the decision-making power i.e., to take decision on her health, for large household purchase or visiting her family and relative over years. Now, if we highlight the contribution of domestic violence in MDI, we will find that the contribution of the physical violence indicator is higher in the Hindu community as compared to the Muslim community. The contribution of the indicator 'experience sexual violence' was the least among both the communities to the MDI implying that among others relatively less women were disempowered in this case and its share had further reduced over the decade. Last but not the least the data also clarify that in case of both the religion, contribution of the indicators was more or less the same.

Categories of Women Disempowerment in India

Here we have categorised the total women belonging to Hindu and Muslim communities into three categories based on their disempowerment scores so that we can get more clearer picture of the multidimensional status of women. The three categories are: multidimensionally empowered which includes those women whose disempowerment score is less than 33.33; moderately multidimensionally disempowered includes those women whose disempowerment score lies between 33.33 to less than 50; and extremely multidimensionally disempowered which includes those women whose disempowerment score is 50 or above. From this attempt we identify the extremely multidimensionally disempowered women which was not possible figure out up till the last exercise. Table 6 executes that the percentage of multidimensionally empowered women has increased in case of both the religion and was higher in the Hindu community and was 48 percentage and 40 percentage for Hindu and Muslim community respectively while the percentage of extremely multidimensionally disempowered women reduced considerably by around 11 percentage point and 15 percentage point respectively which stood at 20 percent and 22 percent in 2015-16. This figure very well clarifies that the situation of women has improved considerably over the decade among both the religion and Muslim community is giving greater effort as compared to the Hindu community. Further, it can also be observed that the difference between the two religions in terms of all these three categories is reducing as time flies. But the point which needs utmost focus is that less than half of the women population in both these communities are multidimensionally empowered and the rest are multidimensionally disempowered of whom one fourth of extremely multidimensionally disempowered.

Econometric Analysis of Multidimensional Disempowerment of Women across religion in India

The degree of disempowerment varied from one woman to another. The factors hypothesised to stimulate women empowerment and are considered for the analysis are age of the respondent (AGE), women residing in rural area (RURAL), highest years of education of the women (HEDU), employment status of women (EMPL), Hindu women (HINDU), Muslim women (MUSLIM), belongs to scheduled caste (SC), scheduled tribe (ST), other backward caste (OBC), women belonging to low wealth class family (LWI), High wealth class family (HWI), media exposer i.e. watch television, listen to radio and reads newspaper at least once a week (ME), have bank account (BA), marital control i.e. husband is jealous if she talks with other men,

accuses for her unfaithfulness, does not permits to meet female friends and family members, insists on knowing where she is and doesn't trust her with money (MC) and time dummy (TD) which is considered to access the change in the degree of multidimensional empowerment over time. The notation, specification and descriptive statistics are present in Table 7.

Econometric Framework

Ordered logistic regression is used to as because the dependent variable is ordered categories. The model is specified as follows: the data consists of different level of multidimensional empowerment of women facing 3 choices: multidimensionally empowered, moderately multidimensionally disempowered and extremely multidimensionally disempowered which are coded as 1,2 and 3 respectively. EMP_{it} is the dependent variable which takes the value ranging from 1 to 3 based on the degree of women disempowerment. Together with EMP_{it} , we have a number of explanatory variables about which we have discussed above.

The regression model is specified as follows:

$$EMP_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 TD_{it} + \beta_2 AGE_{it} + \beta_3 RURAL_{it} + \beta_4 HEDU_{it} + \beta_5 EMP_{it} + \beta_6 HINDU_{it} + \beta_9 SC_{it} + \beta_{10} ST_{it} + \beta_{11} OBC_{it} + \beta_{12} LWI_{it} + \beta_{15} ME_{it} + \beta_{16} BA_{it} + \beta_{17} MC_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Where i= No of women and t= 2 (2005-06 and 2015-16)

The result in Table 8 shows that education, employment, financial independence, media exposure and age of the women are inversely related to women disempowerment whereas caste, residence, lower wealth and marital control of the partner are positively related to the disempowerment status of women. Implying that if the women is educated, employed, financially independent and are exposed to media then they are less likely to be at the higher degree of multidimensional disempowerment. In contrast, if the women reside in rural areas, belongs to lower strata of social caste and wealth status, and is exposed to marital control by partner then they are more likely to be at the higher degree of multidimensional disempowerment.

IV. Conclusion

Through this paper we have tried to measure the status of empowerment of Hindu and Muslim women residing in India using Sen's Capability Approach which centrally emphasises on the notion of enjoying the freedom of basic capabilities one has reason to value. We have also conceptualised the multidimensionally of the term 'empowerment' and thus have worked with the multidimensional framework. Some interesting facts which we have found from the analysis is that women belonging to both Hindu and Muslim community are disempowered to a great extent in almost all of the considered indicators and more specifically they lack the freedom of movement. Even though more Muslim women were disempowered as compared to the Hindu women in 2015-16 but over the decade reduction in the share was higher in the Muslim community as compared to the Hindu community. The multidimensional analysis revealed the fact that near about 60 percent of the Muslim women and 52 percent of the Hindu women were multidimensionally disempowered in 2015-16 even after experiencing reduction in their percentage over the decade and the MDI reached to 0.2 and 0.3 for the Hindu and Muslim community in 2015-16. The contribution of the dimension named 'Freedom of Movement' was found to be highest for both the community. By categorising the women population into 3 broad categories we managed to find the figure of the extremely multidimensionally disempowered women

which stood at 20 percent and 22 percent respectively for Hindu and Muslim community in the year 2015-16. When we turned towards finding the determinants of disempowerment of women, we found that residence, marital control and low wealth have positive impact on disempowerment status of women whereas education, employment, bank account, media exposé, age and being Hindu have negative impact on the status of women disempowerment. At last we would like to conclude that even though Muslim women are relatively more disempowered than the Hindu women in both the considered year but still higher reduction in the percentage share of disempowered women in their community as compared to Hindu community was observed. Apart from that, the most important point which was found and which needs utmost attention is that more than half of the women population belonging to either of these religious community are multidimensionally disempowered. Thus, action to improve their status must be done based on the factors we have discussed above as well as emphasis must be placed on the socio-economic factors as well.

V. Figures and Tables

Table 1: Basic Profile of women in India in 2005-06 and 2015-16

	2005-06		2015-16	
	Hindu	Muslim	Hindu	Muslim
Residence				
Urban	29.9	35.8	33.3	46.4
Rural	70.1	64.2	66.7	53.6
Education				
No Education	47.6	56.0	31.2	36.3
Primary	15.1	15.6	13.8	16.1
Secondary	31.0	26.1	43.6	41.7
Higher	6.3	2.3	11.4	5.9
Employment				
No	60.3	77.3	74.0	86.5
Yes	39.6	22.6	26.0	13.5
Wealth Index				
Low	41.5	42.9	37.5	35.9
Middle	20.0	19.9	20.8	19.2
High	38.5	37.2	41.7	44.9

Source: NFHS data of the 3rd (2005-06) and 4th (2015-16) rounds, <http://rchiips.org/nfhs/>

Table 2: Percentage share of disempowered women across religion in 2005-06 and 2015-16

Dimensions	Indicators	Hindu		Muslim	
		2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
Decision Making	Decision on Health Care	36.6	24.6	37.1	26.2
	Decision on large household purchase	44.4	25.2	47.7	26.6
	Decision on visiting her family/relatives	36.9	24.3	43.3	27.2
Domestic Violence	Experience emotional violence	15.2	13.4	15.6	13.7
	Experience physical violence	35.0	30.2	39.5	28.0
	Experience Sexual violence	9.4	6.6	13.4	6.9
Freedom of Movement	To market alone	44.7	41.7	55.5	50.9
	To health facility alone	47.9	45.8	54.5	53.7
	To outside village alone	59.3	48.6	66.4	56.4

Source: NFHS data of the 3rd (2005-06) and 4th (2015-16) rounds, <http://rchiips.org/nfhs/>

Table 3: Dimensions, Indicators, Disempowerment cut-off and weight of Multidimensional Disempowerment

Dimension	Indicator	Disempowerment Cut-off
Decision Making (1/3)	Decision on Health Care (1/9)	No decision-making power on health care
	Decision on large household purchase (1/9)	No decision-making power on large household purchase
	Decision on visiting her family or relative (1/9)	No decision-making power on visiting her family and relatives

Domestic Violence (1/3)	Experienced Emotional violence (1/9)	Experienced Emotional violence
	Experienced Physical violence (1/9)	Experienced Physical violence
	Experienced Sexual violence (1/9)	Experienced Sexual violence
Freedom of Movement (1/3)	To market alone (1/9)	No freedom of going to the market alone
	To health facility alone (1/9)	No freedom of going to health facility alone
	To outside village alone (1/9)	No freedom of going outside village alone

Source: NFHS data of the 3rd (2005-06) and 4th (2015-16) rounds, <http://rchiips.org/nfhs/>

Table 4: Multidimensional Disempowerment Estimation in India, 2005-06 and 2015-16

	Incidence		Intensity		MDI	
	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
Hindu	62.3	51.6	51.9	48.1	0.32	0.25
Muslim	71.5	59.6	53.2	47.9	0.38	0.29

Source: NFHS data of the 3rd (2005-06) and 4th (2015-16) rounds, <http://rchiips.org/nfhs/>

Table 5: Contribution of each indicator to MDI across religion for the year 2005-06 and 2015-16

Dimensions	Indicators	Hindu		Muslim	
		2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
Decision Making	Decision on Health Care	11.1	9.4	9.9	9.1
	Decision on large household purchase	13.5	9.7	12.8	9.2
	Decision on visiting her family	11.2	9.3	11.6	9.4
Domestic Violence	Experience emotional violence	4.6	5.2	4.2	4.7
	Experience physical violence	10.6	11.6	10.6	9.7
	Experience Sexual violence	2.9	2.5	3.6	2.4
Freedom of Movement	To market alone	13.6	16.0	14.9	17.6
	To health facility alone	14.5	17.6	14.6	18.5
	To outside village alone	18.0	18.6	17.8	19.5

Source: Author's Calculation from Unit Level data of NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16)

Table 6: Distribution of women population by different degrees of Multidimensional disempowerment across religion, 2005-06 and 2015-16

	Multidimensionally Empowered		Moderately Multidimensionally Disempowered		Extremely Multidimensionally Disempowered	
	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
Hindu	37.7	48.4	31.6	31.9	30.6	19.7
Muslim	28.5	40.4	34.1	37.4	37.3	22.3

Source: Author's Calculation from Unit Level data of NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16)

Table 7: Notations, Specification and descriptive statistics of Variables used in the Ordered logistic regression model

Notation	Specification	Year	Mean	SD
<i>Dependent Variable</i>				
EMP	Status of Women in terms of Disempowerment (EMP takes the value '1' for multidimensionally empowered, '2' for moderately multidimensionally non-empowered and '3' for extremely multidimensionally non-empowered)			
<i>Independent Variables</i>				
TD	Time Dummy, If 2015-16=1, 2005-06=0	2005-06 2015-16	0 1	0 0
AGE	Age of the respondent	2005-06 2015-16	31.66 32.74	7.97 8.02
RESIDENCE	Whether women residing in rural area? Yes=1, No=0	2005-06 2015-16	0.56 0.71	0.50 0.45
HEDU	Highest years of education	2005-06 2015-16	5.30 4.07	5.26 1.63
EMPL	Whether the woman is employed or not? Yes=1, No=0	2005-06 2015-16	0.35 0.24	0.48 0.43
HINDU	Hindu Women Yes=1, No=0	2005-06 2015-16	0.74 0.75	0.44 0.43
MUSLIM	Muslim Women Yes=1, No=0	2005-06 2015-16	0.12 0.13	0.33 0.34

SC	Whether Women belongs to SC category? Yes=1,	2005-06	0.17	0.38
	No=0	2015-16	0.18	0.38
ST	Whether Women belongs to ST category? Yes=1,	2005-06	0.13	0.34
	No=0	2015-16	0.18	0.39
OBC	Whether Women belongs to OBC category?	2005-06	0.32	0.47
	Yes=1, No=0	2015-16	0.39	0.49
LWI	Whether women belong to Low Wealth class	2005-06	0.30	0.46
	family? Yes=1, No=0	2015-16	0.40	0.49
ME	Whether women is exposed to media like	2005-06	0.69	0.46
	Newspaper, TV or Radio? Yes=1, No=0	2015-16	0.70	0.46
BA	Having Bank Account? Yes=1, No=0	2005-06	0.18	0.39
		2015-16	0.53	0.50
MC	Does husband impose marital control? Yes=1,	2005-06	0.38	0.49
	No=0	2015-16	0.48	0.50

Source: NFHS data of the 3rd (2005-06) and 4th (2015-16) rounds, <http://rchiips.org/nfhs/>

Table 8: Estimated Results of Ordered logistic Regression of different degrees of multidimensional disempowerment of women across religion in India

Ordered logistic regression

Number of observations = 112405

Wald chi2(13) = 16015.07

Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

Log pseudolikelihood = -110691.99

Pseudo R2 = 0.0739

	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P>z
Time	-0.097	0.013	-7.3	0.00
Education	-0.042	0.001	-29.6	0.00
Employment	-0.335	0.014	-24.7	0.00
Bank account	-0.584	0.014	-42.1	0.00
Media exposer	-0.177	0.015	-11.9	0.00
Age	-0.049	0.001	-63.4	0.00
Hindu	-0.217	0.017	-12.8	0.00
SC	0.102	0.018	5.6	0.00
ST	0.104	0.023	4.6	0.00
OBC	0.215	0.014	15.0	0.00
Residence	0.315	0.014	22.9	0.00
Marital Control	0.577	0.012	48.8	0.00
Low Wealth	0.091	0.016	5.8	0.00
/cut1	-2.120	0.035		
/cut2	-0.513	0.034		

Source: Author's Calculation from Unit Level data of NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16)

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