

# **AFFECTING FACTORS ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN WHO HEADED HOUSEHOLDS (CASE STUDY DELFAN CITY, LORESTAN PROVINCE IN IRAN)**

**Shima Safa<sup>a</sup>, Mahboobeh Babai<sup>b</sup>**

<sup>a</sup> Soil Conservation and Watershed Management Research Institute, Shahrak Gharb, Tehran, Iran.  
Corresponding author: shima.safa@gmail.com

© Ontario International Development Agency. ISSN 1923-6654 (print)  
ISSN 1923-6662 (online). Available at <http://www.ssrn.com/link/OIDA-Intl-Journal-Sustainable-Dev.html>

**Abstract:** Women's poverty exist as an issue of long time in all human societies, in recent years we have been witness the formation of new approaches under the empowerment approach in the field of Sustainable Development.

The main purpose of this study is affecting "Imam Khomeini Relief commit" services on the empowerment of women headed households who are live in Delfan city. Survey's Method is "concurrent – triangulation mixed methods design". In the Qualitative research used: rapid rural assessment methods, participatory evaluation, semi structured interviews and various techniques such as interviews, stroll transverse, group discussion and etc. we selected 21 individuals by using snowball sampling. In the quantities method, 228 people selected from 3053 people based on Cochran formula. After collected data by questionnaire, we described and analysis them by SPSS.

Here's Welfare Services is an orderly and organized social welfare system to be supported people to complete satisfaction and a comfortable standard of living for individuals to establish coverage. Educational Services and Financial Services are Welfare Service's indicators. Based on the results, individual characteristic had the highest effect on the empowerment of women headed, also education, skills, employment status of women has been affected on empowerment of women who had higher education or technical skills were more powerful. Results also show that among self-employed loans, and psychological and economic empowerment of women is significant and positive relationship exists.

But pay the salary without any plan can't help to empowerment of women headed can be concluded that the Imam khomeini Relief committee in relation to poverty, has welfare approach. Number of years covered by the client confirmed this to be so More than two-thirds of the population has been studied for

more than three years protected by the committee. This represents sustain poverty and dependency of women is a charity committee and possibly other sources. The most important results based on the type of pension related services, help and empower women headed households is economically, socially and psychologically, there is no statistically significant relationship. It is notable that many of the patients were using just this type of service. In conclusion we can say that the majority of services provided to persons not covered by the committee in order to empower them, Rather than a small heal on their poverty. And continue to follow this process will result in the stabilization of the situation of poverty and their dependence on the contributions of others.

**Keyword:** Women headed households, empowerment, poverty, Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, Lorestan

## **Introduction**

Nowadays, regardless of human capital than physical capital is important, the fact that without attention half of the human capital (women) is not possible to achieve a comprehensive, balanced and sustainable development. Poverty in the community and especially poverty among women is such inconvenience that ineffective this capital and the common disorders are widespread in society. Research shows that a large group of women-headed households on worldwide face poverty, disability and powerlessness, especially in family economic affairs So that it would disrupt their self-esteem and mental health and it providing depression and other disorders( Langlois & Fortin, 1994).

Due to the increase in headed households by women and poverty on women-headed households in the city Delfan, This raises the question of how extent Imam

Khomeini Relief Committee could empower in quality and quantity line of women households. And this group of women could be saved from the cycle of poverty and disability and enable them to stand on their own two feet?

That way goal of this paper is to identify the impact of Imam Khomeini Relief Committee on Empowerment of women-headed households in Delfan city, which is based on the following hypothesis is formed.

The main hypothesis: It seems, between the committee of Imam Khomeini services and empowers women-headed households is relation.

### **Theoretical Basics**

In general, about the role of women in development, different approaches are presented which can be expressed in three general types: (1) Theories of welfare, equality and poverty eradication;

(2) Performance Theory; (3) Theory of Empowerment.

Nowadays, empowerment approach has been more fortunate in promoting women. Women's empowerment is a dynamic process that women's ability to change the structures and ideologies that make them inferior position (dependence) is kept in the covers.

This process helps women's for more access to resources and control over life and make sense of independence and more self-confidence. (Agboma, 2001: 239).

Bennett believe empowerment is process overhand which includes an element of agency And must be occur the systematic changes in empowerment of women in all organizational and in the structures that support of patriarchy and the subordination of women. (Malhetra, 2002 :5).

### **Social Security Policy in Iran**

Supportive strategies include social services and social assistance.

### **Social assistance**

Social assistance is based on design principles. That each individual, whether employed or unemployed at the time of occurrence of the events anticipated by the law, are entitled to receive grants from the government's general funds

The main features of social assistance schemes include: (1) The total project cost of government revenues (General Fund) will be financed a. benefit will pay as a legal right and regard to the classification society, requirements. (b) In order to assess the needs, other income and financial resources patronage individual or family is considered. (c) The benefit scale is calculated in such a way that the applicant can provide their Family life

on appropriate level (Institute of Social Welfare Research (Research Council's Institute for Social Security, 1999: 22-20).

In Iran one of the active supports institutions that providing social assistance is committee of relief Imam Khomeini.

### **Social Services**

Scope of social services such as social assistance, but giving services is different. People with physical or psychological reasons needed to support the different are included these services (ibid: 23).

Some of Previous studies what they have done in Iran and outside of Iran have been summarized in a table 1.

### **Theories research**

Right-wingers - left to themselves - the moderates Righties know poverty related Individual factors, they believe that poverty is a direct result of laziness and poor escape liability, therefore provide any protection against the poor and suggests that Support services, the results are the negative moral and spirit of self-reliance damages and causes of poor's welfare dependency. (Fitzpatrick, 2002:39)

Against Right-wingers as left to themselves poverty to factors beyond the control of individuals, they have stated that poverty is caused by the structure of capitalist society and therefore a welfare service to the poor is essential (Giddens, 2008 and Bare, 2001). But moderates believe that poverty cannot be attributed to structural factors or personal factors but also a combination of the above factors are involved in causing the problem. Since this functional approach to poverty is synonymous with poverty, the nature of the service in a way that is conducive to strengthening the capacities and capabilities of the poor. This means that support services should lead to empowerment and autonomy of individuals to enhance their functionality (patreek, 2002:90) The theoretical model used in this study has been developed Based on the theories related to the politics of the Third Way Giddens moderate approach.

### **Politics of the Third Way Giddens:**

Third Way politics, poverty and deprivation caused by the actions of individual actors or only know the structure of society, both in the incidence of poverty and deprivation as effective. He believes that human actors are not aware of their talents rethink existing solely reflects the current activities and conditions (Giddens, 1999).

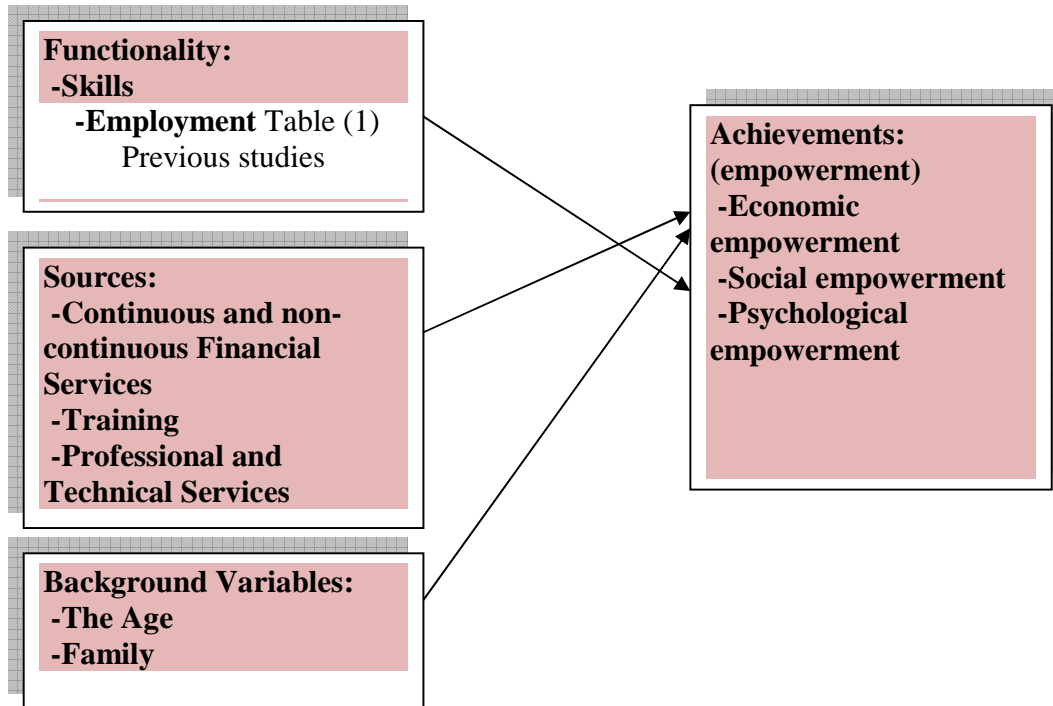
Within the framework of the policy is the same as kaber Third Way Giddens (2001), which consists of three basic components and related enabling, knows, and empower both the perspective of three major components: 1 - Resources 2 – agency 3 - gains.

Table (1) Previous studies

<b>Research conducted in the country</b>		
<b>Author</b>	<b>year</b>	<b>Results</b>
Shaditalab and colleagues	2010	This study to assess the relationship between poverty and gender focus. The main research question is whether women-headed households are the poorest of the poor? Macro-level data were used. Research has shown that the proportion of women-headed households has been more than male-headed households in poverty. Women-headed households due to illiteracy, having smaller families and less number of workers in households are among the poorest of the poor.
Shaditalab and colleagues	2004	In a research project commissioned by welfare agencies about ways to empower have shown that women are more vulnerable to poverty are women and poverty, women are not only economic aspects And psychosocial aspects of women's poverty is also important for combating poverty, empowering and structural changes are necessary.
<b>Research conducted abroad</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>year</b>	<b>Results</b>
Sarah Sibley	2012	This study focuses on the gender-poverty nexus in rural Morocco. It challenges the generalized assumptions made in the feminization of poverty theory and its widely popularized link with female-headed households in gender and development is course . The case study then employs participatory tools within a women's group in the rural southern town of Taroudannt to empirically explore how these attempts may translate into change in the nature of women's empowerment and its implications among female-headed households. Inclusive of varying life stages, marital arrangements, education, employment, social networks, and self-confidence, this research illustrates the need for subjective and culturally specific data.
clark	2000	His research was titled: "The role of gender, age and activity organized by women in Lima».. His research suggests that older women have a deep intellectual developments Thus, willingness to learn, to work more carefully and be more specialized tasks, So not only empower women increases with age but is not weaken with age can be said to be the strength of empowerment.
Rahal kopal	1991	In India county did research with title relation economic empowerment of rural women ,In this study, in order to increase income-generating activities in rural women's groups and collaborators and manufacturers has engage in public education for rural women. The researcher believes that because most women have low education and were also rural households, The training has been very effective in the areas listed And addition operators have been able to reduce poverty and increase incomes, employment of women, empowerment, and create a new culture among rural women.

Next page

### Conceptual research model



**Resources:** Resources are the factors that accelerate the process of empowerment. Variables such as education and employment can be considered as sources of empowerment (Malhatra and colleagues, 2002:8).

#### Women functionality

to mean that women should not be regarded as recipients of services, but women should be considered as the main actors in the change process. Amartya Sen. argues that women are being given the relative influence of variables such as women are able to earn enough money, find a job outside of house ownership, literate so that they can participate in decisions within and outside the family (sen, 2002:265).

#### Achievements:

Another part of the empowerment process results and the result of this process is achieved. Achievements can be full of such elementary things, of being healthy, avoiding preventable diseases and premature deaths begin And continue to more complex achievements such as being happy, having self-esteem, participation in political and social life, etc.(sen,2000:59).

#### Variables research

Independent variables: 1 – utilities

#### Welfare Services

Here's an orderly and organized social welfare system is said to be supported by organizations to help people to complete satisfaction and a comfortable standard of living for individuals to establish coverage.

#### Educational Services

Imam Khomeini Relief Committee in relation to women-headed households Educational Services include: Literacy Movement classes, family learning and vocational training.

#### Financial Services

Imam Khomeini Relief Committee on Financial Services regarding women-headed households are: Self-employment loans, pensions and assistance case (the help of financial services that For various reasons, such as housing deposits, pay off debt, purchase of furniture, home repair ,ect. The applicant shall be paid to patients.

#### Dependent variable: Empowering

Empowerment means that people who have achieved a level of personal development which allowed them to choose according to your wishes (shadehtalab, 2002: 54).In this study, the concept of empowerment, Based on its components were measured.

Table 2. Descriptive characteristics

Technical skills	percent	Education	percent
Sewing	6/6	literate	56/6
Hairdressers	2/2	Literacy	13/3
Knitting	6/6	Movement classes	13/7
Carpet weaving - weaving woolen cloth	11/1	primary	6/6
Computer	0/4	junior	3/1
Other Skills	5/3 67/7	High school Diploma	6/6

Table 3. Descriptive characteristics

Age	percent	Term of Service Committee	percent
35-23	31%	Less 3 age	26/5
47-36	6/33	3-7 age	37/6
59-48	4/55	More 7 age	35/8

Table 4. Employment status of patients before and after coverage

		Cumulative Percent	percent	Frequency
Before covering	Employed	3/1	3/1	3
	Housekeeper	100	7/98	223
	The total		100	226
After covering	Employed	7/2	7/2	6
	Housekeeper	100	3/97	220
	The total		100	226

**Economic capabilities:**

Including the ability to repay the loan variables to obtain or increase revenue.

**Psychological empowerment**

Including variables increase self-esteem, independence of thought, increasing their effectiveness.

**Social empowerment**

Include variables change attitudes towards women's participation in public affairs, gregariousness, and a willingness to participate in public spaces

**Method**

Survey's Method is "concurrent –triangulation mixed methods design". In the Qualitative research used :

rapid rural assessment methods, participatory evaluation, semi structured interviews and various techniques such as interviews, stroll transverse, group discussion and etc. we selected 21 individuals by using snowball sampling. In the quantities method, 228 people selected from 3053 people based on Cochran formula.

**Describe**

The data table (2) shows that 35.8 percent of women have been proteged more than seven years. These data also indicate that more than half of women are illiterate cover. The mean age of the study population was too high to be observed.

The Table 3 shows that a significant number of non-working committee is being sponsored. This means that contributions to the committee during the seven years leading to the empowerment of women are not covered.

Table (5) Distribution of respondents according Get Relief Committee

	Assistance case	Pension	Educational Services	self-employment loans
Received	57	226	158	40
Received not	174	-	68	186
<b>Sum</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>226</b>

The above table shows the types of services received.

**Testing hypotheses****Effects services provided by the committee on empowerment of psychological empowerment, social and economic**

Table (6) of the services provided by the committee on empowerment

		self-employed borrowers	financial services frequent and infrequent	education services
psychological empowerment	Correlation	0/304	0/015	<b>0/374</b>
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	0/000	0/223	<b>0/000</b>
economic empowerment	Correlation	0/412	0/202	<b>0/001</b>
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	0/000	0/88	<b>0/082</b>
Social empowerment	Correlation	0/531	0/113	<b>0/111</b>
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	0/124	0/224	<b>0/0881</b>

The results indicate that the economic empowerment of women, education services, financial services committee, and there is no significant relationship. Meanwhile, the self-employed borrowers have a significant relationship with economic empowerment.

Self-employed borrowers and relationship between psychological empowerment of women is statistically significant and positive.

The focus group were conducted with those who have received loans, self-employment can be said that the committee First, the number of people who have received this type of loan, studied the entire population is very low. Second, more than one million women have received loans from the quantity stated, and believed, even as the amount of economic activity for individual low-is insufficient. Most of them lost their jobs due to the high cost of renting space, buying equipment, have noted their low volume of loans received.

#### Correlation between variables of economic empowerment, social and psychological services to clients and variable quantity versus

Table (7): Relationship between the quantities of relief committee on empowerment of women headed households

			Social empowerment	economic empowerment	Psychological empowerment
quantities of relief committee	Correlation		0/006	0/201	0/109
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)		0/112	0/086	<b>0/082</b>

Another hypothesis regarding the quantity of services with the potential economic, social and psychological, this is presented in Table 6.

Significant level of acceptance of the hypothesis 0/05 indicates that economic empowerment and psychosocial variables and Relationship between quantities versus services are not significant.

#### Correlation between variables of economic empowerment, social and psychological variables and quality client services versus

Table (8) International Quality Services committee and empower families are related

			Social empowerment	Psychological empowerment	economic empowerment
Educational services	Correlation		0/111	0/374	/109
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)		0/081	0/001	<b>0/086</b>
Technical and professional skills.	Correlation		0/324	0/441	<b>0/498</b>
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)		0/097	0/000	<b>0/000</b>

As shown in the 8 table, Technical and professional skills, mental and economic empowerment of women heads of households, there is a significant relationship.

While the possession of technical skills and professional and social empowerment of women headed households, there is no significant relationship.

Qualitative analysis of interviews also found in the work of women like carpet weaving and weaving classes and other classes and have the technical skills that one of them was said "When I went with my daughter grade carpet, three carpets were produced and sold".

Educational services not related to social and economic empowerment only has a significant relationship with psychological empowerment. Perhaps there is a relationship between women's agency and empowerment of female-headed households. This hypothesis is to examine the relationship between the agency and the empowerment of women-headed households. In order to analyze this hypothesis, we used correlation analysis, and therefore, we used Spearman's correlation coefficient.

The null hypothesis H is independent of these two variables. Therefore suppose we reject the null hypothesis means of confirming the correlation between the two variables.

Table (9) analyzed the relationship between individual characteristics and the empowerment of women-headed households

		Social empowerment	Psychological empowerment	economic empowerment
<i>Age</i>	Correlation	0/321	0/423	<b>0/091</b>
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	0/001	0/054	<b>0/091</b>
<i>Education</i>	Correlation	0/219	0/351	<b>0/651</b>
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	0/098	0/038	<b>0/000</b>
<i>vocational skills</i>	Correlation	0/111	0/521	<b>0/395</b>
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	0/083	0/019	<b>0/038</b>

As shown in the table 9, the characteristics of the individual, there is a significant relationship between age and social empowerment and positive the right to education and vocational skills and economic empowerment of women and their mental health, there is a significant relationship. Employment is associated with the highest rate of employment can be said to empower women economically. This means that it has the greatest impact on women's financial independence and thus their lack of dependence on welfare. One of the women in the focus groups was to be the other woman was referred by the committee to the flour and worked there" Because you're working inside the factory could you buy a washing machine, But I spent all the money that I get my food for my kids., And I cannot save anything.

### Conclusions

According to the findings of a qualitative and quantitative discussion of education, high levels of illiteracy, one of the major obstacles to the empowerment of the group. Because Background knowledge and literacy and empowerment it is not the duty of the committee. And most educational institutions must take this task.

Also we see at the discussion of educational services, one of the main reasons for the reluctance of women to participate in classes, is revealing their membership.

Because according to tribal traditions and customs, which is one of the wives of such support is a huge disadvantage.

On the other hand the social constraints of women committee members are mainly city residents are fewer than the rural tribes.

Because of the strong social control and more colorful customs and traditions in the rural, Women-headed households are fewer attempts to cover it up by the committee and basically know unlike their families.

The results also indicate employment, vocational skills and self-employed borrowers play a major role in the empowerment of female-headed households.

This means that only women have been empowered in the field of employment and vocational skills. Or capable of self-employment relative have used to debt relief committees.

So, given that many of the women-headed households were without job skills and vocational and the committee did not receive the self-employed borrowers can say Committee of only a few mental and able to economically empower women, and established the position of women in poverty and dependency.

Thus we can conclude that most current aspects of the committee's approach to welfare.

Number of years covered by the client confirmed this to be so More than two-thirds of the population has been studied for more than three years proteged by the committee. This represents sustain poverty and dependency of women is a charity committee and possibly other sources.

The most important results based on the type of pension related services, help and empower women headed households is economically, socially and psychologically, there is no statistically significant relationship. It is notable that many of the patients were using just this type of service. In conclusion we



can say that the majority of services provided to persons not covered by the committee in order to empower them, Rather than a small heal on their poverty. And continue to follow this process will result in the stabilization of the situation of poverty and their dependence on the contributions of others.

### Reference

- [1] Agbomeh, M. M George (2001) : Empowerment Women in agricultural education for sustainable rural development, vol : 36 No : 4 pp : 289-302
- [2] Bennett, Lynn (2002) Using Empowerment and social Inclusion for pro- poor Growth A Theory of social change "Working Draft Background Paper for social Development
- [3] Fitzpatrick, Tony (2011) Welfare Theory: An introduction to the theoretical debates in social Policy, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Basingstoke, 2011: Palgrave Macmillan
- [4] Giddens, Anthony (1999) The Third Way, translated by M. Kashani patience, printing, Tehran, Shirazeh publication
- [5] Langlois, J. & Fortin, D. (1994). Single parent mothers, poverty and mental health : review of the literature. *Sante' Mentale Quebecoise* 19, 157-173.
- [6] Malhatra. Anju, sandy, Ruth, schuler (2000) )Measuring women's empowerment as a variable in International development Jun 28. Research Council's Institute for Social Security, 1999: 22-20
- [7] Sibley, Sarah (2012 ). Women's Empowerment and the Feminization of Poverty among Female-Headed Households in Rural Morocco: Challenging stigma in an unequal society
- [8] School of Geography and School of Politics and International Relations MA Globalisation and Development Working Paper Series No. 1
- [9] Shadi talab, Jaleh. (2004 )Empowerment of women headed households, Tehran University Center for Women's Studies
- [10] Shadi talab, Jaleh ., Masumeh , Vahabi ., Varmazyar , Hasan (2005 ). Income poverty is only one aspect of poverty in female-headed households, *Journal of Social Welfare*, Year IV, No. 17
- [11] World Bank (WB) 2001. Social Protection Sector Strategy. Washington D.C; the World Bank.

