Perceptions of homemakers on women empowerment through educational advancement and involvement

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Abstract

Women empowerment has been global advocacy that aims to encourage women. Among these minorities, homemakers are essential groups that need to be empowered. As such, this study investigated the social empowerment of homemakers and specifically explored their perceptions of women empowerment and education. A total of 5 homemakers with a degree from Baguio City were interviewed. An in-depth interview was conducted to gather detailed information about the participants' experiences. Then the lecturer analyzed four documents to triangulate the data. The lecturer identified themes among the participants' answers. The methods conducted determined that homemakers have different perceptions of women empowerment, which revolves around notions of women empowerment such as contribution to society, recognizing one's power within, and the ability to control one's life.

Regarding their perception of education, there are two categories: an aid in logically doing parenting jobs and secondary to family obligations. It has been concluded that homemakers view education as beneficial for their well-being and role fulfillment within their families. Homemakers considered resuming their education as they deemed it beneficial for their psychological and social empowerment. However, a concentrated idea of irrelevance, lack of time, and self-doubts have been directed to their hesitations to continue formal education.

Keywords: homemakers; women empowerment; education

1. Introduction

Women are entitled to an equal education (Wollstonecraft, 1796). More than 200 years ago, Mary Wollstonecraft advocated the idea that women, to become independent and have a sense of worth, had to be educated (Delphi Classics, 2016). Her ideas sparked a movement that would seek to liberate women from domestic affairs. Indeed, her ideas slowly brought women out of their traditional role into all aspects of human society, politics, economics, education, and science. It seems that empowerment was equated with removing women from the home. This movement has somehow marginalized those who remained at home. It created a divide between those who have chosen a career path and those who chose to remain at home.

Coming full circle with the idea of another feminist, one hundred years later, Simone de Beauvoir said that education is one method for women to gain independence. Undoubtedly, women could only overcome oppression by employing their intellect.

Women empowerment has been the goal of most groups of people. United Nations Population Fund (2021) views women empowerment as the key to addressing different social issues. During the 1900s, women were starting to be empowered, enabling them to have household participation, educational opportunities, job opportunities, and, most importantly, a political voice. The women empowerment era has opened avenues for women to confidently advocate for themselves to achieve the best version they can be.

From this, women started to decide on their career paths, family plans freely, and educational plans, and such events enabled women to decide on being working women or homemakers (Goldin, 2006). From the perspective of women empowerment, there is no difference between working and non-working women. Accordingly, its main goal is to empower women inside and outside; therefore, it does not matter if a woman is working or not as long as she feels empowered by what she does.

Goldin (2006) states that in the late 1900s, women started to be part of the labor force, and eventually, in the 21st century, they have been creating names in their chosen fields of work. The continuous success of women in the labor force has created a notion within society that women who were able to establish themselves in their field are better, more powerful, and more accomplished. Different programs, advocacies, and studies have focused on empowering women in careerwomen.

Career women are the most supported and hyped-up women, but society and other organizations failed to empower every woman. Homemakers, for example, continue to experience negative comments about their decision to be full-time mothers (Alam et al., 2013). It has been viewed that their decision is not empowering women and is irrelevant to achieving social change. Moreover, self-improvement made by this population is often disregarded because people think that they do not need educational improvements, psychological empowerment, and Social Empowerment (Mandal, 2013). This is due to the public's perception that their contributions to family and society are unimportant or, if not undervalued.

However, society should note that these homemakers decide in the best interest of their family economically, socially, individually, and even politically. Establishing a family that is beneficial to society is enough contribution that they should be considered empowered women too. Mandal (2013) argues that the types of women empowerment, educational and psychological empowerment are the types that should be focused on for all women.

In the Philippines, the Philippine Commission on Women is the agency that looks into the welfare of all Filipino women from all walks of life. The "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Plan 2019-2025" seeks to implement the Magna Carta for Women strategically. The enactment of the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710) has been regarded nationally and internationally as a significant milestone in the Empowerment of Filipino women. The law provides and entrenches women's rights, particularly among marginalized, underserved, and discriminated (Commission on Population and Development, n.d.).

This gender and development program is anchored on international laws such as the Conventions on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) - an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Women empowerment through education

Education is the most pervasive and enduring experience carried through one's entire life. Britannica (2021) defined education as a discipline focused on learning in a school-like environment. Moreover, it is a social institution that teaches basic academic knowledge, skills, and cultural norms essential for social interactions and development (Lumen Learning, 2021).

Education is seen and proven to be one of the main ways to empower women. Basic education provides knowledge and science that is crucial for the development of an individual. It does not only provide knowledge and skills to improve health and livelihoods, but it empowers women to gain their rightful place in society and the development process (Chandra & Sharma, 2004).

According to Watson (2020), education can boost self-confidence, self-esteem and make girls self-sufficient. It further gives them a way to amplify their intellectual, political, social, and religious consciousness. It also hinders the growth of bigotry, narrow-mindedness, superstition, intolerance, and so on.

Moreover, education enables a woman to make decisions, accept responsibilities at her home and outer world, and understand her rights to equal treatment like a man in this nation's society (Bhonde, Patil & Ajbani, 2019).

Sundaram, Sekar, and Suburraj (2014) conducted a study that aims to determine the impact of education on women's empowerment; it was revealed that education qualification has positively affected the respondents' level of women's empowerment.

Another study investigated the effect of education on women empowerment; Murtaza (2012) specifically studied the effect of higher education on women empowerment. The research revealed that women who finished higher education had increased awareness of independent decision-making, economic independence, social participation, political involvement, and abuse. Such areas where they had increased awareness were components of women empowerment as

discussed by several scholars; as such, it proves that education increases women's empowerment.

Afroz and Sharma (2014) conducted a similar study but situated in their locality; it was concluded that women who achieved higher education were more empowered. Accordingly, they had enhanced status within the family and community, increased confidence, boosted self-esteem, advocated their rights, increased self-efficacy, reduced dependency, enhanced mobility, opened career opportunities, and created better upbringing for their children.

Kalakoti (2021) also studied women's Empowerment through higher education, but she studied it from a sociological perspective. The study revealed that educated women were more likely to shape educated children as beneficial to society. In addition, educated women were participative in social advocacies and economic occurrences, thus enhancing society.

Engida (2021) discussed the three-dimensional role of education for women's Empowerment. Such dimensions are personal Empowerment, relational Empowerment, and Social Empowerment. The author states that education is an essential prerequisite for any person. A constitutional right for it helps the person minimize inequality and plays an important role in human development that influences the overall growth of the social economy. The author believes that women's empowerment is the key mechanism for achieving gender equality. Education is one of the most effective ways of encouraging women to engage fully in the growth process with the awareness, skills, and self-confidence available.

In the Philippine context, Reyes & Valencia (2018) conducted research that aims to study the pedagogy of transformative education applied to a course in Women Studies in one of the Teacher Education Institutions based in Manila, Philippines. It investigated how various action research projects of students in Women Studies were able to develop lifelong learning skills that led to the Empowerment of women in the community. These lifelong learning skills women acquire include acquiring a new mindset, the strength of character, sharing one's knowledge, having a new disposition in life, taking care of one's body, and building self-confidence, patience, and resiliency. On the other hand, the action research conducted enabled the students to understand gender issues and women empowerment, self-knowledge, and application of theories and concepts on Women Studies to real-life situations. Through various intervention programs, women felt empowered due to the skills and knowledge they have acquired in the course, understanding themselves, and responding to adversities. On the other hand, the students were also transformed and empowered in implementing the programs, making them realize that classroom learning is different from actual community exposure and experiences. In this regard, transformative education and learning support the idea that learners can adjust their thinking by thinking critically and relating new knowledge to their own life experiences.

Mantuhac (2020) wrote a paper that aims to explore the Degree of Empowerment among women volunteers in the Hope Day Care Center (HDCC) in the informal relocation site in Southville 8, Cabuyao, Laguna, by determining the role of HDCC in promoting women empowerment at the same time know how HDCC teachers become empowered women leaders in the community identifying women empowerment measured in the Familial, Socio-cultural, Psychological and Political dimensions. The findings revealed that HDCC plays a vital role in promoting women's empowerment, providing opportunities for simple women to become more confident among themselves and become trusted community leaders through training, ongoing formation programs, and experiences while teaching.

The results showed that women volunteers have become a source of pride among the family members and are treated with more respect and equal dignity in terms of the familial dimension. In the socio-cultural dimension, the women feel the value of Empowerment and the need to share it because of its positive impact on them and the community. In the psychological dimension, women shared their dreams for a better future and acknowledged the values of unity, cooperation, role modeling, and wholehearted service as the key to achieving this. The volunteers believed that they possessed the necessary skills to become good leaders in the political dimension. Women volunteers are empowered through the HDCC program. Despite attaining lesser than the required college education, they have been empowered to teach basic education, are more self-confident, have a voice in decision-making, and are independent-minded.

Education is indeed a tool to achieve women's empowerment. The mentioned studies proved that education provided women the knowledge to be politically, socially, and economically aware and the confidence and self-esteem under psychological Empowerment.

2.2 Empowerment among homemakers

McClain (2019) examined the use of internet access by homemakers. The study results suggest that homemakers are still excluded from access to information via the Internet due to domestic issues known to them. The study finds that if

only homemakers are given equal opportunity to access information, they will learn more about their rights, be informed, and be motivated to participate in community activities, leading them to surpass their role as homemakers.

An inquiry in 2018 intended to discover the pursuit of full-time mothers in the aspects of career, family, and intellectual endeavors (Dalhag et al., 2018). The researchers revealed the status of full-time mothers in society and how this status improved through individual and collective accomplishments in social change. In addition, it also tackled insights about full-time mothers and how they empowered themselves and others to improve their skills and well-being.

The study aimed to provide a different program for full-time mothers to help them significantly. The researchers believed that knowing the significance of the study can lead them to fully understand the pursuits of full-time mothers. Based on the survey conducted, the full-time mothers in their family pursuits were likely to pursue particular goals to strengthen each family member. For career pursuits, they are moderately interested in participating in the labor force and achieving the demands of society. And for intellectual purposes, they are somewhat interested in pursuing certain goals to accomplish their intellectual curiosity. Full-time mothers in the Philippines are well known for their family-centeredness, focusing their time on strengthening their family, so full-time mothers do not focus on the said pursuits (career and intellectual).

There is a need for women to be supported, especially in spousal support. According to Hawley (2012), women are still more likely to be in charge of the house chores and parenting, but co-parenting and collaboration with the spouse can lead to greater success in running the household. Moreover, spousal support directed to mothers is proven to enhance a mother's ability to handle stress after childbirth and strengthen the mother-child relationship (Eslahi, Barmadi & Alimoradi, 2020).

The above-related literature presented issues confronting women in the past and the current era, including movements and programs that have addressed these issues that eventually led to the rise of women's empowerment.

3. Methods

The study utilized a qualitative-descriptive research design and conducted online interviews to gather data on the perceptions of homemakers regarding women empowerment and education. Purposive sampling was used to select five participants who were homemakers from Baguio City and had college degrees but were not formally employed. The researcher also analyzed published journals from Google Scholar with specific tags related to women empowerment, non-working women/homemakers, and education. In-depth interviews were conducted via Messenger call, and guide questions were recorded for transcription. Ethical considerations were taken into account, including obtaining informed consent from the participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and providing the right to withdraw from the study. Data analysis involved deductive analysis of transcriptions and document analysis, identifying similarities and differences, and developing categories and themes. The data collected was used solely for research purposes.

4. Results and Discussions

After analyzing the gathered data, interesting concepts surfaced like 'women empowerment and education describing the perceptions of women empowerment and education.

4.1 Perceptions of homemakers on women empowerment

4.1.1 Women empowerment is contributing to society beyond monetary

Women empowerment is global advocacy that aims to empower all women across locations, ages, races, and careers. The idea of women's empowerment started during the 1900s when women began to gain participation, voices, confidence, and opportunities. As such, at present, it has gained so much attention that women already have different notions on the idea of women empowerment. From the series of interviews, respondent B mentioned: "Women Empowerment, maybe, is when we can say that we also have a purpose or contribution. Being married does not mean women just have to stay at home. Even if women are not working, they can still contribute to the community, even if it's not monetary."

The idea of women joining the workforce was just established in the late 1900s when they were allowed to be

educated and earn for themselves. After establishing themselves in their specific fields, the idea of women joining the workforce has significantly turned. Today community contribution lies in economic perspective and political participation. However, homemakers view women's Empowerment as something more than their economic contributions to society or categorized as economic Empowerment. Mandal (2016) defines this as when women gain more control over resources such as material and financial matters.

However, their economic mobility is more than what women's Empowerment wants. Having a purpose is one of the aims of women's empowerment, where women get to find their purpose without receiving societal backlash.

4.1.2 Women empowerment recognizes one's power within

From another perspective, homemakers viewed women's empowerment as discovering and expressing themselves. Respondent A explained that "Empowerment is when you can show your capabilities and talents. How do I explain this... when you can show yourself your abilities and talents, it can be related to self-improvement."
Crasto (2016) states that Women's Empowerment is a process through which women recognize their inherent worth and power within. This statement embodies the psychological category of women empowerment, where Empowerment lies within the individual views and improvement one can achieve. In the report, having the confidence to show your capabilities and talents is a sign of self-improvement. This coincides with Mandal's (2016) definition of psychological Empowerment, saying that giving women the chance to perform beyond societal roles establishes control, self-confidence, and self-worth among themselves.

Several studies have discussed identity crises once a woman transitions to motherhood and chooses to be a stay-at-home mom. Green (2020) has mentioned that being a homemaker slowly removed her from her other identity as a mother. She focused on activities that would define her as being more than a mother. Similarly, Norman (2021) recognized that being a mother is something she loves; however, missing the days you once had or never had made you question your decisions. According to her, finding a sense of individuality is rooted in establishing self-confidence.

However, these feelings of self-doubt and questioning slowly vanish when they experience motivational events. In this case, homemakers view their children as a spark of light and hope in the darkest days of their self-conflict. Respondent D stated that "When I know that my child is studying well, I feel empowered. When they don't fight with me. When the bills are paid, that's okay." While respondent A stated that "For me right now, just by fulfilling my tasks and seeing that my children are okay, seeing that they are accomplishing their school work, that's enough for me."

As mothers, they are anchoring fulfillment from their children who could grow and be best under their supervision. Despite having doubts about their decisions, their children remain the reminder that they could create individuals who are undoubtedly in their best capacity from all those events.

Another thing they mentioned is appreciation. A homemaker's job is tricky with all the chores and responsibilities to fulfill. In their opinion, appreciation from their children and spouses is enough to keep them going and fulfilling these roles. Respondent B mentioned that "appreciation, that is what lightens up everything. Their acceptance, simple thank you's. Those are what inspire me."

Different scholars have discussed the positive effect of appreciation on an individual. Munshi (2021) has explained that expressing gratitude to people increases their morale and emotional well-being, in connection with homemakers' statements-- their emotional well-being is uplifted with simple appreciation from their loved ones.

Women empowerment is an advocacy that aims to improve yourself to help you cope properly and be confident with yourself. From the emotional factor, it is evident that homemakers have been having problems with their psychological well-being; as such, there is an underlying problem that society needs to address. In this case, homemakers need psychological empowerment; such activities involve situations that enable them to understand themselves, accept themselves, and be confident of whom they are as accomplished mothers.

4.1.3 *Ability to control one's life*

Similarly, one of the analyzed documents mentioned that "Most authors defined empowerment as the ability of women to take control of their own life, self-confidence" (Alam et al., 2013). The statements above powerfully reveal a comprehensive notion of women's empowerment among homemakers. This contrasts with the findings of a previous study saying that women's empowerment is often equated to single things, like when Empowerment was defined as equating

money, voice, laws, and men's defeat (Porter, 2013).

Generally, women's empowerment notion among homemakers is more on social Empowerment where they contribute something to society, economic Empowerment, which focuses on monetary value, and psychological empowerment, which comprises their self-confidence, self-efficiency, and well-being. This is consistent with the response of respondents B and C, respectively:
"Women Empowerment, maybe, is when we can say that we also have a purpose or contribution. Being married does not mean women just have to stay at home. Even if women are not working, they can still contribute to the community, even if it's not monetary."
"At this point, we can say that slowly women are gaining their voice and rights in all aspects of life be it politically, socially, medical field, or in anything. With this comes of course gender equality, where both sexes have equal rights and women have the same voice as men."

Women empowerment has been aimed at by politicians, educators, and even private organizations. This globally and publicly mentioned aim has been rooted in women's minds, from which they have slowly recognized the importance and impacts of the idea. Respondent D revealed that "Women empowerment is important since many women are not self-confident. Like me am not self-confident; when I think about working or engaging in a business, I always think that I am not capable. I have low self-esteem. That's why women empowerment is important."

Women empowerment is powerful advocacy that encourages women to be the best version of themselves. In the context of homemakers, the respondent mentioned having self-doubts in her capacity in engaging business. She views women's Empowerment as a tool to increase her confidence to engage in activities she wants. The respondent also mentioned that low self-esteem and women empowerment enables her to survive through her inner doubts. These statements are evidence that amplifies several definitions of women empowerment from previous studies. For one, Meenakshi (2004) defined women empowerment as a means whereby women can build themselves to uplift their independence, improve their self-reliance, and promote their right to make choices. World Vision Australia (2021) also sees women empowerment as an advocacy that encourages women to recognize their capacity to settle their own choices, acknowledge their sense of self-worth, and their ability to lead social development for themselves.

Moreover, women's Empowerment in the social context is viewed as a powerful tool in molding women, children, and families who contribute best to society. According to the document analysis, "It has been noted that women's active participation at all levels of decision-making is important to achieve equality and peace in the family as well as the country." This statement from a study was rooted in the strong influence of women in the growth of children, decisions of families, and even creating social change for the community. The advanced setting in the present recognized several inequalities, problems, and concerns that could be solved through women's empowerment. In this manner, it was mentioned that empowered women create empowered children and families, which creates a strong positive mindset for the future of society.

Women empowerment has been going on for years. Despite this, there are still numerous instances where women encounter difficulty within society. The goal of the advocacy was to encourage women to be the best version of themselves, along with changing the language of gender norms in society. Therefore, assessing the status of women empowerment among homemakers helps scholars determine the gaps they have to fill. Accordingly, homemakers view the status of women empowerment as respondent E said, "What is happening today is that women are told to stay at home just because they are women. That is not right. Instead, there should be fairness, and the treatment should be equal."

One of the participants mentioned the need to have fairness in the treatment of women and men. In several cases, women are told different statements concerning their life decisions, one of which is their mobility. In the participant's account, she mentioned how women are told what to do, present among different households. The treatment of women and men should be equal so that the set of expectations and roles should not rely on the gender of the individual. Women empowerment is present to advocate and create an environment where men and women can freely decide on their paths without being confined to gender norms set by society.

Regarding the unfair treatment, several documents have noticed the state of women in third world countries, stating that, "Despite the importance of women's participation in family decision-making, in most of the third world countries, women's decision-making power is limited to cultural settings."

The Philippines, being a third-world country, has cultural beliefs that women should have limited participation in family decision-making. In an article by Van der Gaag (2017), it was mentioned that most Filipino women think that a

woman's role is limited to staying home and taking care of the family. In the culture of Filipinos, the woman shoulders all the things involved in housekeeping. Accordingly, several factors affect their family decisions, such as education and financial contributions. With the first statement and the second, despite women's empowerment, women are still treated differently. This coincides with United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (2021) mentioning that females are usually regarded as less important than boys, as manifested in unequal treatment regarding access to education and gender-biased duties. In the same study, it was revealed how young women are still married off just for dowries.

Moreover, according to Schieder and Gould (2016), women also receive inequitable salaries for the same work. They are more inclined to face barriers, especially in the legal aspect that affects their opportunities at work.

In a study by Gorman and Kmec (2007), it was mentioned that women have to work harder than men to prove their capabilities. Yellen (2020) noted that women have participated in educational sectors and the labor force; however, it has been a great challenge. It is essential to recognize that men and women should be given the same starting point in deciding about society and family matters.

On a positive note, other studies have noticed the presence of rights in social and political settings. Respondent C stated: "At this point, we can say that slowly women are gaining their voice and rights in all aspects of life be it politically, socially, medical field, or in anything. Of course, with this comes gender equality, where both sexes have equal rights, and women have the same voice as men." This can be supported by research in the United States finding that the employment rate of women rose dramatically over the past decade. Additionally, the women's to men's pay ratio increased from 0.61 to 0.83 between 1970 and 2018 (England, Levine, & Mishel, 2020).

Engida (2021) emphasized that women's empowerment is the critical mechanism for achieving gender equality. Hence, women's Empowerment has provided opportunities for women to have rights in different fields in society. It has been evident that women are slowly making their mark in politics, medicine, and other notable areas. From this, it shows how the overall message of women empowerment was able to open doors and upgrade the image of women in society.

From another perspective, homemakers lack confidence in their capacity to provide and spend for their families. Respondent D mentioned regrets saying that "I have many regrets. I reached this age when I could not help my husband financially. Then I want to buy things for myself, but I cannot buy them since I am not working." Gay (2018) has mentioned similar statements questioning her economic contributions to the family. Accordingly, she felt guilty and selfish about focusing on herself while her husband worked. Thus, she felt the need to busy herself taking good care of the children. Similarly, a participant mentioned feelings of unfulfillment since they weren't focused on career building during their prime years.

 In connection with this, they are also questioning their contributions to the family, choices during their bachelor's, and even comparing themselves with other women whose indifferent paths with them. Respondent D had the following sentiments:
"The thought of feeling unfulfilled because you are not working."
"Asking myself why did I even finish my studies if I will just remain a housewife."
"It's like you feel like you don't have any contribution."
"I came to a point wherein I felt like I had achieved nothing. I can see that I am left behind. Sometimes I also think about that. I sometimes feel demotivated, thinking, what if I worked?"

Homemakers are generally situated in their homes most of the time. From their given statements, they were circulating on factors present in their homes. The researcher could deduce two categories from these, namely family support and role expectations. Family support is needed to accomplish the role of a homemaker. Building and maintaining a family is collaborative work between the parents (husband and wife) and children. According to Hawley (2012), women are still more likely to be in charge of the house chores and parenting, but co-parenting and collaboration with the spouse can lead to greater success in running the household. Moreover, spousal support directed to mothers is proven to enhance a mother's ability to handle stress after childbirth and strengthen the mother-child relationship (Eslahi, Barmadi & Alimoradi, 2020). These homemakers have mentioned how their spouses' support helped them fulfill their roles effectively in decision-making within the family. Respondents D, A, and C respectively stated that "To fulfill your duties as a housewife, your husband should be supportive. The fact that I don't have a career makes matters more difficult, especially in the financial aspect, especially on bills and necessities. I don't have someone to help me, so the household chores make it more difficult. Emotionally and physically, you are tired."
"The extent to which one's partner is involved in paid employment, childcare, and household duties influence decisions."
"Support of the partner was an essential factor and led to the feeling that they were not alone, while a lack of partner support

led to feelings of stress. "

Role expectations are another set of factors that influence role fulfillment among homemakers. Role expectations at the domestic level include the responsibilities expected of a homemaker. The interviews revealed that role fulfillment gets challenging during a specific set of chores or a pile of tasks. Respondents E, B, and C respectively stated that:
"I think it is challenging when there are babies, if you have small children, it is really challenging. Sometimes, you do all the work. Your husband seems to think that you are just at home, sitting. Sometimes, he even gets mad."
"When the children need my help all at the same time, like when the older brother needs help, and the younger one needs help. Or when we need to pay their tuition fees simultaneously, including the scheduling of household chores. That's when I have difficulties."
"Of course, it is in our instinct to do what a mother or housewife must do. Even if we get stressed because of the chores, seeing that we completed everything we need to do makes us feel content at the end of the day."
"The authority of a mother in the household is different when it comes to decision-making, house repair, decors, cleanliness, etc. "
"Mothers are in charge so that there would be order in the household."

From the statements above, the roles of homemakers have been extensive within the household; they are juggling different chores a day and ensuring the well-being of every individual in the household. Based on the survey conducted by Dalhag et al. (2018), full-time mothers in their family pursuits were likely to pursue particular goals to strengthen each family member. However, career pursuits and intellectual pursuits are the least of their concerns. The factor that makes their tasks challenging is the work they have to accomplish within a day. Moreover, the homemaker learns not all techniques and responsibilities, and such difficulties arise.

Society has significantly influenced molding a person; they provide insights that create or destroy individuals. Khan (2019) suggested that homemakers are less empowered than working women. The interviews divided social factors into two subcategories: societal norms and economic contributions. According to document analysis, societal factors were considered to influence an individual's choices because, according to document analysis, "People want an identity that is validated by the external environment and feels authentic. In terms of societal expectations, previous research found that gendered beliefs about 'the proper thing to do' influence choices mothers make."

From this, it can be inferred that the societal expectations established by society have been a factor in decision-making for individuals, especially mothers in this context. Societal norms are expected for each individual to fulfill; generally, not following such norms has created a backlash from groups of people. Similar to Yellen's (2019) findings, homemakers have been victims of societal roles. As the number of working women increases, society expects all women to be career women, while homemakers then face comments about their intellectual capacity, self-confidence, self-efficacy, and other words unrelated to their choice of path. Women have been the minority continuously judged by society regarding their decisions, behavior, and attributes. As women empowerment arose, social norms for women have been a double standard. This is connected to Dalhag, Abillar, and Florida's (2019) conclusions describing the stay-at-home moms as women with no other jobs but mothering, tending households, and running errands. Although they recognize that women should be equal to men, society has also established impossible determinants. For example, respondent A has the following dilemma, "It is the general expectation that you have to continue your career as you're otherwise perceived as empty and boring, but that being too much into your career makes you a bad mother."

On the other hand, homemakers are tasked to decide their families' financial, educational, and even social aspects. From these, a subtopic on economic contributions has been recognized. This category is rooted in society accepting and slowly entrusting monetary decisions to females. For example, participant B mentioned their authority regarding budgeting, "When it comes to budgeting, I'm in charge. But for household matters, everyone can have an opinion." According to Galie & Farmworth (2019), women's participation in the household and economic decision-making determines women's Empowerment. From the participants, it can be observed that women are slowly provided the trust and power to decide for themselves and their families. Ibrahim and Alkire (2007) also determined women's household decision-making tasks as a duty uplifting women's empowerment. However, Hunt (2016) contrasts these claims by explaining that women's economic participation in the labor force does not automatically equate to women's empowerment. This can be true as it is only one of the many manifestations of women's empowerment.

Generally, homemakers are influenced by several factors in fulfilling their roles. It is important to recognize such factors since these factors affect the efficiency of homemakers. The mentioned factors are components of women empowerment, specifically psychological women Empowerment, decision-making, and Social Empowerment. These three are determinants of women's empowerment. The results could be a grounding in creating a study that aims to empower

women.

4.2 Perceptions of homemakers on education

Education, in general, has helped achieve a progressive society. It enabled communities to grow at different levels; thus, providing its people a better quality of life. In a sense, education is also deemed helpful for women's empowerment and homemakers.

4.2.1 An aid in logically doing parenting jobs

These interviewees were all women who could accomplish a college degree. They were asked if their previous education has been useful to their present situation. According to respondents A and C: "To be honest, I cannot say if I was able to apply my previous education or not. I do not know if it helped. But I think there is a benefit, especially in Industrial Engineering which needs time management. Your daily activities must be organized. In engineering, there is the technical aspect. In a way, I was still able to apply like in the house, you need to practice time management, especially with the kids."

"I think it has benefits because I can still help when someone asks me about something. I can also teach my children. If I didn't study before, I can't help my child with his studies. By helping others, I'm able to use my previous education."

They have viewed that the technicalities of their primary education were quite unhelpful since they weren't able to apply what they learned in a supposed specialized work. However, in the long run, they have noticed that their prior learning in basic education and bachelor's have enabled them to help their children in their studies. This is aligned with the findings of Kalakoti (2021), concluding that educated women were more likely to shape educated children. Moreover, beyond the intellectual level, they realized that their formal education had created life skills that helped them in their roles as a mother. This is also true that education can make women self-sufficient it gives them a way to amplify their intellectual, political, and social skills. To add, Engida (2021) says that education is one of the most productive means to encourage women to be fully involved with processing and improving their skills, knowledge, and self-assurance.

4.2.2 Possibility of engaging in further education

In terms of engaging in formal education again, they viewed education as empowering. According to respondent B, self-satisfaction is one benefit she may get from engaging herself in further education, as reflected in her answer, "Maybe the self-satisfaction. I can't say that they will see me differently, but I think that my kids and my husband will be proud of me." This was supported by respondent C when she said, "I can see that those women who graduated from college seem to have more impact or they can carry themselves differently from others."
"I think I will grow more if I can study. I have so much to learn just by being a mother and a spouse. There are so many things I want to learn, but there is no time anymore."

Homemakers viewed education as empowering on a personal level since it provides them self-confidence where they feel accomplished being able to study and their responsibilities as a mother. This is similar to the discoveries of Sundaram, Sekar, and Suburraj (2014), wherein it was revealed that education qualification has positively affected the level of women empowerment of the respondents. The finding also strengthens that education amplifies personal, relational, and social Empowerment (Engida, 2021). Furthermore, women who finished higher education had increased awareness of independent decision-making, economic independence, social participation, political involvement, and abuse, as Murtaza (2012) revealed.

Moreover, the interviewees view education as an effective method of bringing impact to society's perception. Women who have been receiving backlash with every decision they make find education as a chance to redefine themselves and improve to be the best version of themselves. As Chandra and Sharma (2004) mention, education does not only provide knowledge and skills to improve health and livelihoods, but it empowers women to gain their rightful place in society and the development process.

In addition, Kalakoti (2021) also concludes that educated women enhanced society through participating in social advocacies and economic occurrences.

4.2.3 Secondary to Family Obligations
The participants have already defined education as empowering and helpful to their children. With this in mind,

they were asked if they would try to resume their education if they were given the opportunity. Most of the participants were reluctant to consider the idea as respondents D and E thought:

"I don't think I can, especially now that I'm feeling the effects of aging in my body."

"Although I can't say for sure because I don't think about that."

"However, I think I'm too old for it."

"I want to learn, but there is no time anymore."

The participants' statements were circulating ideas that they cannot engage in formal education again since their bodies cannot handle it because of their age. Moreover, some view time as running out for them; thus, engaging in formal education may waste time. Contrary to the results of a national survey by Champlain College Online, revealed that 60% of U.S. adults between the ages of 23 to 55 have considered returning to school (Quinn, 2018). Reports in Australia also show an upward trend from 2015-2018 regarding the number of enrollees from the generation of baby boomers (Neale, 2017). From another perspective, a participant does not think of engaging in formal education again since she is content with having the support of her family.

Another consideration that these homemakers considered was their family. In line with this, the findings of Dalhag et al. (2018) say that full-time mothers in the Philippines are well known for their family-centeredness, focusing their time on strengthening their family, which is why full-time mothers do not centralize pursuits concerning educational advancements.

In another context, engaging with education at their age indeed needs support from the family. In the interview, respondent C mentioned that:

"It should be approved by your husband and your kids so that they can support and help you. At least if they know that you want to study again or do some training, they will also know that they cannot demand more from you as they did before. They cannot disturb, and request favors from you whenever they want".

Formal education is collaborative work that eats time; therefore, engaging in formal education again would be heavy for the family since the homemaker's time is divided. Another participant considered such a scenario thus, opting for an informal one. Respondent A stated, "I would opt for the education on basic life skills or the things I like doing today. Like learning about business skills. More on livelihood."

Homemakers are already reluctant to engage in formal education because of several considerations. The empowering effects of education are achievable without formal education; education can be beyond the four walls of a classroom or an institution.

5. Conclusions

Based on the study's findings, homemakers' perceptions of women's Empowerment and education are determinants and assessments of the current state of their Empowerment. The lecturer derived specific conclusions: homemakers' perception of women empowerment was clustered into three subcategories: contribution to the society beyond monetary, recognizing one's power within, and ability to control one's life. These categories concluded that homemakers view women's empowerment as self-improvement, leading them to be the best version of themselves, thus realizing the importance of advocacy. However, the findings also deduced that the state of women empowerment generally and among homemakers is not ideal and lacking.

Lastly, in terms of their perception of education, there are two categories: an aid in logically doing parenting jobs and secondary to family obligations. It has been concluded that homemakers view education as beneficial for their well-being and role fulfillment within their families. However, technicalities rooted in their primary education were deemed unhelpful. Moreover, homemakers considered resuming their education as they deemed it beneficial for their psychological and social Empowerment. However, a concentrated idea of irrelevance, lack of time, and self-doubts have been directed to their hesitations to continue formal education.

6. Recommendations

From the study's findings and conclusions, the perceptions of homemakers towards women empowerment and education have been revealed, along with the factors influencing their role fulfillment. The interviews have shown that women have low Empowerment within themselves, specifically within the psychological, economic, and decision-making perspectives.

Therefore, it is recommended for homemakers digest their inner doubts and slowly address such. Moreover, they

could engage in self-enhancing exercises such as literary activities, media involvements, and training in aspects that fascinate them. Enhancing their skills inclined to their interests will help them gain a sense of fulfillment, thereby increasing their feelings of Empowerment.

For spouses and children, it is recommended that they support and assist these homemakers in their responsibilities to ease up the levels of stress, doubts, and challenges within them.
For institutions focused on women empowerment, it is recommended to establish empowerment media and methods for non-working women or homemakers. In addition, it is also recommended for them to provide sets of activities that would support women who have difficulties within themselves.

For future researchers, it is recommended that they create a study investigating methods for Empowerment among non-working women/homemakers. Specifically, researchers can explore the current status of women's empowerment among different subjects, especially homemakers, and formulate a set of activities for the said goal of empowering women.

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