

## Examining Three Domains of Women's Empowerment in Two Culturally Diverse Populations

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**Abstract:** A multi-dimensional study of measures provides alternative ways through which women's empowerment can be viewed and understand how each domain contributes to enhance the empowerment of women in the developing countries. In this study, we examined women's empowerment levels using three domains that are directly related to issues regarding the position of women in their individual households. The strength of each of these domains was examined through some indicators that point out how well they contribute to the empowerment of women in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh (India). Statistical analysis was applied to two national survey data obtained from the Nigerian Demographic Health Survey (2008) and India National Family and Health Survey (2006). The study revealed that the women's background characteristics have significant association with the three selected domains and women's empowerment levels in the study areas, even though some of these characteristics were positively related and some are negatively related as revealed by the values of Beta. However, the Beta coefficients revealed that some of the variables contribute more to their respective domains, while some less, and a few have no any contribution at all. The study also revealed that women's empowerment level through their participation in household decision making is more in Nigeria than in Uttar Pradesh (India), while empowerment level through non-justification of wife beating but justification of refusing sexual intercourse were observed more in women of Uttar Pradesh (India) compared to Nigerian women.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, domain, multivariate regression, diverse, decision making.

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### I. Introduction

Women constitute a very significant and indispensable portion of the population in almost all countries across the world. That is why in recent times, women have come to a definite focus because of the realization of what the world might have been missing for not involving them in the developmental process of the nations. Although few developed countries has empowered their women to a large extent, that allows them to play some important roles and contribute their quota towards the development of the societies, many developing countries like Nigeria and India have not yet fully appreciated the important roles women can play in the transformation of their countries when sufficiently empowered. Several scholars and researchers over the years have emphasised the importance of empowering women for National development. However, such empowerment can be achieved by focusing first on women's position in the household, that is how well she can take a decision in household matters; her position in the community, as well as the society as a whole.

Asaju and Adagba (2013) said that the progress and development of any nation are contributed by the women in the society; as such women can be seen as a tool for positive change, depending on how well they are treated and the level of opportunities given to them to actualise their potentials. Even though women's empowerment is a complex construct that has no universally acceptable definition or agreement regarding which domain and sub-domain comprise one's empowerment. Nevertheless, many literatures (Kabeer 1999, Malhotra *et al.* 2002, Alsop & Heinsohn 2005, Alsop *et al.* 2006, Samman & Santos 2009) referred to women's empowerment as the notions of power, agency, control and decision making. Kabeer (1999) in a study defines empowerment as a process, namely, 'the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied'. In line with Kabeer's definition of empowerment and for the purpose of this study, we viewed women's empowerment as women's ability to independently or jointly participate in household decision making pertaining to their lives and family in order to improve their social and economic status and for the family's well being. Even though the term "empowerment" has been used to represent a broad range of concepts and to describe a large number of outcomes, and hence it is multidimensional in nature. Our study tries to examine empowerment from a demographic point of view, where household an issue as the base for empowerment is the focus of this study. Moreover, since women are the makers and caregivers in most

households, empowering them is of paramount importance both to the household, community, society and the world as a whole.

This study uses three selected domains to measure the levels of women's empowerment in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh (India). These domains are; decision making, wife beating and refusing sexual intercourse, each of these domains has indicators used to measure it. Kabeer (2005) said decision making power is one of the elements required to enable one-gain power, authority and influence over others, institutions or society. Almost all definitions of woman's empowerment considered here, points to the "expansion of choice and freedom to make decisions and take the actions necessary to shape life's outcomes" (Malhotra and Schuler 2005).

### **Objective of the study**

This study attempts to explore and examine three important domains of women's empowerment that are common in the two study areas (Nigeria and UP-India) in relations to some socio and demographic characteristics of women. We will therefore, seek to answer the question as to how the socio-economic and demographic inequalities contributes in shaping the three selected aspects of women's empowerment considered in two different cultures and social context of Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh (India).

### **Need for the study**

Several studies have been conducted on various issues relating to women's empowerment, but only a few of these studies attempt to examine women's empowerment levels in relation to women's background characteristics of two populations having different backgrounds and cultures. Our study, therefore, seeks to examine women's empowerment levels through three domains. Such study of two culturally diverse areas will help us establish whether international agenda for women's empowerment differ in execution in the two populations and the extent this may occur, which can be useful for evaluation to foster growth and development in each of the study areas. Only through such study we can know the extent to which some demographic and socio-economic variables such as age, education level, couples' age and education gap, wealth status, place of residence and other developmental variables affects women's empowerment in different cultures and backgrounds, Raj and Ibrahim (2014)

## **II. Data And Methods**

The study made use of secondary data obtained from two national surveys and documented by measures DHS:

1. The 2008 Nigeria Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) is a nationally representative survey which was conducted by the Nigerian National Population Commission (NPC).
2. The National Family Health Surveys (NFHS – 3) is a nationwide survey conducted with a representative sample of households throughout India.

### **Dependent variables.**

The three selected domains of women's empowerment are the dependent (outcome) variables in the study. Each of the outcome variables (decision making, wife beating, refusing sexual intercourse) were presented in binary form as "0 = No and 1 = Yes".

#### **Decision making**

Four indicators were used to measure women's participation in household decision making and the responses were grouped into two; those who reported having a say either alone or jointly in decision making were coded 1- indicating their participation in decision making, while those who reported that their husbands or other person made decisions were coded 0- indicating their non participation in decision making. Hence the responses were combined and scores ranging from 0 to 4 were obtained which represents number of indicators women participate in decision making. Zero indicates no participation in decision, 1 means participate in any one decision, 2 in any two of the decisions variables, 3 means in any three of the decision making variables and score 4 means participate in all the decision making.

#### **Wife beating**

Similarly, five indicators related to women's attitude towards wife beating were used, responses were categorised into two groups - those who do not justify wife beating by responding no to the questions were coded 0 - indicating their non acceptance of violence against women and hence are regarded empowered, and those who justified wife beating by responding yes were coded 1- indicating their acceptance of violence against women and are regarded not empowered. For the purpose of analysis of this domain of empowerment, we considered responses of women who do not justify wife beating as positive response and coded it 1, while those who justify wife beating as negative response and coded 0. Computing the sum of responses in all the

indicators, we obtained score ranging from 0 to 5, where score 5 indicates a women do not justify wife beating in all five situations and score 0 indicates a women justify wife beating in all cases given.

### **Refusing sexual intercourse**

Three indicators related to women's attitude to refusing sexual intercourse with their husband under some given situations was used as the third domain of empowerment. Responses were also divided into two categories, those who justify women refusal of sexual intercourse with their husbands/partners (responded Yes) were coded 1, and those who said it is not justified for any reason (responded No) were coded 0. To obtain a continuous score, we combined the responses of all the indicator of this domain and obtained scores from 0 to 3, where score 0 means women do not justify refusing sexual intercourse for all the reasons and score 3 means they agree or justify refusal for all given reasons.

### **Independent variables**

Two categories of the background characteristics of currently married women were used as the predictor variables in the study. These are;

#### **Socio-economic characteristics**

Women's socio economic variables where used as independent variable in the study. The variables considered here are; educational status, place of residence, wealth status, education gap.

#### **Demographic characteristics**

Women's demographic characteristics such as age, age at marriage, age at 1st birth, age gap and parity was used as independent variables

Finally, we computed the levels of women empowerment using all indicators of the three domains and obtained a score of levels ranging from 0 to 13. The value of the score determines the level of women's empowerment. That is to say higher score means a higher level of empowerment; a lower score means a lower level of empowerment and score 0 means no empowerment.

The rationale behind using these three domains to measure women's empowerment level in this study is based on the following reasons;

1. The assumption that women who actively participate in making decisions at the household level are more likely to have unrestricted beliefs about gender, and are likely to disapprove the practice of wife beating and to support a woman's right to refuse sexual relation with her husband based on the stated reasons (NBS and ICF Macro, 2011).
2. They are the only common indicators that are directly pointing to women's empowerment and are more related to women's right/autonomy and have consequences for women's being and health in the two study populations.

Nevertheless, the argument here is that empowered women who have control over choices in their life and has greater self-worth and power, will not justify violence against women for any reason. On the other hand, a woman who justifies wife-beating lacks control and power in her life and is bound by the constraints of gendered power structures and therefore not empowered in this domain. The domains as well as their indicators considered in the study are specifically related to individual women's empowerment in the household and the community and do not tackle other macro-elements of political participation or collective action, but they do give an idea of the many dimensions of women's empowerment. The inclusion of multiple dimensions of empowerment is meant to reveal how a woman may be empowered in one aspect, say decision-making but disempowered in another such as views on violence against women or sexual roles.

### **Analysis**

#### **Bivariate distribution**

We used cross tabulation of the outcome variables (3 domains) in turn together with the predictor variables (background characteristics) to obtain the frequency and percentages that revealed the behaviour of each of the variables used in the study.

#### **Multivariate regression**

To examine the relationship that exist between the outcome and the predictor variables, we computed multiple regression taking both the outcome and predictor variables as continuous variables. Regression equation used in this study is of the form:

$$WED_{DWR} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + \beta_9 X_9 + \beta_{10} X_{10} + e$$

Where

$WED_{DWR}$  = women's empowerment domain in decision making (D), wife beating (W) and refusing sexual intercourse (R).

$X_1$ = women's age                       $X_4$ = couple's age gap                       $X_7$  = couple's education gap  
 $X_2$ = age at marriage                       $X_5$ = women's education                       $X_8$ = wealth status  
 $X_3$ = age at 1<sup>st</sup> birth                       $X_6$ = partner's education                       $X_9$ = place of residence  
 $X_{10}$ = parity,  $X_{11}$ = work status and e = error term.

The regression equation can also be written as

$$WED_{DWR} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{women's age} + \beta_2 \text{age at marriage} + \beta_3 \text{age at 1st birth} + \beta_4 \text{age gap} + \beta_5 \text{women's educational} \\ + \beta_6 \text{partner's level of educational} + \beta_7 \text{education gap} + \beta_8 \text{wealth status} + \beta_9 \text{place of residence} \\ + \beta_{10} \text{parity} + \beta_{11} \text{work status} + e$$

### III. Results And Discussions

#### Women's decision making ability

The relationship between decision-making ability of women in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh together with their background characteristics were examined on a frequency distribution obtained by computing a cross-tabulation and the results are given in Table 1 (Appendix). The result showed that decision making ability of women in all four dimensions increases as their age, age at marriage and age at 1st birth increase in both study area and shows a significant association as revealed by results in Table 1. However, Women with age and education gap less than or equal to 5 recorded high percentage participation in household decision-making in Nigeria, and in Uttar Pradesh (India), women with age gap greater than 5 and education gap less or equal to 5 have higher percentage participation.

Furthermore, the impact of education cannot be overlooked in examining women's household decision-making ability, the multivariate descriptive statistics results in Table 1 showed that the level of education of both women and their partners were significantly related to their participation in household decision-making. Additionally, women with knowledge gap of less or equal to 5 years with their spouse have a slightly greater percentage of participation in all the four dimensions of household decision making in both study areas.

Wealth status and place of residence were also found to be significantly associated with women's participation in decision-making in both areas under study, however in Nigeria, women in the wealthy status tends to participate more in household decision, while in Uttar Pradesh, women in the middle status participate more in household decisions. In both study areas, women living in urban residence were observed to have a greater percentage of participation in household decision making as shown in the results in Table 1.

Results obtained on women parity revealed that their percentage participation in household decision making increases as their parity level increases in Uttar Pradesh, while it is the reverse case in Nigeria, where decision making decreases with increase in parity.

Working status of women is statistically significant to their participation in decision making as revealed by the results in Table 1 (Appendix). Working women tends to have slightly high percentage participation in household decision making in both study areas.

Figure 1 is a graphical representation of women's participation in four decision-making areas in the household. It can be observed from the graph that in Nigeria less than 50% of women participate in making decisions about their own health care and on making large purchases, more than 50% participate in making decisions on purchases for daily household needs as well as on visits to families or relative. The graph also revealed that more than 50% of the women interviewed participated in each of the four dimensions of decision making in Uttar Pradesh. However, less than 50% of the women in both areas participate in making all the four decisions.

Figure 1: Women's Participation in Four Household Decision Making in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh (India).



Table 2 present the results of multivariate regression analysis examined the impact of the various socio economic and background characteristics selected on women's participation in four household decision making variables, in which decision making is the dependent variable. The  $\beta$ -values are the regression coefficient which tells us more about the relationship existing between the predictor variables (background characteristics) and the dependent variable (women's household decision making). Positive value of  $\beta$  means that for every 1-unit increase in the predictor variable, the dependent variable will increase by the  $\beta$  coefficient value. The values of  $\beta$  for constant means that even without considering women's background characteristics, their participation in household decision making is 1.212 and 2.801 in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh. From Table 2, the  $\beta$  coefficient is observed to be negative for age at 1<sup>st</sup> birth, couple's age gap, partner's education and parity in Nigeria. In Uttar Pradesh on the other side, negative coefficients of  $\beta$  were seen in age at 1<sup>st</sup> birth, partners' education and place of residence. This means that for every 1-unit increase in each of the predictor variables, there is a decrease in women's participation in household decision making by the values of the  $\beta$  coefficient. However, positive  $\beta$ -coefficients depicts that positive relationship exist between the predictor and dependent variable in such a way that a unit increase in the predictor variable increases decision making ability of women (dependent variable).

Each  $\beta$  -value has an associated standard error indicating to what extent these values would vary across different samples and are used to determine whether or not the  $\beta$  value is significantly different from zero. Standard error is an important indicator that can be used to assess the precision of the prediction. Smaller values of standard errors are better because it indicates that the observations are closer to the fitted regression line. The larger the standard error of the coefficient estimate, the less precise the measurement of the coefficient.

Beta column gives the standardized regression coefficients when all variables are express in standardized (z-score) form, which makes the coefficient more comparable. From Table 2, we observe from Beta coefficients for Nigerian sample that as respondent's age, age at marriage, education level and wealth status increases, women's participation in decision making also increases. Furthermore, as age at 1<sup>st</sup> birth, partner's education level and parity increases, decision making decreases. In addition, women who live in urban regions and who were working at the time of the survey participate more in decision making. However, the Uttar Pradesh sample revealed that increase in women's age, age at marriage, education wealth status and parity tends to increase women's participation in decision making. While increase in women's age at first birth, partner's education and place of residence decreases their decision making.

Table 2: Results of multivariate Regression Analysis for women's participation in Household Decision Making in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh(India)

Variables	Nigeria			Uttar Pradesh(India)		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	1.212	0.201		2.801	.277	
Respondent age	0.032	0.004	0.142***	0.051	0.004	0.249***
Age at 1st marriage	0.012	0.006	0.034*	0.032	0.015	0.061**
Age at 1st birth	-0.007	0.007	-0.018 <sup>+</sup>	-0.046	0.015	-0.092*
Couple's age gap	-0.021	0.003	-0.078***	0.011	0.008	0.023 <sup>+</sup>
Respondent education	0.278	0.031	0.111***	0.194	0.048	0.081***
partner's education	-0.066	0.027	-0.028**	-0.006	0.004	-0.021 <sup>+</sup>
Wealth status	0.153	0.016	0.114***	0.015	0.030	0.011 <sup>+</sup>
place of residence	0.144	0.040	0.042***	-0.973	0.068	-0.289***
Parity	-0.030	0.012	-0.041**	0.089	0.021	0.090***
Respondent working status	0.634	0.042	0.155***	0.407	0.068	0.094***

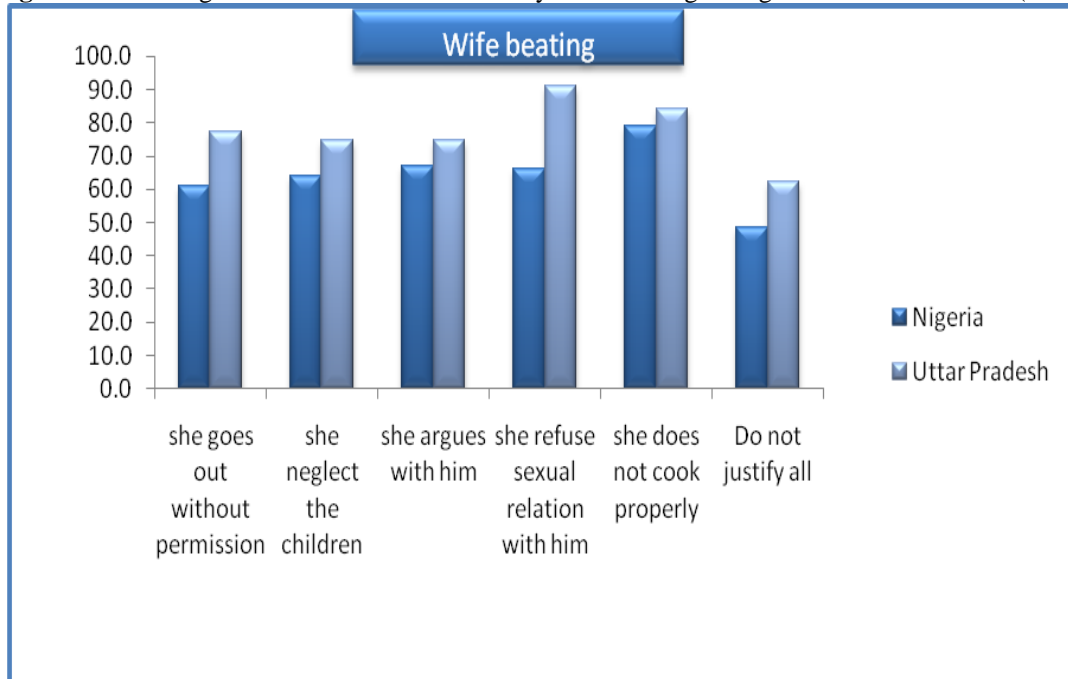
\*\*\* p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05; <sup>+</sup>p < 0.1; Dependent variable: Women's Decision making ability (DM)

**Women's Attitudes towards Wife beating.**

In addition to the decision making domain of empowerment discussed above, we also examine the general attitudes of women towards their opinion about wife beating by husbands, we made use of five variables in the area of women's perception to gender-role norms that justifies men's control over women. Table 3(Appendix) presents results on the percentage of women who do not justify wife beating in five areas. It is evident that as women increase in age, they do not justify wife beating, however in Nigeria, the proportion of women who do not justify wife beating in all the five areas is more in the older age group (35-49) years, while in UP, it is more in the middle age group (25-34) years. These relationships are significant only in Nigeria. Similarly, women with age at marriage 25-34 years tends not to justify wife beating more in Nigeria, in UP, women with age at marriage 35-49 years. Women with age difference less or equal to 5 years with their husbands have a greater percentage of not justifying wife beating in both study population. Education level of both couples has a significant relationship with women's perception of gender-roles (wife beating) where women with secondary or higher education and education gap less than 5 years do not justify wife beating. The results also revealed that in Nigeria, women in the rich wealth status have high proportion not to justify wife beating and in Uttar Pradesh, it is the middle status women who have high proportion of not justifying wife beating. Place of residence, parity and work status were seen to be significantly related to women's perception to violence (wife beating) in the study areas. Urban women, women with parity 3-5 and working women have higher proportion of disagreeing wife beating in Nigeria, but in Uttar Pradesh, women having lower parity (0-2) have greater percentage of disagreeing wife beating as presented in Table 3 (Appendix)

Figure 2 gives a representation of all the five variables of wife beating. It can be clearly observed that non-justification of wife beating in all the situations given were high among the Uttar Pradesh women than Nigeria as illustrated by the bar graphs; however it is observed on a general note that more than 60% of women do not justify wife beating for any given reason in both study areas. Lack of women justifying wife beating is high for the reason of not cooking properly in Nigeria but high for reason of refusing sexual relation with spouse.

**Figure 2:** Percentage of Women who do not Justify Wife Beating in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh (India)



**Table 4** presents the multivariate regression results for the relationship between women's background characteristics and their attitudes towards justifying wife beating. It can be observed from the output in Table 4 that  $\beta$ -coefficients for respondent's age, age at marriage, age at 1<sup>st</sup> birth, education, and wealth status are positive while others negative. This shows that a positive relationship exist between these variables and women's justification to wife beating. That is to say for every one year/step increase in women's age, age at marriage, education and wealth status, the percentage of women not justifying wife beating will be increased by the respective  $\beta$  values when all other variables are kept constant.

In other to compare the different variables used to predict wife beating and to know the level of contribution of each of these variables to women justifying wife beating, we examine the beta coefficients. These coefficients revealed that in both study areas, wealth status followed by women's level of education

contributes more in explaining the outcome variable (i.e. wife beating). While women's age (Uttar Pradesh), age at 1<sup>st</sup> birth, couple's age gap, partner's level of education and work status of women has no any significant contribution in explaining wife beating. As women's age, age at marriage, education and wealth increases, they tends to disagree more on wife beating in both study areas, however this relationship is significant except for women's age in Uttar Pradesh. On the other hand, the Nigerian sample shows that age gap and partner's level of education have an inverse relationship with wife beating which depicts that an increase in couple's age gap as well as partner's level of education tends to decrease women's level of disagreement with wife beating. Nevertheless in Uttar Pradesh, as women's age at 1<sup>st</sup> birth, partner's level of education, place of residence and parity increases, their level of disagreeing to wife beating decreases by the individual coefficients presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Multivariate Regression Analysis Results for Women's Attitudes Towards Wife Beating in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh**

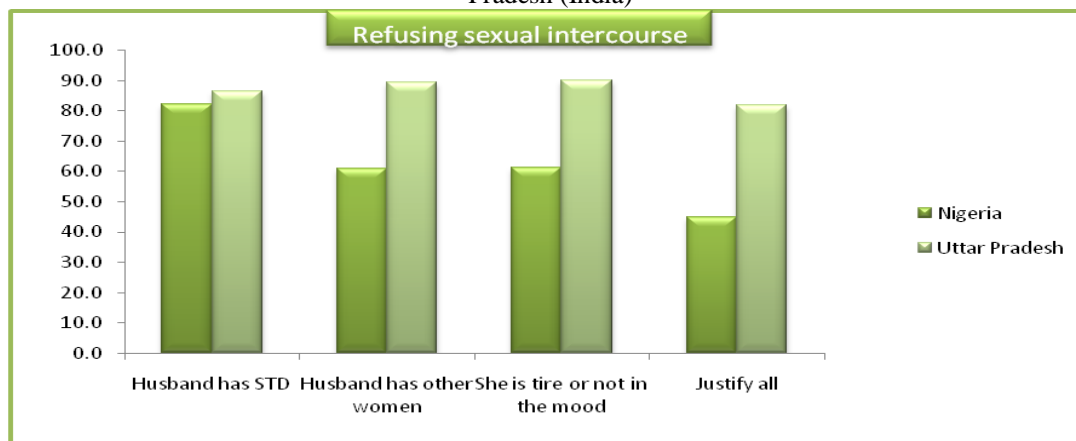
Characteristics	Nigeria			Uttar Pradesh (India)		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	β	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	2.296	0.159		3.712	0.232	
Respondent age	0.021	0.004	0.093***	0.002	0.004	0.014 <sup>+</sup>
Age at 1st marriage	0.016	0.007	0.044*	0.033	0.012	0.081**
Age at 1st birth	0.006	0.007	0.015 <sup>+</sup>	-0.004	0.013	-0.010 <sup>+</sup>
Couple's age gap	-0.003	0.003	-0.012 <sup>+</sup>	0.011	0.006	0.028 <sup>+</sup>
Respondent education	0.260	0.032	0.102***	0.159	0.040	0.085***
partner's education	-0.035	0.028	-0.014 <sup>+</sup>	-0.005	0.004	-0.024 <sup>+</sup>
Wealth status	0.241	0.017	0.175***	0.159	0.025	0.149***
place of residence	-0.154	0.041	-0.043***	-0.408	0.057	-0.154***
Parity	-0.055	0.012	-0.073***	-0.059	0.017	-0.075**
Respondent working status	-0.071	0.043	-0.017 <sup>+</sup>	0.100	0.057	0.029 <sup>+</sup>

\*\*\* p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05; <sup>+</sup>p < 0.1; Dependent variable: Wife beating (WB)

**Refusing sexual intercourse**

To measure women's perception on whether it is justified to refuse sexual intercourse with their husbands under particular condition, we examined the percentage responses of women in the three situations (reasons) in relation to the selected background variables and the results obtained are presented in Table 5 (Appendix). The results showed that the percentage responses regarding refusing sexual intercourse are generally high (more than 50%) across the study area for all the given reasons, though difference in the proportions is slightly small across each variable. It was also revealed that a significant relationship exist between women's background characteristics and their ability to refuse sexual intercourse with their husband based on the three given situations with the exception of couple's education gap which is not significant in both areas. The figure below shows the distribution of women Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh according to their percentage response in the three reasons for refusing wife beating. The chart revealed that more than 60% currently married women interviewed during the survey justify that it is right for women to refuse sexual intercourse with their husbands based on all the given situations in both study areas. This result depicts that only one-third women in the study area do not agree that it is right for women to refuse a sexual relationship with their spouse in any of the stated reasons. In the light of that, it can be clearly observed that the percentage of refusal is more in Uttar Pradesh than in Nigeria as presented in the chart below.

**Figure 3: Graph Showing Percentage of Women who Justify Refusal of Sexual Intercourse in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh (India)**



**Table 6** shows results of multivariate regression for women's attitudes towards refusing sexual intercourse with their background characteristics. The results revealed that among the background characteristics of women considered in the study, only respondent education, wealth status and place of residence has a significant relationship with women's refusal of sexual intercourse in Nigeria, and in Uttar Pradesh, only respondent and partner's education and place of residence showed significance. In Nigeria, wealth status contributes more to women's justifying refusing sexual intercourse for the given reasons, and in UP women's education contributes more.

Characteristics	Nigeria			Uttar Pradesh (India)		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	1.906	0.089		2.763	0.128	
Respondent age	0.002	0.002	0.020 <sup>+</sup>	0.003	0.002	0.040 <sup>+</sup>
Age at 1st marriage	0.002	0.004	0.010 <sup>+</sup>	0.007	0.007	0.031 <sup>+</sup>
Age at 1st birth	-0.003	0.004	-0.014 <sup>+</sup>	-0.005	0.007	-0.024 <sup>+</sup>
Couple's age gap	-0.002	0.002	-0.016 <sup>+</sup>	-0.002	0.004	-0.012 <sup>+</sup>
Respondent education	0.040	0.018	0.029*	0.068	0.022	0.070**
partner's education	0.016	0.016	0.012 <sup>+</sup>	0.083	0.025	0.066**
Wealth status	0.044	0.009	0.060***	0.012	0.014	0.021 <sup>+</sup>
place of residence	0.064	0.023	0.034**	-0.101	0.032	-0.073**
Parity	-0.006	0.007	-0.015 <sup>+</sup>	-0.021	0.010	-0.051 <sup>+</sup>
Respondent working status	0.069	0.024	0.031**	0.028	0.031	0.016 <sup>+</sup>

\*\*\* p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05; <sup>+</sup>p < 0.1; Dependent variable: Refusing sexual intercourse (RS)

### Women's empowerment level

Result presented in Table 7 is from a multivariate regression for women's empowerment level with background characteristics. Empowerment level of women was used as the outcome variable whiles women's background characteristics as predictor variables. Women's empowerment level was measured on a 14 pointer scores (from 0 to 13) comprising of all indicators of the three domains of empowerment used, where higher score implies higher level of empowerment and lower score implies lower level of empowerment. It can be observed from Table 7 that almost all the background characteristics considered have significant relationship with level of women's empowerment except age at 1<sup>st</sup> birth and place of residence for Nigeria and age gap and parity for Uttar Pradesh. Wealth status and women's age contributes more to women's level of empowerment in Nigeria and UP respectively as clearly observed from the beta coefficients.

Characteristics	Nigeria			Uttar Pradesh(India)		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	4.97	0.251		9.276	0.379	
Respondent age	0.055	0.006	0.151***	0.057	0.006	0.198***
Age at 1st marriage	0.031	0.011	0.051**	0.071	0.02	0.098***
Age at 1st birth	-0.004	0.012	-0.006 <sup>+</sup>	-0.055	0.021	-0.079**
Couple's age gap	-0.026	0.004	-0.060***	0.019	0.01	0.029 <sup>+</sup>
Respondent education	0.136	0.015	0.116***	0.118	0.021	0.117***
partner's education	-0.027	0.013	-0.024*	-0.013	0.006	-0.035*
Wealth status	0.437	0.026	0.198***	0.186	0.04	0.099***
place of residence	0.055	0.066	0.01 <sup>+</sup>	-1.482	0.094	-0.315***
Parity	-0.091	0.019	-0.076***	0.009	0.028	0.007 <sup>+</sup>
Respondent working status	0.632	0.067	0.094***	0.535	0.093	0.088***

\*\*\* p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05; <sup>+</sup>p < 0.1; Dependent variable: Women's Empowerment Level (WE)

## IV. Conclusion

The study was focused on three domains of women's empowerment in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh (India). The domains were used to examine the level of women's empowerment in the two study areas about their socio-economic and demographic characteristics. In both areas, currently married women of reproductive age (15-49) years were considered and secondary data was used for analysis in the study that was obtained from two national surveys conducted in Nigeria (NDHS-2008) and India (NFHS-2005/06). The study revealed that most of the women's background characteristics have significant relationship with the three selected domains and women's empowerment levels in the study areas, some are positively related and some are negatively related as revealed by the multivariate regression results of B coefficient. However, the Beta coefficients revealed that some of the variables contribute more to the domain, some less, and a few have no any contribution. Findings from the study revealed that empowerment level through women's participation in



decision-making is more in Nigeria than in UP, while empowerment level through not justifying wife beating and justifying refusing sexual intercourse is observed to be more in UP in relation to Nigeria.

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### Appendix

Table A: Description of domains, coding and measurements of variables used to examine the level of empowerment in the study				
No	Domain	Indicator	Coding	Measurement Scale
1	Decision Making	Final say on: - own health care - making major household purchases - purchases for daily household needs - visit to family/relatives	1=Respondent alone 2=Respondent and Husband/partner 3=Respondent and other person 4=Husband/partner alone 5=Someone else 6=Others	1,2,3 = participate = 1 4,5,6 = No participation = 0  1 = yes 0 = No
2.	Domestic violence against women index	Wife beating if she: - goes out without telling husband - neglect the children - argues with him - refuses sexual relation with him - burns food/do not cook properly	0=No 1=Yes	0 = wife beating not justified (No) 1 = wife beating is justified (yes)
3.	Attitude towards refusing sexual Intercourse with husband	Refusing sexual intercourse if: - husband has sexually transmitted disease (STD) - she knows that he has other women - she is tired or not in the mood	0=No 1=Yes	0 = Does not agree women refusal (No) 1 = Supports refusal (Yes)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 Domains</b>	<b>13 Indicators</b>		
<b>Socio economic and demographic characteristics</b>				
1	Age of respondent, age at marriage and age at first birth	This are the age in years of currently married women interviewed during the survey.	1 = 15-19 years 2 = 20-24 years 3 = 25-29 years 4 = 30-34 years 5 = 35-39 years 6 = 40-44 years 7 = 45-49 years	1 = 15-24 years 2 = 25-34 years 3 = 35-49 years
2	Couple's age gap	This is the difference between the age of the respondents with their partners	Husband's current age – wife's current age	1 <= 5 years 2 = 5 years and above
3	Couple's education gap.	This is the difference between the years of education of the respondents with their partners	Husband's highest year of education – wife's highest year of education	1 <= 5 years or less 2 = More than 5 years.
4	Level of education	Educational status of the respondent and partner	0 = No education 1 = Primary 2 = Secondary 3 = Higher	0 = No education 1 = Primary education 2 = Secondary/higher
5	Wealth status	This is the economic status of the respondent and partner	1 = Poorest 2 = Poor 3 = Middle 4 = Richer 5 = Richest	1 = Poor 2 = Middle 3 = Rich
6	Parity	This is the total number of children ever born		1 = 0 - 2 children 2 = 3 - 5 3 = 5+
7	Place of residence	This is the location of where the respondent live	1 = Urban 2 Rural	1 = Urban 2 = Rural.
8	Partner's age	This is the respondent' partner's age		1 = < 40 years 2 = 40 years and above

<b>Table B: Distribution of four indicators of household decision making by socio economic and demographic characteristics of currently married women.</b>								
<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Nigeria</b>				<b>Uttar Pradesh</b>			
	Own health care	Large purchase	Purchase for daily needs	Visit to family or relatives	Own health care	Large purchase	Purchase for daily needs	Visit to family or relatives
<b>Respondent age</b>								
15-24 years	31.2	26.5	36.1	43.4	47.1	31.8	33.5	32.1
25-34 years	45.5	39.4	51.7	56.7	67.4	55.6	58.8	50.9
35-49 years	49.4	42.7	55.8	60.2	74.7	67.3	70	64.6
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>414.6***</b>	<b>352.9***</b>	<b>479.5***</b>	<b>361.1***</b>	<b>470.7***</b>	<b>764.1***</b>	<b>860.1***</b>	<b>627.1***</b>
<b>Age at marriage</b>								
15-32years	47.4	41	53.8	58.9	63	51.7	54.3	48.8
33-49 years	62.2	52.9	70	71.2	68.7	57.5	60	55.7
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>189.2***</b>	<b>128.6***</b>	<b>232.9***</b>	<b>138.6***</b>	<b>5.9**</b>	<b>3.0*</b>	<b>2.9*</b>	<b>2.6+</b>
<b>Age at 1st birth</b>								
15-24 years	43.4	37.3	49.4	55	66.4	55.4	58.1	52.5
25-34 years	57.1	49.3	64.3	66.9	54.7	42.3	44.4	41.2
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>168.8***</b>	<b>128.6***</b>	<b>190.3***</b>	<b>122.9***</b>	<b>71.4***</b>	<b>76.1***</b>	<b>90.5***</b>	<b>60.0***</b>
<b>Couples' age gap</b>								
<= 5 years	53.1	45.5	60.2	64.2	62.9	51.4	53.9	48.9
> 5 years	40	34.7	45.6	51.4	66.9	56.1	59.1	53.5
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>284.2***</b>	<b>232.0***</b>	<b>373.2***</b>	<b>262.7***</b>	<b>6.1**</b>	<b>10.3**</b>	<b>12.7***</b>	<b>6.4**</b>
<b>Respondent's education</b>								
No education	26.5	23.2	30.2	38.9	65.5	54.8	57.8	51.7
Primary	52.8	45.9	61.4	64.4	61.1	49.4	54.2	49.3
Secondary/higher	63.1	53.7	70.7	72.5	62.5	50	50.8	47.4
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>2401.9**</b>	<b>1916.5**</b>	<b>3126.2***</b>	<b>2053.8***</b>	<b>3.4+</b>	<b>3.7+</b>	<b>0.7+</b>	<b>7.666*</b>
<b>Partner's education</b>								
No education	26.9	23.2	29.7	38.9	69.4	56.9	62	53.8
Primary	49.4	43.4	57.8	61.4	67.9	57.5	60.8	53.1
Secondary/higher	57.4	49.2	65.3	67.6	60.8	50	51.2	48
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>1694.5**</b>	<b>1448.9**</b>	<b>2468.2***</b>	<b>1571.3***</b>	<b>31.8***</b>	<b>16.7***</b>	<b>43.4***</b>	<b>4.1+</b>
<b>Couple's education gap</b>								
5 years	60.2	51.6	68.8	70.6	62	50.1	52.1	48
5+	28.4	24.9	32	40.6	65.5	54.6	57.6	51.7
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>2205.3**</b>	<b>1783.9**</b>	<b>3064.3***</b>	<b>1968.6***</b>	<b>0.2+</b>	<b>0.0+</b>	<b>0.01+</b>	<b>4.3*</b>
<b>Wealth status</b>								
Poor	29.6	26.6	34.3	41.8	64.4	54	55.8	51.2
Middle	45.1	40.4	52.2	58.2	61.6	49.7	52.7	46
Rich	59.4	49.4	66.4	68.8	65.5	53.3	57	51.6
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>365.1***</b>	<b>187.9***</b>	<b>320.5***</b>	<b>225.0***</b>	<b>41.7***</b>	<b>53.4***</b>	<b>89.3***</b>	<b>118.6***</b>
<b>Place of residence</b>								
Urban	54.4	45.1	59.7	63.4	73.2	63.1	67.6	58.9
Rural	38.7	34.2	45	51	61.4	49.8	51.8	47.7
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>365.1***</b>	<b>187.9***</b>	<b>320.5***</b>	<b>225.0***</b>	<b>210.7***</b>	<b>325.1***</b>	<b>416.7***</b>	<b>385.9***</b>
<b>Parity</b>								
0 - 2	42.3	36.1	47.4	53.2	51.2	37.3	39	36.5
0 - 5	47.3	40.5	53.9	58.6	70.4	60.4	62.9	56.7
> 5	40.3	35.6	46.6	52.2	74.7	65.3	69.7	61.7
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>54.5***</b>	<b>36.3***</b>	<b>74.6***</b>	<b>54.3***</b>	<b>282.0***</b>	<b>378.4***</b>	<b>440.5***</b>	<b>257.7***</b>
<b>Respondent work status</b>								
Not employed	29.1	26.4	32.3	38.8	61.6	50.3	59.3	53.8
Employed	50.6	43.2	58.1	62.9	70.9	59.9	59.9	60.3
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>870.1***</b>	<b>621.7***</b>	<b>1273.6***</b>	<b>1058.2***</b>	<b>59.0***</b>	<b>60.8***</b>	<b>28.3***</b>	<b>47.9***</b>

\*\*\*P&lt;0.0001; \*\* P&lt;0.01; \* P&lt;0.05; +p&lt;0.1

Table C: Distribution of five reasons to justify wife beating by socio economic and demographic characteristics of currently married women in Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh (India)										
Characteristics	Nigeria					Uttar Pradesh (India)				
	GO WP	NC	AWH	RSR	DCP	GOWP	NC	AWH	RSR	DCP
<b>Respondent age</b>	Frequency (percent)									
15-24 years	57.6	62.5	63.6	63.5	77.9	74.8	73	73.8	90	82.8
25-34 years	66.2	68.9	71.7	71.6	83.6	74	71.5	73.1	90.4	81.9
35-49 years	67	68.4	70.7	72.1	83.3	73.8	71.3	72.1	89.5	81
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>107.4*</b> **	<b>42.3**</b> *	<b>84.6***</b>	<b>117.2***</b>	<b>67.8***</b>	<b>1.2+</b>	<b>0.1+</b>	<b>0.2+</b>	<b>3.3+</b>	<b>0.9+</b>
<b>Age at marriage</b>										
15-32 years	66	68	70.4	72.3	83	74.2	71.9	73.4	90.5	82.4
33-49 years	78.5	78.7	81.8	86.1	90.3	74.1	71.6	71.6	87.9	79.9
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>104.7*</b> **	<b>77.2**</b> *	<b>88.3***</b>	<b>158.0***</b>	<b>61.2***</b>	<b>3.6*</b>	<b>3.7*</b>	<b>3.7*</b>	<b>13.1***</b>	<b>13.4**</b> *
<b>Age at 1st birth</b>										
15-32 years	63.3	66.2	68.7	69.2	81.7	73.9	71.3	72.6	90.3	81.7
33-49 years	76.8	76.7	80.1	83.7	83.9	75.6	74	74.7	88.5	82.5
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>142.2*</b> **	<b>86.9**</b> *	<b>100.5**</b> *	<b>183.1***</b>	<b>61.5***</b>	<b>3.0*</b>	<b>7.2*</b>	<b>7.4*</b>	<b>1.4+</b>	<b>1.4+</b>
<b>Couples' age gap</b>										
5 years	68	69.2	72.7	74.1	83.6	73.8	71.7	73.2	90	81.7
5+	63.2	66.5	68.2	68.7	81.6	75	72.1	72.4	89.8	82.2
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>39.9**</b> *	<b>13.7**</b> *	<b>38.1***</b>	<b>40.7***</b>	<b>7.4**</b>	<b>0.5+</b>	<b>0.2+</b>	<b>0.2+</b>	<b>0.7+</b>	<b>0.2+</b>
<b>Respondent's education</b>										
No education	56.9	62.8	62.3	59	77.8	71.2	69.3	69	88.3	79
Primary	62.2	63	67	71.8	79.9	73.5	70.6	74.4	90.7	83.3
Secondary/higher	77.6	77	81.9	85.9	90.3	81.8	78.6	82.1	93.8	88.1
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>649.9*</b> **	<b>333.1*</b> **	<b>588.9**</b> *	<b>1146.9***</b>	<b>367.6***</b>	<b>219.6*</b> **	<b>193.6*</b> **	<b>252.5*</b> **	<b>107.4***</b>	<b>181.6*</b> **
<b>Partner's education</b>										
No education	57.4	63.1	63	59.9	78.1	71.3	69.6	68.6	87.4	79.3
Primary	61.8	65	67.6	71.3	80.8	71.1	69.7	71.3	88.9	80.3
Secondary/higher	73.2	72.6	77	80	87	76.2	73.4	75.5	91.5	83.4
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>421.3*</b> **	<b>137.9*</b> **	<b>319.2**</b> *	<b>661.1***</b>	<b>196.3***</b>	<b>71.5**</b> *	<b>50.2**</b> *	<b>78.2**</b> *	<b>49.9***</b>	<b>42.4**</b> *
<b>Couple's education gap</b>										
<5 years	72.6	72.3	76.8	81.4	87	79.2	76.1	79.7	92.9	86.7
>=5 years	57.1	62.6	62.7	59.9	77.8	71.3	69.4	69.1	88.3	70
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>456.7*</b> **	<b>145.9*</b> **	<b>351.9**</b> *	<b>962.5***</b>	<b>224.5***</b>	<b>157.8*</b> **	<b>134.6*</b> **	<b>200.0*</b> **	<b>85.6***</b>	<b>150.1*</b> **
<b>Wealth status</b>										
Poor	56.7	62	62.2	6	77.1	70.1	68.1	66.9	87.4	77.6
Middle	57.6	61.6	65.5	59.8	78.8	71.4	69.2	71.9	88.9	80.2
Rich	77.1	76.8	79.9	66.5	89.8	82.3	79.3	83.1	94.6	89.4
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>384.6*</b> **	<b>191.6*</b> **	<b>291.5**</b> *	<b>358.2***</b>	<b>186.1***</b>	<b>326.1*</b> **	<b>261.8*</b> **	<b>281.3*</b> **	<b>164.7***</b>	<b>281.2*</b> **
<b>Place of residence</b>										

Urban	75.9	75.3	79.3	80.7	88.4	85.1	81.1	85.7	95.3	90.1
Rural	59.3	63.5	80.7	65.4	79.3	70.8	68.9	69	88.3	79.3
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>690.1*</b> **	<b>341.1*</b> **	<b>498.9**</b> *	<b>1008.5***</b>	<b>415.9***</b>	<b>336.7*</b> **	<b>258.1*</b> **	<b>231.6*</b> **	<b>142.0***</b>	<b>252.9*</b> **
<b>Parity</b>										
0 - 2	66.1	69.1	71	72.3	82.9	76.5	74.8	75.7	91.4	83.8
3-5	67.1	68.9	71.5	71.8	83.5	74	71.3	72.5	89.8	81.7
> 5	59	62.6	64.7	65.1	79.6	70.2	67.9	69.2	87.8	78.7
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>84.5**</b> *	<b>70.3**</b> *	<b>69.2***</b>	<b>61.9***</b>	<b>29.8***</b>	<b>68.6**</b> *	<b>70.2**</b> *	<b>56.8**</b> *	<b>39.7***</b>	<b>48.3**</b> *
<b>Respondent work status</b>										
Not employed	61.8	66.7	67.9	65.9	79	75.3	72.8	73.9	89.8	82.8
Employed	65.8	67.4	70.2	72.2	83.7	71	69.1	70.5	90.3	79.1
<b>Chi square value</b>	<b>10.7**</b>	<b>0.8+</b>	<b>1.5+</b>	<b>27.6***</b>	<b>46.5***</b>	<b>23.9**</b> *	<b>24.2**</b> *	<b>13.9**</b> *	<b>0.1+</b>	<b>19.6**</b> *

\*\*\*P<0.001; \*\* P<0.01; \* P<0.05; +p<0.1; GWP=Goes out without permission; NC = Neglect the children; AWH = Argues with husband; RSR = Refuse sexual relation; DCP = Does not cook properly

Characteristics	Nigeria			Uttar Pradesh (India)		
	Husband has STD	Husband has other women	She is tire or not in the mood	Husband has STD	Husband has other women	She is tire or not in the mood
<b>Respondent's age</b>						
15-24 years	80.3	61.9	55.4	81.9	86.5	87.4
25-34 years	83.6	62.8	64	84.4	88.5	89.2
35-49 years	83.8	61.6	65	84.9	87.2	88.5
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>36.8***</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>145.8***</b>	<b>21.1***</b>	<b>8.4*</b>	<b>9.9**</b>
<b>Age at marriage</b>						
15-32 years	83.5	63.1	65.6	84.3	88	89
33-49 years	84	62.9	74.2	82.1	85.7	86.6
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>0.1+</b>	<b>0.5+</b>	<b>79.2***</b>	<b>13.4***</b>	<b>16.8***</b>	<b>19.9***</b>
<b>Age at 1st birth</b>						
15-32 years	62.8	62.7	83.3	84.1	87.8	88.9
33-49 years	62.3	71.3	82.8	82.9	86.1	86.4
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>82.9***</b>	<b>0.9+</b>	<b>2.9*</b>	<b>6.9**</b>
<b>Couples' age gap</b>						
<= 5 years	83.3	63.3	68.1	85	88.3	89.1
> 5 years	82.8	61.7	60.2	81.5	85.7	87.1
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>5.3*</b>	<b>101.5***</b>	<b>19.818<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>11.052<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>10.550<sup>a</sup></b>
<b>Respondent's education</b>						
No education	79.9	59.3	50.2	81.4	85.8	86.9
Primary	85	63	68.7	84.7	87.6	86.9
Secondary/higher	86.1	65.9	76.3	89.6	91.7	92.8
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>156.9***</b>	<b>102.1***</b>	<b>1419.4***</b>	<b>141.1***</b>	<b>95.5***</b>	<b>95.0***</b>
<b>Partner's education</b>						
No education	78.8	58.7	49.7	77.8	82.2	84.4
Primary	84.3	62.5	66.1	83.8	87.9	87.8
Secondary/higher	86.4	65.5	73.2	87	90.1	90.7
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>167.7***</b>	<b>103.6***</b>	<b>1395.1***</b>	<b>131.4***</b>	<b>117.9***</b>	<b>94.7***</b>
<b>Couple's education gap</b>						
<5 years	86	65.2	74.5	88.1	90.5	91
>=5 years	80.1	59.4	51.2	81.4	85.8	86.9
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>40.0***</b>	<b>26.2***</b>	<b>203.5***</b>	<b>118.5***</b>	<b>79.7***</b>	<b>61.7***</b>
<b>Wealth status</b>						

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Poor	79.6	58.8	51.6	80.4	85.7	86.4
middle	83.4	64	64.5	85.5	87.8	88.9
Rich	86.7	65.1	74	88.2	90.1	91.3
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>158.7***</b>	<b>91.2***</b>	<b>1031.4***</b>	<b>188.1***</b>	<b>99.5***</b>	<b>110.2***</b>
<b>Place of residence</b>						
urban	85	64.6	69.2	88.1	89.5	91
rural	82	61	59.2	82.6	86.9	87.6
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>40.0***</b>	<b>26.2***</b>	<b>203.5***</b>	<b>171.4***</b>	<b>86.1***</b>	<b>98.6***</b>
<b>Parity</b>						
0 - 2	82.1	62	62.3	83.2	87.6	88.7
0 -5	83.6	62.5	64.9	85.9	89	89.6
> 5	83.2	61.9	59.1	81.2	84.5	85.8
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>10.1*</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>38.2***</b>	<b>26.9***</b>	<b>32.9***</b>	<b>27.1***</b>
<b>Respondent work status</b>						
Not working	80.7	59.4	54.4	83.7	86.7	88
working	84.1	63.6	66.4	84.2	89.4	89.5
<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>67.4***</b>	<b>62.6***</b>	<b>370.1***</b>	<b>0.1+</b>	<b>4.1*</b>	<b>1.1+</b>
***P<0.0001; ** P<0.01; * P<0.05; +p<0.1						