

DOES EMPLOYMENT EMPOWER WOMEN? AN ANALYSIS OF
EMPLOYMENT AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between women's empowerment and employment in India. The current rhetoric of women's "empowerment" in developing countries calls for greater participation and decision-making in the economic, political and social spheres. In the economic sphere, paid employment is seen as essential to women's empowerment. Research on the relationship between employment and empowerment often focuses on access to employment opportunities and working conditions at the societal level, and on a woman's control over resources and contribution to total family earnings in the household.

In Malhotra and Mather's (1997) analysis of the impact of education and work in women's decision-making in Sri Lanka, a combination of survey data, focus groups and life histories are used to test the relationship between employment and empowerment. They find that education and employment are important determinants of women's decision-making in terms of finances, but not in terms of household decisions related to social or organization matters. They conclude that research on the links between education and employment and empowerment must include broader measures of education and empowerment and incorporate a greater breadth of social, household and life course factors relevant to gender and family relations.

This study uses Demographic Health Survey (DHS) data from India to empirically analyze the link between labor force participation and women's empowerment at the individual level for ever-married women age 15-49. Employment is unpacked and includes occupation and a number of employment characteristics to demonstrate important differences in outcomes for women's empowerment across various aspects of what "working" consists of. This study asks the question, when does employment empower women and when does it not, and in what ways?

In this study empowerment is measured across four indicators: decision-making, freedom of movement, control over resources and views on violence against women. Ordered logit models are used to first assess the relationship between employment status and women's empowerment across the four empowerment indicators, and then to look at the association between various occupational classifications and empowerment. Subsequent models measure the relationship between employment and empowerment by looking at the interaction between occupation and who the respondent works for and then, in the fourth model specification, including women's contribution to total family income.

The results of this study suggest that working is important to empowerment and that women who work have a greater likelihood of higher empowerment than those women that do not, but that the strength of the relationship varies by empowerment indicator. The findings of this analysis also reveal that women in certain occupations have a greater likelihood for empowerment and that various employment characteristics are associated with some of the indicators of empowerment. The author concludes that looking deeper into the employment experience and considering a broader range of empowerment indicators is important to developing a better understanding of the complex relationship between employment and empowerment.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Brooke West was born in Selma, Alabama, but spent most of her childhood in Cleveland, Ohio. After graduating high school, she attended the College of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina with the intention of studying marine biology. After one and half years in Charleston she returned to Ohio to finish her Bachelors Degree at Cleveland State University.

At Cleveland State University, Brooke West took her first sociology course, Sociology of Gender, and was struck by the importance of the subject matter and by how interested she was in learning more about social theory and human interactions. She continued taking sociology courses, mostly in the areas of race, class and gender inequality, and decided to pursue graduate study in the field of sociology. At Cleveland State, Brooke West worked as a research assistant under the guidance of Dr. William Morgan on numerous projects and the opportunity to work on a longitudinal research project solidified Brooke's desires to continue in the field of sociology and to work on issues of inequality. In May 2002, Brooke graduated cum laud with a Bachelors Degree in Sociology and Philosophy. She was named the Department of Sociology student of the year and became of a member of Alpha Kappa Delta, the Sociological Honor Society.

In August 2002, Brooke entered the PhD program at the Cornell University Department of Sociology. She continued to study race, class and gender inequality, but expanded her interests to the international sphere and became particularly interested in women's inequality in the developing world.

In the summer of 2004, Brooke went to New Delhi, India to work as a visiting researcher at PRIA (Participatory Research for Asia) on issues of barriers to women's participation in local governance. Brooke continued to pursue research opportunities in international development and in the fall of 2005, spent the semester as Program

Intern at Women for Women International in Washington, DC, working with women and men in post-conflict countries to promote women's rights, equality and their participation in community reconstruction and development.

Brooke's research focuses mainly on issues of marginalization in developing countries, with a particular focus on gender inequality in access to important social, economic and health resources. Her recent work with the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS (CIRA) at the Yale School of Public Health has focused specifically HIV/AIDS prevention for sex workers and clients in India. Future work will continue to address issues of gender inequality, particularly in relation to women's reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.

This is dedicated to my father, Cliff West, who has supported me throughout my education and throughout my life. Thank you.

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INTRODUCTION

Research on women's status in developing countries reports widespread inequality between the genders. Inequality between women and men takes the form of economic inequality as well as differentials in education, health care, rights, access to a number of essential resources and differences in power in all spheres of life. In 1994, at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, development organizations agreed that women's empowerment is necessary for important development outcomes: "the empowerment and autonomy of women, and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status, constitute an important end in themselves and one that is essential for achieving sustainable development." Gender equality and women's empowerment is necessary for the improvement of women and men's well-being, for social justice, and for the achievement of development goals.

Women's empowerment is typically discussed in relation to political, social and economic empowerment, but the economic empowerment of women has received particular attention and is often cited as one of the most important ways to promote gender equality, reduce poverty and improve the well-being of not only women, but children and societies. Economic empowerment includes women's participation in economic activities as well as women's economic decision-making and power. Employment, specifically paid employment, is seen as the fundamental component of economic empowerment.

The assumption that there is a link between employment and women's empowerment, both in terms of economics and gender relations, is widely accepted and supported by NGOs, multi and bilateral organizations and by academics and development workers around the globe. A 1999 report by UNESCAP says the following:

Economic empowerment constitutes one of the fundamental building blocks in efforts towards the overall empowerment of women. Participation in formal economic activities on terms and conditions which reflect the productive capacity of women, and their control over their own incomes, are some of the important dimensions of economic empowerment...Access to earned income improves women's position within the household substantially, gives them greater control over the distribution of such earnings and household resources, and generally improves their status and strength in society as well as their own self-esteem. The ability to earn income from outside and to engage in activities other than household-oriented ones can lead to significant social change in the long run. Where women are generally denied the ownership of property and control over assets, the ability to earn outside income can become an important instrument for the transformation of gender relations and challenge many traditional modes of social and economic relations.

Despite the widespread support for the assumption that employment leads to women's empowerment, there is very little research that empirically tests this relationship and there is still a lot that we do not know about the link between employment and empowerment. This research empirically tests this assumption by looking deeper into the connections between various aspects of work and indicators of women's empowerment. This study asks the question, what implications does employment have for women's empowerment in India?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

What is Empowerment?

Definitions

Although the definition of empowerment is contested and the term is often used to cover any multitude of concepts, there are a few elements that are widely agreed upon. Most researchers agree that empowerment involves an element of control and choice in the context of power structures that exist in households, communities, nations and also globally. In the case of women's empowerment these power structures often refer to patriarchal systems of control that subordinate women. Most researchers also agree that empowerment is a process and therefore involves *changes* in existing power structures and a move from a state of disempowerment to empowerment. Finally, researchers agree that empowerment is multidimensional, occurring at different levels, and in different ways depending on individuals and communities and the environments in which they live.

The World Bank (2002) defines empowerment as the “expansion of the assets and capabilities [of individuals]...to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives.” Kabeer's (2001) popular definition adds a layer of complexity to the simple component of control and states that empowerment is “the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where the ability was previously denied to them.” According to Malhotra et al. (2002), Kabeer's conceptualization of empowerment is particularly relevant because it contains both the element of process and the elements of human agency and choice, with empowerment implying “choices made from the vantage point of real alternatives” and without “punishingly high costs.” Basu and Koolwal (2005) add that choice must extend to the ability to choose NOT to do something without fearing the consequences.

There is a heavy reliance in the empowerment literature on the concept of choice and agency. Alsop and Heinsohn's (2005) presentation of empowerment utilizes these essential concepts and broadens the definition of empowerment to agency and the opportunities that are available to women. They define empowerment as "a person's capacity to make effective choices; that is, as the capacity to transform choices into desired actions and outcomes." They go on to say that "the extent or degree to which a person is empowered is influenced by personal agency (the capacity to make purposive choice) and opportunity structure (the institutional context in which choice is made)." Agency is indicated by asset endowments (psychological, informational, organizational, material, social, financial or human), while opportunity structure includes things like the presence and operation of formal and informal institutions, including the laws, regulatory frameworks, and norms governing behavior. Degrees of empowerment are measured by existence of choice, the use of choice, and the achievement of choice.

A number of researchers have also expanded the concept of empowerment as a process to incorporate empowerment as a condition or as an outcome. In other words, empowerment is not just a process, but it is the state of being that results from the empowerment process. Dixon-Mueller's (1998) description of empowerment nicely sums up this viewpoint: "empowerment is both a group and an individual attribute; both a process (that of gaining power) and a condition (that of being empowered)." The author goes on to argue that empowerment is a state of being by discussing it in terms of consciousness: "the essence of empowerment is the development of individual and group consciousness of the opportunity and ability to act: consciousness (resulting from a process of 'conscientization') of the existence and sources of injustice; consciousness of an entitlement to fair and equal treatment and to the conditions necessary for survival, security, or social advancement; consciousness

of a capacity to confront, challenge and overcome social injustice wherever it occurs.” In this sense, empowerment is the process by which an individual or group overcomes their own ideas and the external barriers that oppress them (conscientization), and also the outcome of this process, being empowered (consciousness).

Other scholars present similar conceptualizations of empowerment noting the importance of both process and outcome. Batliwala (1995) says that “women’s empowerment is thus the process, and the outcome of the process, by which women gain greater control over material and intellectual resources, and challenge the ideology of patriarchy and the gender-based discrimination against women in all the institutions and structures of society”, and a report by CIDA (1999) emphasizes that “empowerment is about people—both men and women— taking control over their lives: setting their own agenda, gaining skills, increasing self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is both a process and an outcome.”

The last common component of most definitions of empowerment is that it is multi-faceted. This often refers to the ability of empowerment to cross both numerous domains and numerous dimensions, with domain referring to where empowerment occurs. For instance, according to the UN Population Information Network (1995) women's empowerment involves “their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.” This statement recognizes that empowerment needs to occur across many domains: in women’s own lives, in their homes and communities, in broader society and its structures, and in the national and international arena. In terms of the multiple dimensions of empowerment, Malhotra et al. (2002) point out that various empowerment frameworks identify a number of unique dimensions, suggesting that

empowerment must occur along economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political, and psychological lines.

The literature on women's empowerment suggests that empowerment involves choice and control, that it is a process and an outcome and that empowerment occurs across a number of domains and dimensions. Therefore, when thinking about empowerment, we must think of where it occurs and the dimension in which it occurs, we must consider the context in which decisions are made and the power structures being challenged, and we must look at the characteristics of the women or communities involved in the process. We must also be aware that empowerment can occur in more than one domain and more than one dimension at a time. We must think of empowerment as process, as the whole story, from the awareness of power structures that subordinate women, to the questioning of systems of control, to making active changes and asserting power, and to empowerment as an outcome, as a state of being.

Indicators of Empowerment

Women's household decision-making and freedom of movement are often used as indicators of women's empowerment. Before the word empowerment was used, women's autonomy, their independence, was often discussed as a goal for women's rights and equality in society. The ability to make decisions that affect one's life and the ability to move beyond the sphere of the home freely exemplify autonomy and were quickly adopted as basics to empowerment. Other aspects of women's lives have become important to empowerment as the concept has expanded to encompass power in a number of spheres and forms, and women's control over resources has become a particularly contested aspect of women's empowerment.

What then does women's control over resources do for women's empowerment? Some scholars, like Blumberg (2005), go so far as to say that

enhancing women's control over income and other key economic resources is a "magic potion" for gender equality, development and empowerment. By enhancing women's economic power in the home in terms of control over resources gender inequality can be reduced, self-confidence increases, women have a greater voice in the household, women can begin to have control over "life options" and they can have a greater influence in community affairs (Blumberg 2005). This debate is particularly important to the discussion of the links between employment and empowerment because the standard argument is that it is not enough to work and earn a wage, but rather it is *control* over those resources that matters (Kabeer 1997, Blumberg 2005). A woman may work, but if she has no say in how resources are managed or allocated in the household, she is unlikely to gain any control or power in the household.

Numerous examples of female workers suggest that the control over resources is closely intertwined with women's autonomy. Looking at female Bangladeshi workers, Kabeer (1997) found that access to earnings did not in itself serve as evidence of improvements in bargaining power in the home, but that women's work and wages allowed for the theoretical possibility, though not usually acted upon, of being able to support oneself and one's children if they left their husband and of being able to return to one's natal family as a contributing member (Kabeer 1995). This *possibility* of alternatives allowed for more autonomy and could increase women's ability to assert strategic choices.

Other researchers though find that control over resources may not actually matter that much to women's empowerment because control over resources does not necessarily translate into any real power or into changes in patriarchal control (Kibria 1995; Endeley 2001; Malhotra and Mather 1997). According to Kibria, control over resources is shaped by socioeconomic background and male kin's ability to provide for the family. Working class men are more likely to retain control over wages

because it affirms their ability to provide for their family and men in higher economic classes are more likely to hand over control over resources. But, this also demonstrates that they *could* provide for their family and that the woman's wages were not essential to the household. In either case, women's access to or even "control" over resources did not translate into woman's empowerment because women lacked any real control and were unable to challenge the male system of control in the household.

It is unclear whether or not controlling resources is a strong indicator of empowerment, but it does seem that it has the potential to be. While the extent of the control and the autonomy it allows are essential to determining how empowering financial control can be, it seems that even in its weaker forms, control over resources should be treated as an indicator of empowerment or at least as a first step towards creating more balanced relations in the home because it indicates some degree of autonomy. For this reason, control over resources is treated as indicator of empowerment in this study.

Employment and Empowerment

The Basic Argument

So why is employment supposed to lead to empowerment? The most common argument says that women's participation in income-generating activities will lead to women's empowerment because by having access to resources a woman can improve her bargaining position, thereby allowing for greater control over decisions and life choices. If a woman has income of her own, she presumably has a greater ability to take care of herself and is therefore less dependent on her husband or others for survival. Her ability to negotiate within the household should increase not only because she has more to offer the household, but also because she has an improved fallback position. Greater bargaining power in the household is seen as empowering because it affords a woman greater control over her and her family's life. Other

arguments suggest that working may contribute to empowerment because it allows women to participate in the public sphere, to interact with a wider network of individuals and because it can increase self-esteem or self-worth.

On the other end of the spectrum, there are arguments that say that working is not enough to empower women because the barriers that stand in the way of women's control over their lives and equality are just too great to be overcome by employment alone. Here, the point is that structural factors like poverty, and not choice, lead women into paid employment thereby limiting its potential for empowerment. On top of this, the job opportunities that are available to most women in India and other developing countries are limited. Both gender ideologies and women's lower education levels mean that the jobs available to most women require little skill, pay poorly, afford no security and involve poor working conditions. This, combined with the fact that participation in income-generating activities does not erase women's domestic responsibilities, suggests that most working women face a triple burden of domestic responsibilities, employment and the burden of ensuring their family's survival.

These arguments are quite simple, but the reality probably lies somewhere in the middle. While it does not appear to be the case that working is a ticket to empowerment, working does have the potential to increase women's autonomy and importance in the domestic sphere; however, the process by which employment could lead to empowerment is much more complex than the above arguments recognize and involves a number of important factors, both in terms of the conditions under which employment takes place and the type of empowerment that we are considering.

Employment Status and Empowerment

In the literature, there are some contradictions in findings with regard to even the simplest question: does being employed empower women? While some research

suggests that “paid employment has the potential to alter deeply embedded cultural norms” (Dutta 2000), other studies find that the simply being employed does not matter much without considering the conditions of employment. Studies with Bengali women in India and with poor women in Bangladesh report that paid work is empowering to women and that women who work are more likely to have decision-making in the home, control resources, have greater mobility and are better able to accumulate assets and secure their own well-being (Dutta 2000; Salway 2005).

However, even when there are positive impacts on empowerment and market activity affects women’s ability to influence resource allocation and domestic decision-making (Acharya and Bennett 1983), drastic changes in women’s empowerment as a result of employment are limited. In the case of the Bengali women in India, husbands still maintain the final say in major domestic decisions (Dutta 2002), and in Bangladesh, despite improvements in women’s empowerment from working, a number of structural barriers limit the extent of the affects of employment on empowerment (Salway 2005).

In this paper, it is argued that simply being employed is probably not enough to ensure women’s empowerment because working does not necessarily allow women to challenge the power structures that prevent their agency and full participation in society (Kabeer 1997; Kantor 2003; Sen 1999; Pearson 2004). Empowerment is also impeded because women’s employment is often survival-driven and does not affect changes in gender relations, women’s low earnings do not offer them entitlements to social protection, employment does not relieve the burden of domestic labor, it does not increase political participation and it does not lead to equal property rights (Pearson 2004; Baruah 2005). Despite these barriers, employment, under the right conditions, can be an important factor in the promotion of women’s empowerment.

How can employment be empowering? It is a matter of looking deeper at this complex connection and taking into consideration the process of employment, not only what drives a woman to enter the work force, but also what happens once she is there and to an even greater extent, what happens in the home as a result of this work and the introduction of her wages. This study tries to look at some of these elements to better understand the relationship between employment and empowerment. In addition to women's employment status, this study asks: what role does her occupation play in empowerment? How important is whom she works? Also, what is the relationship between empowerment and women's contribution to the total family earnings?

Demographics and Empowerment

Socio-demographic background could influence empowerment both directly, but also indirectly in its relation to employment opportunities, social status and expectations about proper gender roles. Studies find that the status of husbands and wives at marriage and the social context, in terms of family systems and household characteristics, are important to financial arrangements, decision-making power and to women's economic power overall (Frankenberg and Thomas 2001; Mason 1998). Younger women, less educated women, rural women, poor women and women of lower castes or classes are also less likely to be empowered.

Education may be one of the most important influences on women's employment and its link to empowerment because of its relation to life chances and outcomes. Among Sri Lankan women, education and employment are critical factors in financial domestic power, but they are not in social and organizational matters (Malhotra and Mather 1997). So while more educated and employed women may have a greater say in financial decisions, they do not necessarily have more say in other matters in the household.

Occupation and Empowerment

There is very little research on the connections between occupation and women's empowerment, but studies suggest that there is good reason to believe that a woman's occupation can play a role in empowerment outcomes. A woman's occupation may be important because occupations are associated with income, educational requirements and power within society. They can tell you something about the skills and credentials required to do the job, about the monetary rewards associated with such a position, about working conditions and about class position.

In India, women work in jobs from all occupational classifications, but they are largely concentrated in low-skill, low-income positions like agricultural, domestic work and unskilled manual labor. Very few women are working in higher prestige occupational categories and women are rarely in positions of authority in any employment sector. For those few women who have the education and the opportunity to work in non-manual position, they are often found in "feminized" occupations in the service industry, like nursing, teaching and social work (ILO 1998). As discussed earlier, occupation may be important to empowerment, not only in its links to caste and educational attainment, but also in illuminating working conditions, income and the societal prestige and power, or lack thereof, that goes along with working in one occupation relative to another.

Manufacturing jobs that are available to women are labor-intensive, poorly paid, often involve bad working conditions and offer no opportunities for advancement. According to a report by the ILO (1998), a "study of female and male factory workers in Indonesia found that women were half as likely to be permanent or regular workers, that women were much more likely to be hired on a daily basis, that twice as many women as men were required to do obligatory overtime, and that two-thirds did not receive maternity leave."

Agriculture workers may work on someone else's land for a wage or they may work on their own family's land. Working on someone else's land should allow for greater mobility, but women are still paid poorly, work very long hours, have no access to land rights and no control over the work that they do. Women working on their families' land face even more limitations: their mobility is constrained by working in such close proximity to the home and their work often remains unpaid. Overall, women in agricultural work are at a disadvantage relative to men because they work longer hours, they rarely own land, do not have access to financial or extensive services, and are less likely than men to have access to government-provided facilities under agricultural development programs (ILO (1998)).

While most of the jobs available to women are in agricultural work, most of the women who work in these positions are poor, are often uneducated and of course live in rural areas. These factors, in addition to the working conditions associated with agricultural labor can be important in determining a woman's likelihood of decision-making, mobility or her views on violence against women. Looking at occupation tells us not only about socio-demographic background, but also about the working conditions associated with the position, the opportunities that it affords, the status it may confer and the amount of authority associated with the position, and in this sense, should be considered when looking at the association between employment and women's empowerment.

Type of Employment and Empowerment

Proximity of a woman's work to her family and her home could be important in its role of letting women move out of the private and into the public sphere.

Women who work outside the home or for someone other than family may have a greater opportunity to interact in the public sphere and with non-family members than women who work for their family or in the home.

Working inside the home, like working for family, is usually seen as a barrier to empowerment because working in the home means that women remain under the control of male guardians and lack autonomy and mobility. According to Kantor (2002), “norms of female seclusion limit women's mobility in the public sphere, constraining their economic opportunities by limiting their choices of work location and their ability to interact in markets.” Looking at home-based garment workers in India, Kantor finds no connection between mobility and economic success, but argues that the mobility associated with work outside the home is important to economic outcomes and to women’s empowerment.

Part of the link between employment and empowerment can be understood by looking at employment characteristics like whom the respondent works for (Baruah 2004, Datta 2003, IFAD/OE 2000, Kantor 2002, Whitehead 1985). Women who carry out forms of production independent of male household members and in social relationships outside the family sphere of command and control are more likely to retain control over proceeds of their labor (Whitehead 1985), but many women in India work for their families and more and more women are self-employed.

An intervention for women in India reports that self-employment could be empowering for women because it “at least...allows women the possibility to have better working conditions, save on travel time, and be able to more effectively combine reproductive and productive roles”, but that it does not necessarily indicate women’s control over their labor. The evaluation noted “many women [in the intervention] may simply have gone from undertaking paid work outside the home to becoming unpaid family laborers (in male-managed enterprises)” (IFAD/OE 2000). While it is generally agreed upon that working for family limits women’s empowerment, there is still no real consensus in the role that self-employment can play in empowering women.

Financial Contribution and Empowerment

Women's wages may be a significant part of increasing women's empowerment by giving women a greater sense of control and value in their home. Women's wage contributions to their families can make them more valuable to the household and being able to control those wages could mean a greater say in decisions. This relationship between employment and women's empowerment, specifically, how much of her family's total earnings she contributes, is one aspect of women's participation in the workforce that most researchers agree is important to empowerment. The extent to which a family relies on the income of a woman can influence the power and control that the working woman has in her household because it increases her value in the household and it improves her fall back position by decreasing her dependence on male family members. If a woman contributes only a small share of her family's total income, the wages will not translate into a greater say in important decisions; however, if a woman contributes half or even all of her family's income, she may be able to assert herself more in her household and have a greater voice. Research on women's contribution to family earnings and empowerment show support for this positive relationship between larger contribution and increased likelihood for empowerment (Grasmuck and Espinal 2000; Hashemi et al. 1996; Schuler et al. 1996; Kabeer 1997).

Looking at women in Bangladesh and the relationship between domestic violence and women's contribution to family earnings, Schuler et al. (1996) found that women who achieved a redefinition of their roles and status in the household tended to be economically successful and/or whose incomes provided most of the family's earnings. In this case, women's contributions to their family's earnings, when significant, translated into increased empowerment in terms of a reduction in domestic violence against women.

Wages can make a difference to empowerment, despite the absence of any dramatic challenge to patriarchy, because earning a wage means that women are contributors and this means that they could be treated differently in their homes (Kabeer 1997). Women in Kabeer's study report that they felt "valued, loved and respected as a result of their hard work", although they did not speak of a direct relationship between earnings and claims that having expanded possibilities offered an improved fall-back position in the time of crisis and conflicts. Women said that they used their wages to secure a more central place in domestic relationships, to improve chances for children and to renegotiate terms of bad relationships. The wages earned "have helped transform the parameters within which women workers make their choices" and in this way have an empowering effect (Kabeer 1997). Overall, women's financial contributions to their families can increase empowerment by increasing their value to their family and by making women feel more valuable.

Empowerment Studies using DHS data

While the assumption that employment is linked to empowerment is widely accepted there is little empirical research that looks closely at this relationship. The literature does suggest that looking at women's employment status alone is not enough to proclaim that working is empowering to women and that there are a number of factors that might affect the impact of employment on empowerment. These studies demonstrate the complexity of the relationship between employment and empowerment and the many obstacles that stand in the way of the potentially empowering affects of the participation of women in paid employment. Overall, these studies establish the need for a greater understanding of the link between work and empowerment.

There is still a lack of understanding about the conditions under which employment can be empowering and the ways in which it can be empowering. Unlike

previous studies, this study focuses solely on this relationship and uses a much larger sample than most other studies that look at similar issues. This study uses Demographic Health Survey (DHS) data to look at the connections between employment status, occupation, employment characteristics and women's empowerment in terms of decision-making, freedom of movement and views on violence against women. In Malhotra et al.'s (2002) discussion of the research conducted on women's empowerment, they report that DHS data can offer the benefits of large datasets while allowing for an analysis of decision-making and women's autonomy in the household at the individual level. Of the five studies that they identify as using DHS data in this way, they report that none of them treats empowerment as the dependent variable.

Since then, a study of women's empowerment using DHS data for India has been published that uses empowerment as the outcome variable and that looks at some employment indicators. Roy and Niranjana's (2004) study looks at the association between indirect measures of autonomy (education, work-force participation, remuneration for work, age at marriage and spousal age difference), direct measures of autonomy (decision-making, freedom of movement, access to money) and "evidence" of empowerment in terms of attitudes to girls' education, self-esteem and family planning in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. They find that being engaged in employment for cash increases women's autonomy, but that education is more important, and that direct measures of autonomy are positively related to empowerment outcomes and more closely related than indirect measures of empowerment.

Roy and Niranjana's (2004) study provides useful insights about the relationship between indirect, direct and empowerment outcomes as well as the role of various socio-demographic indicators in women's empowerment, but it does not focus

specifically on employment and only treats working as an indirect indicator of empowerment. Their work does not look closely at the relationship between employment and empowerment and fails to acknowledge the multi-faceted nature of what all employment encompasses and how this relates to empowerment. This research looks deeper into these complexities in an attempt to better understand the relationship between economic activity and women's empowerment in India. This paper looks at employment status as well as occupational category and a number of other employment characteristics to build a more complete picture of the connection between employment and empowerment.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Sample

The data used in this study come from the 1998-1999 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) for India. The DHS survey is based on the 1998-1999 NFHS-2 data for India. The sample covers 26 states and is a nationally representative sample of about 90,000 ever-married women age 15-49. For the purposes of this paper, only the individual-level data are utilized. This study incorporates socio-demographic characteristics, employment characteristics, and measures of women's autonomy, freedom of movement, control over resources and views on violence against women ("empowerment indicators"). While acknowledging the diversity in India between states and districts, this study utilizes data from all of India in order to identify broad linkages between women's work and their empowerment and to determine when employment is empowerment and when it is not.

Dependent Variables: Empowerment Indicators

The 1998-1999 DHS survey for India asks a number of questions related to decision-making capabilities, freedom of movement, control over resources and women's views on violence against women. This study treats these variables as *indicators* of empowerment and not as empowerment itself. Due to the lack of data at more than one point in time, this study cannot measure empowerment as a process (Malhotra 2000), but it does attempt to identify important predictors of empowerment and to see their relationship to employment. The empowerment indicators used in this study are commonly used as proxy measures of empowerment and reflect only some of the many indicators that may be used to represent women's empowerment.

'Empowerment' is operationalized by a number of variables that serve as indicators of empowerment. Three of the empowerment measures used are 'behavioral' measures that are commonly employed as indicators of empowerment

(decision-making, freedom of movement and control over resources). One 'attitudinal' measure of empowerment is also included to get at a different dimension of empowerment that is not often considered. This 'attitudinal measure' looks at women's views on violence in the household and specifically at the justification of wife-beating.

It must be noted that empowerment is a messy concept and not easily measured so there are inherent weaknesses in any study trying to harness an empirical measure of empowerment. Additionally, because it is easier to measure behavioral change than attitudinal change I have higher confidence in the decision-making, freedom of movement and control over resources measures than the views on violence measurement. Despite the potential problems with measurement of attitudes, an attitudinal measure of empowerment is important due to the nature of the concept of empowerment and what it means to be empowered.

A Decision-making Scale was created by finding the mean score for each respondent across two decision-making indicators. Scores range from 0 to 1 with higher scores corresponding to greater levels of decision-making power within the household and therefore greater levels of empowerment in terms of decision-making capabilities. Decision-Making is measured by two variables asking: who decides about obtaining health care and who decides about the respondent staying with family. Response categories are "husband or others" or "respondent or jointly with others".

A measure for Freedom of Movement was developed that is the average of a respondent's scores on two questions about mobility: do you need permission to go to the market and do you need permission to visit friends or family. Responses are "yes or not allowed to go" and "no". The average ranges from 0 to 1 and a score of 1 indicates that the respondent does not need permission to visit family or to go to the market and so also indicates a higher level of empowerment. Scores of .5 indicates

that the respondent needs permission in one of the cases and a score of 0 specifies that the respondent is not allowed to go to the market or to visit friends without permission or that she is not allowed to go at all.

Control over resources is often cited as an important indicator of empowerment (Kabeer 1997, Blumberg 1984, Blumberg 1991). In this survey one variable is used to begin to get at this connection between control over wages and empowerment. While it does not ask if the respondent manages her own or household funds, it does ask whether or not the respondent is allowed to have money set aside. Though not perfect, this measure is linked to financial control and does give important information about a women's ability to have her own funds. Being able to have money set aside indicates having some measure of control over one's resources and is therefore included in this study as a possible indicator of empowerment.

An 'attitudinal' measure looking at the respondent's views on a husband's right to hit his wife, is a combination of six indicators that form a measure of women's empowerment in terms of their acceptance of violence against women (VAW). The questions ask, yes or no, "can a husband hit his wife if" she cheats, her family does not give money, she shows disrespect, she goes out without telling him, she neglects the house or children, or if she does not cook properly. The VAW measure is a combination of these six questions. Women are given a score 1 if they answer no to all six questions, that wife-beating is *not* justified in any of these situation. A woman is given a score of 0 if she reports that violence against wives is acceptable in one or more situation. Having a score of 1, and therefore saying that wife-beating is never okay, is associated with empowerment and likewise, a score of 0 is an indication of disempowerment. The argument is that an empowered woman, one who has control over choices in their life and has greater self-worth and power, will not justify violence against wives 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.

These indicators of women's empowerment cover a number of areas in which women can become empowered and can begin the process of change towards greater control over their life and capabilities. These indicators are specifically related to individual women's empowerment in the household and the community and do not tackle the more macro elements of political participation or collective action, but they do give an idea of the many facets 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, like in views on violence against women. This multidimensional operationalization of empowerment also allows for a deeper exploration of the relationship between employment and empowerment and allows for an assessment of the differential impact of employment on a sample of the various aspects of empowerment.

In addition to the regressions presented, analyses using individual empowerment variables rather than the scales were run, but for simplicity, only the scales will be discussed in this paper.

Independent Variables: Employment

This research expands the definition of employment to include a breadth of employment dimensions and their association with women's empowerment. While the common rhetoric links "employment" and more specifically "paid employment" with empowerment, this research empirically tests the relationship between many dimensions of the work experience and women's empowerment. To achieve a more nuanced understanding of this relationship that is so often assumed, the basic assumption of employment and empowerment is first tested with a simple measure of whether or not the respondent is currently working. Subsequent models look deeper

into employment and include measurements of occupation and then a series of “employment characteristics” that serve to test the assumption that while employment may matter to empowerment, it is necessary to determine when and in what ways it does so. Occupations modeled include a reference category of “Did not Work” and the following aggregated occupational classifications: professional/technical/managerial, clerical, sales/services, household and domestic, skilled manual, unskilled manual and agriculture.

Other employment characteristics included in this study are whom the respondent works for (family, someone other than family, or self-employed) and contribution to total family earnings (less than half, half or more, or all of family earnings).

Control Variables: Socio-Demographic Characteristics

In addition to the employment variables, a few key socio-demographic characteristics are included as control variables. Education Level is broken down into illiterate, primary school or less, middle school complete, high school complete and higher or secondary school complete. A respondent’s age is included and women in the sample are between the ages of 15 and 49. Whether a respondent lives in an urban or rural area is also included as an important socio-demographic characteristic as is a measure of marital status. A woman may report that she is “married” or “other”, which includes women who are widowed, divorced or not living with their husband. Finally, a measure of caste is included in the analysis. Response categories are “scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, other backward caste” or “other”. The first category consists of the castes/classes that are entitled by the government for positive discrimination. Members of these groups tend to be of lower status in India although there is extensive in-group hierarchy as well.

Methods

This analysis aims to empirically test the relationship between employment and women's empowerment and to determine if, when and in what ways employment is linked to important empowerment indicators. I rely on categorical data analysis to measure the relationship between employment and empowerment. A combination of logit models are used to determine the odds ratios of having a higher level of empowerment across various socio-demographic and employment measures. Logistic regression is used for the dichotomous dependent variables, Control over Resources and Violence against Women, and an ordered logit model is used for the multiple category response variables, Decision-making and Freedom of Movement. By modeling the possible associations between empowerment and employment, I am able to exhibit the complex relationship between the many dimensions of individual empowerment in the household and community for women in India and the differential affects of numerous aspects of employment.

In addition to the logit results presented below, each model was run by individual education level for the three dimensions of empowerment in this study. These models allow for a comparison of the relationship between empowerment and work for women of similar educational background, thereby controlling for education and ensuring that the effect of employment on empowerment is not just a function of education, but truly an employment effect. The results are consistent with the findings presented.

This study utilizes four model specifications that are applied to each dependent variable. The first model specification establishes the relationship between employment and empowerment and subsequent specifications explore the connection between a more detailed conception of work and the four indicators of women's empowerment.

Model Specification 1

Model Specification 1 looks at the relationship between empowerment and employment status in order to test the basic assumption that employment is linked to empowerment. In other words, do women who are currently working have increased odds of empowerment? This model controls for the respondent's age, education level, caste, marital status and whether the respondent lives in an urban or rural area and includes a measure of whether or not the respondent is currently working.

Model Specification 2

Having tested the assumption that there is a relationship between employment and empowerment, Model Specification 2 assesses what aspects of employment are linked to empowerment. In this model, the connection between occupation and empowerment is explored to determine whether empowerment is associated with the type of work that women do. For example, do Indian women working in certain occupations have higher levels of empowerment than women in other occupations?

Model Specification 3

Model Specification 3 expands the occupational classifications used in Model Specification 2 to look at specific characteristics of employment that may be associated with women's empowerment. This model breaks down agricultural, skilled manual, sales/service and professional/technical/managerial workers into individual categories by who the respondent works for, either for family, for themselves or for someone else. These variables were formed by taking the interaction between occupation and each category of whom the respondent works for. Only these four occupations were expanded because all possibilities could not be estimated without losing precisions and because otherwise the sample sizes got too small when subdividing into smaller categories. All other occupations remain intact and results

are for all workers, rather than just self-employed workers or women that work for their families.

Model Specification 4

Model Specification 4 includes one more indicator related to women's employment situation: contribution to total family income. This model specification is the same as Model Specification 3, but includes measures for contributing half or more of family income, contributing all of family income and women that had missing data for the contribution variable. The "contribution-missing" category is composed of mostly non-workers and small percentage of working women. The reference category however is women that contribute less than half of their family's income allowing for comparisons between women that are low contributors and those that contribute more.

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis of DHS Data

Tables 1 and 2 show the frequencies of the independent variables in this study. Almost all the women in the sample are currently married and only a very small percentage of the women (6.03) are widowed, divorced or separated. Almost 60% belong to a scheduled caste, tribe or other backward caste and almost 70% live in rural areas. The majority of the women are between the ages of 25 to 29, followed by women in the age ranges of 20-24, 30-34, 35-39 and then 40-44. Although the sample covers ever-married women aged 15-49, only 9.46% of the respondents are between the ages of 45 and 49, and an even smaller percentage (7.8) are in the 15-19 category. While this percentage is small, that still means that almost 8% of women in India are married between the ages of 15 and 19.

The distributions for education reveal that most women in India are largely uneducated. Of over 90,000 respondents, 54% report that they are illiterate and only 20% are literate and have either completed primary school or have some primary education. Education after primary school is minimal and only 9.41% of women have completed middle school, 8.4% have completed high school and 8.17% have completed higher secondary education or more.

In India, only about 35% of women sampled are employed. The majority of women who are working are employed in agricultural work, with 60% of working women reporting employment in agriculture. Of these women, the majority work for their family or are self-employed. Only about 20% of employed women in this study work in manufacturing jobs (8.22% unskilled manual and 12.15% skilled manual), and almost 3% work in household or domestic services. Skilled manual workers are largely self-employed or work for someone other than family. About 6% of working women work in sales and services, mostly for themselves or for someone other than

Table 1: Frequencies of Socio-Demographic Variables

Variable	Frequency
Type of Place of Residence (n=90,303)	
Urban	31.07
Rural	68.93
Caste (N = 89,657)	
Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Other Backward Caste	58.21
Other Caste	41.79
Education Level (n=90,303)	
Illiterate	54.01
Primary School or Less	20.02
Middle School Complete	9.41
High School Complete	8.40
Higher Secondary Complete or More	8.17
Age (n=90,303)	
15-19	7.80
20-24	17.69
25-29	20.11
30-34	17.52
35-39	15.25
40-44	12.16
45-49	9.46
Current Marital Status (n=90,303)	
Married	93.97
Other	6.03

family and only a small percentage of women work in professional-type jobs. In the professional/technical/managerial occupational classification, only about 7% of employed women, 2.6% of all women in India, work in these professions and an even smaller amount, about 2% of working women, are employed in clerical work. Interestingly, most professional workers are self-employed.

With regard to women's total contribution to family earnings, women are contributing significantly to their family's survival and while only 17% of working women bring in their family's entire income, 28% of working women that there is data for contribute half or more of their family's total earnings.

Table 2: Frequencies of Employment Characteristics

Variable	Frequency
Current Employment Status (n=90,303)	
Working	35.21
Not working	64.79
Occupation (n=90,303)	
Not Working	63.08
Professional/Technical/Managerial (total)	2.55
<i>Works for family</i>	.20
<i>Self-employed</i>	1.73
<i>Works for someone else</i>	.63
Clerical	0.79
Sales/Services (total)	2.17
<i>Works for family</i>	.62
<i>Self-employed</i>	.61
<i>Works for someone else</i>	.93
Household/Domestic	1.09
Skilled Manual (total)	4.46
<i>Works for family</i>	.80
<i>Self-employed</i>	1.94
<i>Works for someone else</i>	1.71
Unskilled Manual	3.02
Agriculture (total)	22.64
<i>Works for family</i>	12.35
<i>Self-employed</i>	8.98
<i>Works for someone else</i>	1.31
Unknown but Working	0.19
Contribution to Family Earnings (n=90,303)	
Missing	76.04
Less than Half	13.15
Half or More	6.73
All	4.09

Table 3 displays the frequencies for the individual empowerment indicators that make up the empowerment scales used in each model. The frequencies suggest that there is some variation across empowerment indicators and being empowered in one area, does not necessarily mean being empowered in another. About 54% of women decide about obtaining health care alone or jointly with others and almost 52% decide about staying with family either alone or jointly. It is discouraging that just

Table 3: Frequencies of Empowerment Indicators

Variable	Frequency
Decision-Making (n=90,303)	
Who decides about obtaining health care?	
Husband or Others	45.66
Respondent or Jointly with Others	54.34
Who decides about respondent staying with family?	
Husband or Others	48.46
Respondent or Jointly with Others	51.54
Freedom of Movement (n=90,303)	
Do you need permission to go to the market?	
Yes or Not allowed to go	66.71
No	33.30
Do you need permission to visit friends or family?	
Yes or Not allowed to go	73.54
No	26.45
Control over Resources (n=90,043)	
Are you allowed to have money set aside?	
No	38.42
Yes	61.58
Views on Violence against Women (n=90,303)	
A husband may hit his wife if she cheats	
Yes	31.30
No	68.70
A husband may hit is wife if her family does not give money	
Yes	5.54
No	94.46
A husband may hit his wife if she disrespects him	
Yes	32.83
No	67.17
A husband may hit his wife if she goes out without telling him	
Yes	34.56
No	65.44
A husband may hit his wife if she neglects the house or the children	
Yes	38.33
No	61.67
A husband may hit his wife if she cooks improperly	
Yes	21.96
No	78.04

under half of ever-married women age 15-49 have no part in decision-making about staying with family or about decisions as important as obtaining health care.

In terms of mobility, the data demonstrate that there are significant constraints on women's freedom of movement. Only 33% of women are allowed to go to the market without permission and even less, about 26%, can visit friends or family without permission. That means that 67% of women need permission or are not even allowed to go to the market and 74% of women are constrained or denied the ability to visit friends or family. It is clear that on this dimension, women's empowerment in India is extremely limited.

Women do seem to be doing better in terms of control over resources though and almost 62% of women are allowed to have money set aside, but that means that about 38% do not have control over resources.

In the final measure of women's empowerment, views on violence against women, there are large variations in women's perspectives on when it is and when it is not acceptable for a husband to hit his wife. While 94% of women say that a husband *may not* hit his wife if her family does not give money, 22%, 31% and 33% say that a husband *may* hit his wife if she does not cook properly, if she cheats, or if she disrespects him. Even more women, 38%, report that a husband may hit his wife if she neglects the house or children. These numbers demonstrate the significant acceptance of domestic violence among women in India and indicate that for many women, there are numerous reasons why a husband would be justified in hitting his wife. About 45% of women said no to all six questions, that none of these reasons are a justification for violence, while over 11% said yes to five or more questions.

Looking at the distributions for the four indicators of empowerment included in this study, it is clear that women are potentially more empowered in some areas than others. The data demonstrate that while half or more of the women are involved

in decision-making in the household and can set money aside, two-third or more have limited mobility and need permission or are not allowed to go to the market or to see their family. The data also demonstrate that over one-third of women sampled report that there are situations when a husband may hit his wife. Table 3 shows a complex picture of women's empowerment in India and illustrates the need for looking at numerous categories of empowerment to determine the association between employment and women's empowerment.

Models of Empowerment

A number of demographic variables were significant across all empowerment indicators and in each model. Education level is a consistently important predictor of women's empowerment in terms of decision-making, freedom of movement, control over resources and views on violence against women. Having a higher level of education is associated with higher levels of empowerment for all indicators and for each level of education attained, women are anywhere from 1.18 to 1.52 times more likely to have higher levels of empowerment than women in lower educational categories. Likewise, being from an urban as opposed to rural area significantly increases the likelihood of having higher empowerment scores. Being from a rural area decreases the log odds of having higher empowerment for all indicators and for all models. Being currently married decreases the log odds of having higher empowerment and women who are widowed, divorced or separated have a greater likelihood of having more decision-making, freedom of movement, control over resources and have higher scores on the Violence against Women Scale. Being older also makes a difference to almost all indicators of empowerment and women in higher age categories are around 1.2 times more likely to have higher empowerment levels than women in lower age categories.

Caste does not have consistent predicting power across empowerment indicators or across models. Being in a scheduled caste, schedule tribe or other backward class is associated with a *decreased* likelihood of having greater freedom of movement and of having a *higher* empowerment score in terms of views on violence against women, but caste is not strongly associated with decision-making or control over resources.

Decision-Making

Model Specification 1

Table 4 presents the regression results for women's decision-making by employment indicators. Model Specification 1 tests the assumption that there is a link between employment and women's empowerment. While the relationship between employment and decision-making is significant, the coefficient is quite small (.053), indicating that there is not a very strong association between working and greater decision-making power for women in the home.

To look deeper at this most basic relationship between working and empowerment, predicted probabilities were generated for respondents of various "ideal types" to determine the importance of working to women's decision-making for different kinds of women. Table 5 presents the predicted probabilities for women's decision-making power and confirm what we see in the regression table. For decision-making we see almost no change in the predicted probabilities by work status for young illiterate rural women or even for more highly educated older urban women. For the women who are most likely to be disempowered in terms of their socio-demographic background, and for women who are more likely to be empowered because of their education, age and urban status, working makes no difference for greater decision-making. Women who work are basically just as likely as those who do not to have lower decision-making power. We do, however, see much higher

Table 4: Ordered Logit Model Predicting Decision-Making by Socio-Demographic and Employment Characteristics

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Demographics				
Education Level	.193*** (.005)	.177*** (.006)	.177*** (.006)	.177*** (.006)
Rural	-.122***(.015)	-.077*** (.015)	-.075***(.015)	-.075***(.015)
Marital Status	1.589***(.033)	1.560*** (.034)	1.552***(.034)	1.503***(.034)
Caste	-.030* (.013)	-.033* (.013)	-.028* (.013)	-.027* (.013)
Age	.114*** (.004)	.112*** (.004)	.116*** (.004)	.111*** (.004)
Works Currently	.053*** (.013)	---	---	---
Occupation				
Not Working		(omitted)	---	---
Prof/Tech/Managerial		.319*** (.044)	---	---
Clerical		.427*** (.079)	---	---
Sales/Services		.362*** (.045)	---	---
Household/Domestic		.454*** (.065)	---	---
Skilled Manual		.099*** (.031)	---	---
Unskilled Manual		.113*** (.038)	---	---
Agriculture		-.070*** (.017)	---	---
Unknown but Working		.045 (.148)	---	---
Occupation * Works For				
Not working			(omitted)	(omitted)
Profess -Family			.036 (.146)	-.037 (.146)
Profess- Other			.416***(.053)	.327*** (.063)
Profess- Self employ.			.162* (.081)	.075 (.088)
Clerical- all			.428***(.079)	.324*** (.086)
Sales/Serv- Family			.283***(.082)	.221** (.084)
Sales/Serv- Other			.502***(.086)	.409*** (.093)
Sales/Serv- Self empl.			.334***(.068)	.245*** (.075)
House/Domestic- all			.460***(.065)	.359*** (.073)
Skilled Man- Family			-.072 (.070)	-.130 (.074)
Skilled Man- Other			.148***(.046)	.072 (.057)
Skilled Man- Self empl.			.169** (.048)	.055 (.058)
Unskilled Man- all			.114***(.038)	.025 (.050)
Agricult- Family			-.126***(.020)	-.139***(.021)
Agricult- Other			-.010 (.023)	-.087* (.039)
Agricult- Self employ.			.062 (.056)	.014 (.059)
Unknown- all			.038 (.148)	-.050 (.152)
Contrib. to Fam Income				
Missing			---	-.036 (.036)
Less than Half			---	(omitted)
Half or More			---	.048 (.030)
All			---	.287*** (.039)
Cut 1	-0.0516 (.022)	-0.053 (.022)	-0.050 (.022)	-0.088 (.042)
Cut 2	1.054 (.022)	1.054 (.148)	1.058 (.023)	1.021 (.042)
N	89,619	89,574	89,561	89,561

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

predicted probabilities in the full decision-making category for women who are more educated, urban and older.

Table 5: Predicted Probability of Decision-making by Women’s Work Status and Socio-Demographic Characteristics for Model Specification 1

Ideal Types	Predicted Probabilities		
	None	Half	Full
Illiterate, rural, young and NOT working	.52	.25	.23
Illiterate, rural, young and working	.50	.25	.25
High School, urban, older and NOT working	.05	.09	.86
High School, urban, older and working	.05	.08	.87
An “average” individual, NOT working	.34	.27	.39
An “average” individual, working	.32	.27	.41

Model Specification 2

Model Specification 2 looks deeper at the relationship between employment and empowerment and examines the association between occupation and women’s decision-making power. The data suggest that occupation is associated with women’s decision-making. For women’s decision-making, the coefficients indicate that women working in professional/technical/managerial, in clerical, in sales/services, and even in household or domestic professions have a greater likelihood of having more decision-making in the home than women who do not work at all and women in other occupations. These women are 1.38, 1.53, 1.44 and 1.58 times more likely than women who do not work at all to have higher levels of decision-making. The coefficients for skilled and unskilled manual work are much smaller than non-manual occupations, .099 and .113, respectively, and women in skilled manual occupations are only 1.10 times more likely to than women not working to have higher decision-making and women in unskilled manual professions are 1.12 times more likely to have greater empowerment. This indicates that working in a skilled or unskilled manual

occupation is essentially the same as not working at all for women in terms of decision-making.

Female agricultural workers are the least likely to have greater household decision-making power and the negative coefficient, $-.070$. The negative coefficient for agriculture indicates that these women are less likely than women that do not work at all to have greater decision-making power in the home. The coefficient is quite small, however, suggesting that agricultural workers are not that much different than non-working women when it comes to decision-making about healthcare and visiting family or friends. These results indicate that women agricultural workers, the majority of female workers in India, are severely limited in terms of decision-making power and that working does not seem to matter much as it does not increase women's empowerment, but perhaps exacerbates existing inequalities in gender roles and class position.

Figure 1 displays the predicted probabilities of decision-making for "average" women by occupational category and demonstrates some of the variation in level of decision-making that occurs for women in different occupations. Generally, for women working in non-manual occupations there are higher predicted probabilities for full decision-making and lower predicted probabilities for no decision-making power. The predicted probabilities of full decision-making are around $.50$ for professional/technical/ managerial, clerical, sales/services and household/domestic workers, but for manual workers the probability of full decision-making is $.42$ for skilled and unskilled manual and only $.38$ for agricultural workers. The predicted probabilities for agricultural workers point out that women in agriculture fare worse than women in any other occupational category in decision-making as they have the lowest probability of full decision-making and the greatest probability of having no decision-making.

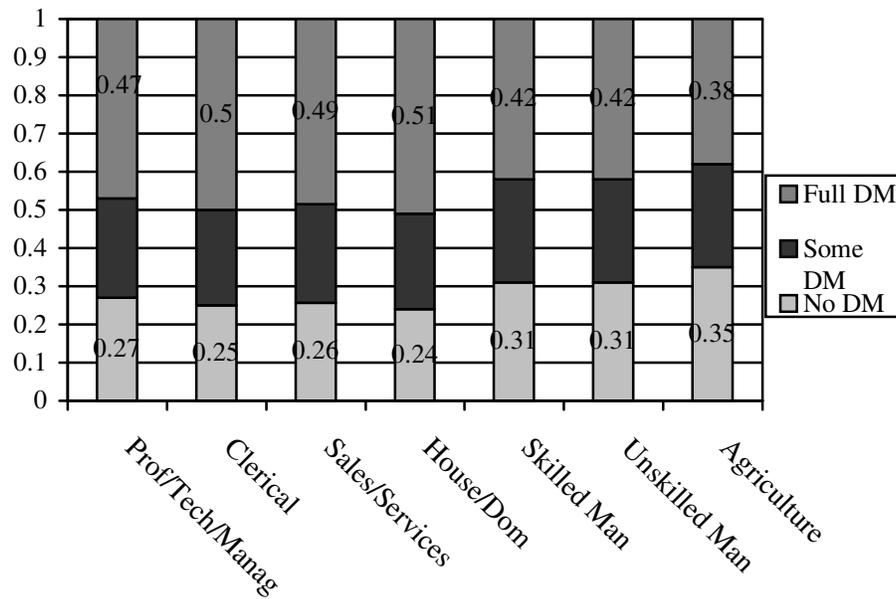


Figure 1: Decision-Making Predicted Probabilities for an "Average" Woman by Occupation for Model Specification 2

The predicted probability for no decision-making is also higher for manual workers than non-manual workers and women in manual and agricultural occupations have a predicted probability of .31 to .35 for the “no decision-making” category. Interestingly, there is very little variation in predicted probabilities across occupation for women with some decision-making power (from .25 to .27).

Model Specification 3

Model Specification 3 looks at the interaction between occupation and for whom the respondent works and focuses specifically on differences in decision-making power for women working for family, self-employed women and women that work for someone other than family in agricultural, skilled manual, sales/service, and professional/technical/managerial occupations. The logit results in Table 4 demonstrate that who the respondent works for is important, but that this work characteristic does not mean the same thing for everyone. For instance, agricultural workers do not appear to have a payoff when they work for someone other than

family, but for professional, sales and even skilled manual workers there is a boost in decision-making power when a woman works for someone other than family.

The regression results indicate that professional and sales/service worker that work for someone other than family are doing far better in terms of decision-making power than women in unskilled manual, skilled manual and agricultural occupations. However, professionals working for their family are closer to the women in manual and agricultural positions than to other professional women working for someone else. Self-employed professionals are in between the professionals working for others and women in skilled manual occupations, but are closer in decision-making to the manual workers. Interestingly, sales and service workers are doing well in terms of decision-making regardless of who they work for.

For skilled manual workers we see that women working for someone other than family have the greatest likelihood of decision-making power in the home, followed by self-employed workers and women working for their families. Skilled manual laborers working for family have a slightly smaller likelihood of greater decision-making, .93 times, relative to women to that do not work at all and are therefore very unlikely to be able to make decisions about healthcare and visiting friends or family. Likewise, agricultural workers of any type, but especially those working for their families are no more likely, and even in some cases less likely, than non-working women to have decision-making power in the home.

The predicted probabilities for Model Specification 3 shown in Table 6 show the probability of being decision-making for illiterate, rural, young (<25) women and women working in the same occupations but that have a high school education, are older (>40) and that live in an urban area. In Table 6 we see differences in the probability of decision-making by who the respondent works for and by demographic background. Overall, women who have more education, are older and live in urban

Table 6: Predicted Probability of Decision-making by Occupation, Who the Respondent Works for and Socio-Demographic Characteristics for Model Specification 3

Ideal Types	None	Half	Full
Illiterate, rural, young			
Agriculture, works for family	.52	.25	.23
Agriculture, works for someone else	.49	.25	.26
Skilled Manual, works for family	.50	.25	.25
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.45	.26	.29
Sales/Services, works for family	.41	.27	.32
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.36	.27	.37
Professional/Technical, works for family	.47	.26	.27
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.38	.27	.35
High School, urban, older			
Agriculture, works for family	.22	.24	.54
Agriculture, works for someone else	.20	.23	.57
Skilled Manual, works for family	.21	.24	.55
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.18	.22	.60
Sales/Services, works for family	.16	.20	.64
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.13	.18	.69
Professional/Technical, works for family	.19	.23	.58
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.14	.19	.67

areas have much greater probability of full decision-making than young, rural, illiterate women. When we look at these women, those most likely to be empowered due to their socio-demographic background, we see that most women, regardless of occupation or who the respondent works for fall into the ‘full decision-making’ category. However, when we look at women that rural, young and illiterate we see that most women, in almost all employment situations have *no* decision-making power. Within occupations we also see significant differences between women from rural areas with little to no education and women from urban areas with a high school education.

When we look at individual occupations and who the respondent works for, we see that there are only small increases in full decision-making for agriculture, skilled

manual and even sales/service workers when we compare those that work for family to those that work for someone other than family. For illiterate, rural, young workers there is only an increase of .03, .04, and .05 for agriculture, skilled manual and sales/service workers, respectively. For professional workers the difference is slightly larger, .08, indicating that working for someone else as opposed to family has a greater impact on decision-making than for other occupations. For women with a high school education that are older and from urban areas, the differences in probability of decision-making for women working for someone else rather than family are not that much different than for women of less empowering socio-demographic backgrounds, but the greatest differences are again for professional women.

Model Specification 4

Going beyond occupation and who the respondent works for, Model Specification 4 includes respondents' total contribution to their family earnings. Table 4 displays the regression results for women's decision-making and contribution. The results indicate that contributing all of total family income can significantly increase the likelihood of greater decision-making power and women that contribute all of their family's income are 1.33 times more likely to have greater empowerment than women that contribute less than half of their total family income. Contributing even more than half of total family income, however, does not appear to make a difference for decision-making power in the home.

The predicted probabilities for decision-making by occupation, who the respondent works for and level of contribution to family income are shown in Table 7. Consistent with previous results, the predicted probabilities suggest that women working in agriculture, skilled and unskilled manual work, regardless of who they work for, have lower probabilities of full decision-making than women in other occupations. However, in the manual and agricultural occupations, contributing all of

Table 7: Predicted Probability of Decision-making by Occupation, Who the Respondent Works for and Total Contribution to Family Income for Model Specification 4

Ideal Types	Contributes Less than Half of Family's Income			Contributes All of Family's Income		
	None	Half	Full	None	Half	Full
Agriculture, works for family	.36	.27	.37	.30	.27	.44
Agriculture, self-employed	.32	.27	.41	.26	.26	.48
Agriculture, works for someone else	.35	.27	.38	.28	.26	.45
Unskilled Manual, all	.32	.27	.41	.26	.26	.48
Skilled Manual, works for family	.36	.27	.37	.29	.27	.44
Skilled Manual, self-employed	.31	.27	.42	.26	.25	.49
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.31	.27	.42	.25	.25	.50
Household/Domestic, all	.25	.25	.50	.20	.23	.57
Sales/Services, works for family	.28	.26	.46	.23	.24	.53
Sales/Services, self-employed	.28	.26	.46	.22	.24	.54
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.24	.25	.51	.19	.23	.58
Clerical, all	.26	.26	.48	.21	.24	.56
Professional/Technical, works for family	.34	.27	.39	.27	.26	.47
Professional/Technical, self-employed	.31	.27	.42	.25	.25	.50
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.26	.26	.48	.21	.23	.56

family income increases the probability of having full decision-making by about .07 or .08.

Women in sales/services for all employment situations and professionals that work for their families have a higher probability of empowerment regardless of contribution, but contributing all of family income does increase the probability of decision-making. Professionals that are self-employed or work for family are similar to the manual workers and it appears that it is only when a professional works for someone other than family that there is an increase in empowerment over these less

empowering jobs in manual and agricultural occupations. Overall, women that contribute of all of their family's income have a greater probability of full decision-making indicating that financial contribution is an important factor to decision-making power in the home.

Freedom of Movement

Model Specification

Table 8 presents the regression results for women's decision-making by employment indicators. The logit results demonstrate that for freedom of movement currently working is significantly associated with women's empowerment. The positive significant coefficient indicates that women who work are more likely to have higher empowerment scores. Working appears to be important to women's freedom of movement, and women who work are 1.47 times more likely to be able to go to the market or to see their family than women who do not work.

The predicted probabilities of freedom of movement for women of different socio-demographic background are shown in Table 9. The predicted probabilities demonstrate that being employed does make a difference in terms of freedom of movement and we see small increases in the predicted probabilities of full mobility for women who work relative to those who do not. There is a bigger increase in mobility by work status for the more highly educated, older urban women, an increase in predicted probability of .10, than for the illiterate rural women whose predicted probability increases by .04. While the increases are fairly small for the more socially marginalized women, we do see that working women have a slightly higher probability of having greater freedom of movement, but again, socio-demographics are extremely important to the probability of mobility. Overall, for an "average" woman, when the mean is taken across all socio-demographic variables, working

Table 8: Ordered Logit Model Predicting Freedom of Movement by Socio-Demographic and Employment Characteristics

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Demographics				
Education Level	.241*** (.006)	.231*** (.006)	.231*** (.006)	.231*** (.006)
Rural	-.676***(.016)	-.639***(.017)	-.635*** (.017)	-.634*** (.017)
Marital Status	1.483***(.030)	1.456***(.030)	1.442*** (.030)	1.416***(.031)
Caste	-.322***(.015)	-.320*** (.016)	-.310*** (.016)	-.308***(.016)
Age	.217*** (.004)	.215*** (.004)	.215*** (.004)	.215*** (.004)
Works Currently	.382*** (.016)	---	---	---
Occupation				
Not Working		(omitted)	---	---
Prof/Tech/Managerial		.498*** (.044)	---	---
Clerical		.806*** (.080)	---	---
Sales/Services		.738*** (.046)	---	---
Household/Domestic		.810*** (.066)	---	---
Skilled Manual		.265*** (.034)	---	---
Unskilled Manual		.453*** (.041)	---	---
Agriculture		.286*** (.019)	---	---
Unknown but Working		.275 (.160)	---	---
Occupation * Works For				
Not working			(omitted)	(omitted)
Profess -Family			.130 (.130)	-.042 (.156)
Profess- Other			.668*** (.053)	.454*** (.066)
Profess- Self employ.			.145 (.084)	-.061 (.092)
Clerical- all			.807*** (.080)	.588*** (.088)
Sales/Serv- Family			.550*** (.086)	.414*** (.089)
Sales/Serv- Other			.827*** (.087)	.622*** (.095)
Sales/Serv- Self employ.			.823*** (.070)	.626*** (.079)
House/Domestic- all			.817*** (.066)	.613*** (.075)
Skilled Man- Family			.141 (.079)	.011 (.083)
Skilled Man- Other			.335*** (.050)	.143* (.062)
Skilled Man- Self empl.			.247*** (.053)	.063 (.065)
Unskilled Man- all			.456*** (.041)	.262*** (.055)
Agricult- Family			.154*** (.024)	.123*** (.025)
Agricult- Other			.444*** (.027)	.260*** (.044)
Agricult- Self employ.			.396*** (.063)	.276*** (.067)
Unknown- all			.264 (.161)	.080 (.165)
Contrib. to Fam Income				
Missing			---	-.167*** (.041)
Less than Half			---	(omitted)
Half or More			---	.081** (.033)
All			---	.107*** (.041)
Cut 1	1.350 (.025)	1.354 (.026)	1.362 (.026)	1.193 (.048)
Cut 2	1.957 (.026)	1.963 (.026)	1.972 (.026)	1.804 (.048)
N	89,612	89,567	89,554	89,554

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 9: Predicted Probability of Freedom of Movement by Women’s Work Status and Socio-Demographic Characteristics for Model Specification 1

Ideal Types	Predicted Probabilities		
	None	Half	Full
Illiterate, rural, young and NOT working	.88	.05	.07
Illiterate, rural, young and working	.84	.07	.10
High School, urban, older and NOT working	.13	.09	.78
High School, urban, older and working	.10	.07	.84
An “average” individual, NOT working	.69	.11	.20
An “average” individual, working	.60	.13	.27

increase the probability of having full mobility by .07 and decrease the probability of having no mobility by .09.

Model Specification 2

Model Specification 2 looks at the relationship between occupation and empowerment. The regression results displayed in Table 8 demonstrate that women’s mobility is associated with occupation and women working in non-manual labor tend to have increased odds of greater freedom of movement relative to women who do not work at all and compared to women in manual occupations. The log odds are greatest for women working in clerical, sales/services and household/domestic work, followed by women in professional, technical or managerial occupations.

Women in clerical work are 2.24 times more likely to have greater freedom of movement than women who do not work, and Sales/Services workers are 2.10 times more likely to have greater mobility. Professional/Technical/Managerial workers are significantly likely to be more empowered in terms of mobility, and are 1.64 times more likely than non-working women to not need permission to go to the market to

visit their family. In this case, the strong association between household and domestic work and increased log odds of greater mobility may be a reflection of the type of activities that such work involves. For instance, in many cases, it may be the responsibility of domestic workers to go to the market, thereby affording greater levels of day-to-day mobility.

Manual labor and agricultural work are found to be positively associated with greater levels of mobility, although not as strongly as for non-manual occupations. Skilled manual laborers are 1.31 times more likely and unskilled manual workers are 1.58 times more likely than unemployed women to have higher levels of freedom of movement. Even agricultural workers are more likely to have greater mobility than non-working women with agricultural employees being 1.33 times more likely to have increased freedom of movement. Overall though, agricultural workers, along with skilled manual workers, have a very low likelihood of mobility relative to women in other occupations.

The predicted probabilities for women's mobility across occupation are presented in Figure 2. Similar to the predicted probabilities for decision-making, there are only very slight variations in the probability of having some freedom of movement across occupations (.12 -.15), but most women, regardless of occupation, are very limited in terms of freedom of movement and the predicted probabilities are highest in the "no freedom of movement" category. The predicted probability of having full mobility is quite small for women in all occupations, but is more limited for women in skilled and unskilled manual and agricultural positions, with the probability of full mobility ranging from .23 for agricultural workers to .28 for unskilled manual workers. These same workers have a .58 to .64 probability of having no mobility. Of all the occupational categories though, agricultural workers have the lowest

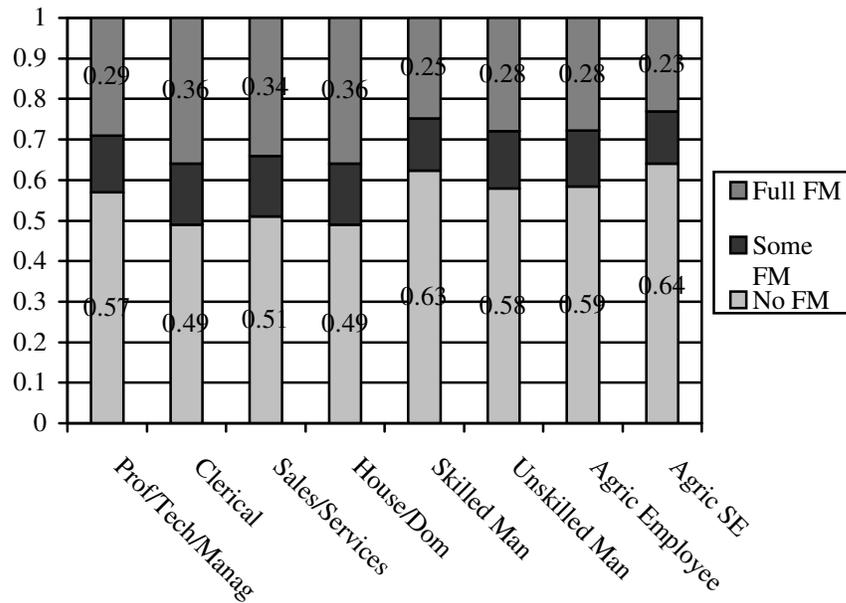


Figure 2: Freedom of Movement Predicted Probabilities for an "Average" Woman by Occupation for Model Specification 2

probability of full mobility and the greatest probability of no mobility therefore indicating that mobility of any kind is extremely limited for workers in this field.

Women in non-manual occupations like clerical, sales/service and also household/domestic work have a smaller probability of having no mobility and a greater probability of having full mobility. Professionals are the exception and in terms of mobility, they do only slightly better than skilled and manual labor.

Model Specification 3

In Model Specification 3, we see that women in all occupation regardless of who they work for are more likely to have greater freedom of movement than women that do not work at all. Women working in professional occupations for someone other than family and women in sales/service, clerical and even household/domestic work have the greatest likelihood of mobility, with women in some work situations being over 2 times more likely than non-workers to be able to go out without permission. In sales/services, women that work for someone other than family or that

are self-employed are especially likely to be more empowered and even sales/service workers that work for family are more likely to have mobility than women in agriculture, skilled or unskilled manual work. For professional workers though, women that work for family or for themselves are at a great disadvantage and are basically the same in terms of mobility as women working for their families in agriculture or skilled manual work.

Women in manual and agricultural work continue to be the least empowered, but who the respondent works for appears to make a difference. For instance, women working for someone other than family having a greater likelihood of freedom of movement than either women that are self-employed or even more so for women that work for their family.

The predicted probabilities shown in Table 10 demonstrate more clearly the difference in mobility between women working for family and women working for someone else by socio-demographic background. One of the most striking findings is the huge difference in mobility by socio-demographic background for women of all occupations and all work situations. For example, for women that work in agriculture for someone other than family, the probability of full mobility increase by .51 when we move from women that are rural, young and illiterate to women that are older, urban and more educated. This large differences hold across occupations and indicate that socio-demographic background may be the most important factor in women's mobility; however, who the respondent works for does seem to matter as well.

For young, rural, illiterate women there are only small increases probability of full decision-making for women that work for someone other than family as opposed to family. These increases are slightly larger for women in sales/service and

Table 10: Predicted Probability of Freedom of Movement by Occupation, Who the Respondent Works for and Socio-Demographic Characteristics for Model Specification 3

Ideal Types	None	Half	Full
Illiterate, rural, young			
Agriculture, works for family	.87	.05	.08
Agriculture, works for someone else	.83	.07	.10
Skilled Manual, works for family	.87	.05	.08
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.85	.06	.09
Sales/Services, works for family	.82	.07	.11
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.77	.09	.14
Professional/Technical, works for family	.87	.05	.08
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.80	.08	.12
High School, urban, older			
Agriculture, works for family	.32	.14	.54
Agriculture, works for someone else	.26	.13	.61
Skilled Manual, works for family	.32	.15	.53
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.28	.14	.58
Sales/Services, works for family	.24	.13	.63
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.20	.11	.69
Professional/Technical, works for family	.33	.14	.53
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.22	.12	.66

professional occupations, but overall there are not huge differences in mobility for between occupations. For older, urban, educated women, on the other hand, there is more fluctuation across occupations and the difference between working for family and working for someone else are more pronounced, especially for agriculture and professional workers. For agricultural workers, there is an increase of .07 for women working for someone other than family and for professionals, this difference is .13. The predicted probabilities demonstrate that while there are some affects on mobility by who the respondent works for, the largest differences are a result of a woman's education, age and type of residence.

Model Specification 4

To get a better understanding of the way that a woman's work situation may interact with mobility, Model Specification 4 also looks at respondents' total

Table 11: Predicted Probability of Freedom of Movement by Occupation, Who the Respondent Works for and Total Contribution to Family Income for Model Specification 4

Ideal Types	Contributes Less than Half of Family's Income			Contributes All of Family's Income		
	None	Half	Full	None	Half	Full
Agriculture, works for family	.62	.13	.25	.60	.14	.27
Agriculture, self-employed	.58	.14	.28	.56	.14	.30
Agriculture, works for someone else	.59	.14	.27	.56	.14	.30
Unskilled Manual, all	.59	.13	.28	.56	.14	.30
Skilled Manual, works for family	.65	.12	.23	.62	.13	.25
Skilled Manual, self-employed	.63	.13	.24	.61	.13	.26
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.62	.13	.25	.59	.14	.27
Household/Domestic, all	.50	.15	.35	.47	.15	.38
Sales/Services, works for family	.55	.14	.31	.52	.15	.33
Sales/Services, self-employed	.50	.15	.35	.47	.15	.38
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.50	.15	.35	.47	.15	.38
Clerical, all	.50	.15	.35	.48	.15	.37
Professional/Technical, works for family	.66	.12	.22	.63	.13	.24
Professional/Technical, self-employed	.66	.12	.22	.64	.13	.23
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.54	.14	.32	.51	.15	.34

contribution to family income. The results for Model Specification 4 are shown in Table 8 and indicate that a woman's contribution is relevant to her ability to go to the market or to visit friends and family without permission, but is only when a woman contributes *all* of her family's income that we see a positive impact on mobility and it is a small impact at that. Women that contribute more than half, but not all, of their family's income are not that different than women that contribute less than half of their family's income and are only 1.09 times more likely to have freedom of movement. Women that contribute all of their family's income do better, although

only slightly, than women that contribute less and they are 1.11 times more likely than women contributing less than half of their family's income to have greater mobility.

When looking at the predicted probability of freedom of movement by occupation for women contributing less than half of family income versus all of family income, we see that there is not a huge difference in mobility by contribution for all occupational categories. The predicted probabilities in Table 11 show that there is a small benefit to working for someone other than family as opposed to family and that professional working for someone else, sales/service and clerical and workers have a greater probability of full mobility than women in other occupations, especially when they contribute all of their family's income. We do see, however, that mobility is extremely limited for all women and that contributing all as opposed to less than half of family income can increase the probability of empowerment, but only slightly.

Control over Resources

Model Specification 1

The logit results displayed in Table 12 illustrate the relationship between various demographic characteristics, employment status and women's ability to set money aside. Having more education, being from an urban area, being older and not living with a spouse increases the likelihood of a woman's control over resources. When considering the employment questions, does working matter to women's empowerment, we that it does with regard to control over resources. Women that are currently employed are 1.18 times more likely than non-working women to be able to set money aside.

In Table 13, the predicted probabilities for women of various "ideal types" suggests that overall, women that are educated, older and from urban areas have a much greater probability of control over resources, regardless of employment status. Women that are rural, young and illiterate are at a clear disadvantage and the

Table 12: Ordered Logit Model Predicting Control over Resources by Socio-Demographic and Employment Characteristics

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Demographics				
Education Level	.386*** (.007)	.370*** (.007)	.370*** (.007)	.370*** (.007)
Rural	-.483***(.017)	-.431***(.018)	-.427***(.018)	-.426***(.018)
Marital Status	.699*** (.034)	.664** * (.034)	.649*** (.034)	.592*** (.035)
Caste	-.068*** (.015)	-.069***(.015)	-.060***(.015)	-.057***(.015)
Age	.136*** (.004)	.1335***(.004)	.133*** (.004)	.133*** (.004)
Works Currently				
	.162*** (.016)	---	---	---
Occupation				
Not Working		(omitted)	---	---
Prof/Tech/Managerial		.545***(.068)	---	---
Clerical		.725***(.132)	---	---
Sales/Services		.725***(.132)	---	---
Household/Domestic		.573***(.079)	---	---
Skilled Manual		.224***(.036)	---	---
Unskilled Manual		.275***(.042)	---	---
Agriculture		.035* (.018)	---	---
Unknown but Working		-.097 (.167)	---	---
Occupation * Works For				
Not working			(omitted)	(omitted)
Profess -Family			.098 (.188)	-.078 (.192)
Profess- Other			.679***(.088)	.433*** (.095)
Profess- Self employ.			.420***(.125)	.192 (.130)
Clerical- all			.728***(.132)	.459*** (.138)
Sales/Serv- Family			.596***(.104)	.436*** (.107)
Sales/Serv- Other			.789***(.118)	.551*** (.124)
Sales/Serv- Self employ.			.791***(.089)	.562*** (.096)
House/Domestic- all			.583***(.079)	.342*** (.087)
Skilled Man- Family			-.180* (.079)	-.327***(.082)
Skilled Man- Other			.335***(.054)	.127* (.065)
Skilled Man- Self empl.			.311***(.059)	.109 (.069)
Unskilled Man- all			.279***(.042)	.054 (.055)
Agricult- Family			-.077***(.022)	-.110***(.023)
Agricult- Other			.167***(.026)	-.036 (.043)
Agricult- Self employ.			.240***(.062)	.104 (.066)
Unknown- all			-.105 (.168)	-.310 (.171)
Contrib. to Fam Income				
Missing			---	-.143*** (.040)
Less than Half			---	(omitted)
Half or More			---	.169*** (.036)
All			---	.315*** (.045)
Cut 1	.102 (.025)	.114 (.025)	.123 (.025)	-.022 (.047)
N	89,370	89,325	89,312	89,312

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 13: Predicted Probability of Control over Resources by Women’s Work Status and Socio-Demographic Characteristics for Model Specification 1

Ideal Types	Predicted Probabilities	
	No	Yes
Illiterate, rural, young and NOT working	.64	.36
Illiterate, rural, young and working	.60	.40
High School, urban, older and NOT working	.11	.89
High School, urban, older and working	.09	.91
An “average” individual, NOT working	.38	.62
An “average” individual, working	.34	.66

probability of being able to set money aside is .36 for non-workers and only .40 for working women. There are not huge differences for women of any socio-demographic background by employment status indicating that while working has some importance to control over resources, socio-demographic background may make more of a difference.

Model Specification 2

When looking at the relationship between occupation and control over resources, we see fairly large differences in ability to set money aside by the type of work that a woman is engaged in. The logit results displayed in Table 12 show that occupation is a significant indicator of control over resources. Women working in agricultural and manual positions, both skilled and unskilled, are the least likely to be empowered when compared to women in other occupations. For the most part though, they are more likely than non-working women to be able to set money aside. The exception is agriculture workers that are essentially the same as non-workers in terms

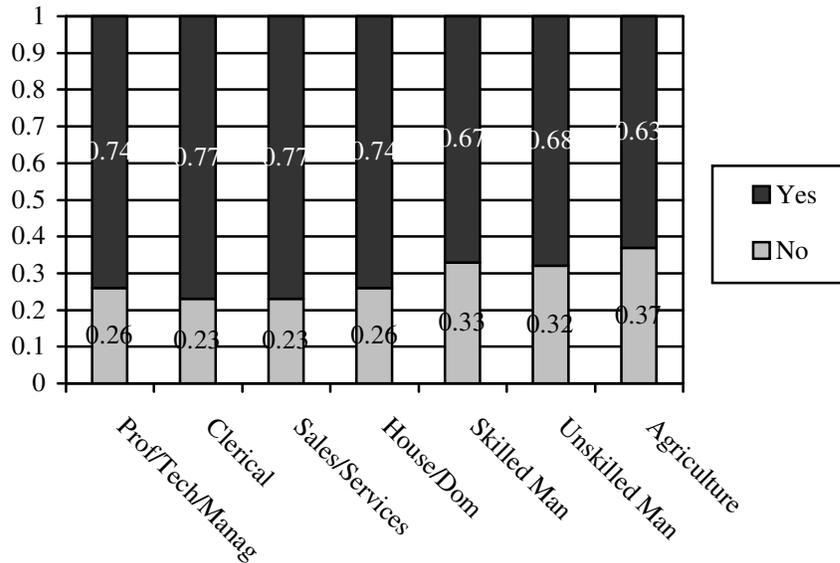


Figure 3: Control over Resources Predicted Probabilities for an "Average" Woman by Occupation for Model Specification 2

of control over resources. Skilled and unskilled manual workers fare better and are around 1.28 times more likely than non-workers to be able to set some money aside.

On the other end of the spectrum, professional, clerical, sales/service and household/domestic workers are much more likely than both non-workers and manual and agricultural workers to have control over resources. Clerical and sales/service workers are doing the best in terms of control over resources and they are about twice as likely as non-workers to be able to set money aside.

The predicted probabilities of control over resources are shown in Figure 3 and illustrate the differences in empowerment by occupation. It is clear from the chart that agricultural workers are the least likely to be able to set money aside and the most likely to have no control over resources. Women in non-manual occupations, like professional, clerical and sales/services are much more likely to be able to set money aside.

Model Specification 3

Model Specification 3 expands Model 2 to look at the interaction between occupation and who the respondent works to various work situations affect women's ability to set money aside. The regression results in Table 12 suggest that who the respondent works for does affect women's control over resources for a number of occupations. For professional workers we see that women working for their family are essentially the same as women that do not work at all when it comes to controlling resources, but other professional workers that work someone else or are self-employed are much more likely to be empowered.

The same is true for skilled manual and agriculture workers. For women in these two occupations, working for family means a significantly decreased likelihood of being able to set money aside, even less than non-working women, but the likelihood increase for both self-employed workers and for those that work for someone other than family. While the coefficients are not as large for skilled manual and agricultural workers as they are for professional workers, we do see a payoff by the way of increased control over resources for women that work for someone other than family of themselves. For sales/service workers, the coefficients are quite large all sales/service workers are likely to be able to control resources, but women working for family are still at disadvantage.

The predicted probabilities for Model Specification 3 shown in Table 14 reveal that both who the respondent works for and socio-demographic background influence women's ability to set money aside. Overall, we see that working for someone other than family for all women in all occupations means an increased probability of controlling resources; however, the interesting thing is to look at the differences between working for family and working for someone else by occupation for women

Table 14: Predicted Probability of Control over Resources by Occupation, Who the Respondent Works for and Socio-Demographic Characteristics for Model Specification 3

Ideal Types	No	Yes
Illiterate, rural, young		
Agriculture, works for family	.65	.35
Agriculture, works for someone else	.59	.41
Skilled Manual, works for family	.67	.33
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.55	.45
Sales/Services, works for family	.48	.52
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.44	.56
Professional/Technical, works for family	.61	.39
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.46	.54
High School, urban, older		
Agriculture, works for family	.12	.88
Agriculture, works for someone else	.10	.90
Skilled Manual, works for family	.14	.86
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.09	.91
Sales/Services, works for family	.07	.93
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.06	.94
Professional/Technical, works for family	.11	.89
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.06	.94

that are young, rural and illiterate and for those that are older, urban and more highly educated.

What we see is that who the respondent works for appears to matter more for those women that are the least likely to be empowered, women that work in agriculture or skilled manual work and that are illiterate, rural and young. For these women, for someone other than family increases the probability of control over resources more than for any other employment situation. For agricultural workers, the probability of being able to set money aside increases by .06 when the woman works for someone else and for skilled manual workers the difference is .12. In general though, working for someone else, working in a professional or sales/service

occupations, and being urban, older and educated increase the probability of control over resources.

Model Specification 4

Adding women's total contribution to family earnings to the occupations and work situations discussed in Model Specification 3 reveals that how much of a financial input women have to their household is an important factor in women's ability to set money aside. In Table 12, the logit results suggest that for many women, contributing substantially to family income affects control over resources more than who the respondent works for. For instance, all women working in agriculture, skilled or unskilled manual positions and even professionals that are self-employed or work for family have a low likelihood of being able to set money aside, but women that contribute half or more of their family's income are 1.18 times more likely than low contributors to have control over resources. This number increases even more for women that contribute all of their family's income and these women are 1.37 times more likely to be able to set money aside. The logit results clearly point to the importance of financial contribution to control over resources.

This finding is further illustrated by the predicted probabilities shown in Table 15. What we see is a fairly small increase in the probability of control over resources by work situation for agriculture and sales/service workers. Women in these occupations do appear to be much better off when they work for someone other than family as opposed to family, whether they are low contributors or significant contributors. For skilled manual and professional workers, things look quite different. For women in these occupational groups we see much larger increases (from .09 to .10) in control over resources for women that work for someone else rather than family.

When we look at the impact of contribution to women's empowerment, we see a consistent increase in control over resources across all occupations and in all work

Table 15: Predicted Probability of Control over Resources by Occupation, Who the Respondent Works for and Total Contribution to Family Income for Model Specification 4

Ideal Types	Contributes Less than Half of Family's Income		Contributes All of Family's Income	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
Agriculture, works for family	.38	.62	.31	.69
Agriculture, self-employed	.33	.67	.26	.74
Agriculture, works for someone else	.36	.64	.29	.71
Unskilled Manual, all	.34	.66	.27	.73
Skilled Manual, works for family	.43	.57	.35	.65
Skilled Manual, self-employed	.33	.67	.26	.74
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.32	.68	.26	.74
Household/Domestic, all	.28	.72	.22	.78
Sales/Services, works for family	.26	.74	.20	.80
Sales/Services, self-employed	.24	.76	.18	.82
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.24	.76	.19	.81
Clerical, all	.25	.75	.20	.80
Professional/Technical, works for family	.37	.63	.30	.70
Professional/Technical, self-employed	.30	.70	.25	.75
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.26	.74	.20	.80

situations. For women working in all occupations, regardless of who they work for, we see anywhere from a .05 increase to a .08 increase in the probability of being able to set money aside when we move from contributing less than half of family income to contributing all of family income. This contribution effect hold for all occupations indicating that in the case of control over resources, contribution is a significant factor in women's empowerment in the home.

Views on Violence against Women

Model Specification 1

Table 16 presents the regression results for women's decision-making by employment indicators. For views on violence against women, the relationship between employment status and women's empowerment is quite different than for the

Table 16: Ordered Logit Model Predicting Views on Violence against Women by Socio-Demographic and Employment Characteristics

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Demographics				
Education Level	.242*** (.006)	.220*** (.006)	.220*** (.006)	.221*** (.006)
Rural	-.218***(.016)	-.182***(.017)	-.180***(.017)	-.180***(.017)
Marital Status	.181*** (.030)	.159*** (.030)	.157*** (.030)	.129*** (.031)
Caste	.261*** (.015)	.254*** (.015)	.256*** (.015)	.256*** (.015)
Age	.048*** (.004)	.045*** (.004)	.045*** (.004)	.045*** (.004)
Works Currently	-.401***(.015)	---	---	---
Occupation				
Not Working		(omitted)	---	---
Prof/Tech/Managerial		-.017 (.047)	---	---
Clerical		-.017 (.081)	---	---
Sales/Services		-.468***(.048)	---	---
Household/Domestic		-.115 (.066)	---	---
Skilled Manual		-.398***(.034)	---	---
Unskilled Manual		-.355***(.042)	---	---
Agriculture		-.534***(.019)	---	---
Unknown but Working		.480*** (.162)	---	---
Occupation * Works For				
Not working			(omitted)	(omitted)
Profess -Family			-.237 (.156)	-.197 (.159)
Profess- Other			.008 (.057)	.065 (.069)
Profess- Self employ.			-.016 (.090)	.039 (.098)
Clerical- all			-.016 (.081)	.024 (.090)
Sales/Serv- Family			-.489***(.089)	-.459** (.092)
Sales/Serv- Other			-.234** (.088)	-.186* (.096)
Sales/Serv- Self employ.			-.617***(.074)	-.573***(.082)
House/Domestic- all			-.111 (.066)	-.069 (.076)
Skilled Man- Family			-.252***(.077)	-.215** (.081)
Skilled Man- Other			-.355***(.051)	-.297***(.063)
Skilled Man- Self empl.			-.512***(.054)	-.454***(.065)
Unskilled Man- all			-.354***(.042)	-.307***(.055)
Agricult- Family			-.544***(.023)	-.537***(.024)
Agricult- Other			-.528***(.027)	-.476***(.044)
Agricult- Self employ.			-.469***(.064)	-.436***(.067)
Unknown- all			.496*** (.163)	.537*** (.167)
Contrib. to Fam Income				
Missing			---	.084* (.041)
Less than Half			---	(omitted)
Half or More			---	.008 (.034)
All			---	.178*** (.041)
Cut 1	.446 (.024)	.415 (.024)	.418 (.024)	.501 (.048)
N	89,263	89,219	89,206	89,206

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

previous two empowerment indicators. Interestingly, for views on violence against women, working *decreases* the log odds of having a higher empowerment score in terms of the Violence against Women Scale. The coefficient of -.401 means that women who work are significantly *less* likely, .67 times, than women who are not

working to have a higher score on the Violence against Women Scale. This means that in the case of justification of wife-beating, working is negatively associated with empowerment. In practical terms, women who work are more likely than women who do not work to report that there are reasons that a husband may hit his wife.

This result is surprising and from the data, it is not clear why this would be the case, but speculating, it could be that women who work are breaking traditional norms about appropriate behavior. In doing so, they may be at an increased risk of violence and so they may be more likely to *expect* violence. Violence may be the price that these women pay for breaking norms and being employed and a greater expectation of violence leads to a greater acceptance of it. This may be one reason why employment is so negatively associated with disempowered views on domestic violence, but again, it is unclear from the data exactly why this is the case and there needs to be research that specifically addresses this question.

For views on violence against women, Table 17 displays the predicted probabilities of views on wife-beating for different “ideal types” of women. We also see an association between justification of wife-beating and employment status, but unlike freedom of movement, for all “types” of women those who work have a *higher* predicted probability of justifying wife-beating than those women who do not work at all. For the “average” woman, working as opposed to not working, means an increase of .1 in the predicted probability of saying that wife-beating is sometimes justified. This holds for young illiterate women as well as older women with a high school education, but being younger, having less education and being from a rural area significantly decreases the probability of saying domestic violence is never justified.

Table 17: Predicted Probability of Views on Violence against Women by Women’s Work Status and Socio-Demographic Characteristics for Model Specification 1

Ideal Types	Predicted Probabilities	
	Sometimes Okay	Never Okay
Illiterate, rural, young and NOT working	.66	.34
Illiterate, rural, young and working	.74	.26
High School, urban, older and NOT working	.23	.77
High School, urban, older and working	.31	.69
An “average” individual, NOT working	.51	.49
An “average” individual, working	.61	.39

Model Specification 2

The ordered logit results for occupation and views on violence against women are quite different than for the other empowerment indicators employed in this study. Women working in sales/services, skilled or unskilled manual labor, or agriculture are much less likely than women not working at all to say that wife-beating is never justified. Women working in these professions are therefore much more likely to report that a husband may hit his wife for any number of reasons. Agricultural workers are by far the least likely to say that wife-beating is never justified. They are only .59 times as likely as non-workers to be empowered when it comes to views on violence against women. While sales/service workers have often been one of the groups with a greater likelihood of empowerment, when it comes to views on domestic violence they are not that much different than agricultural workers. Clearly women in India, regardless of occupation are lack empowerment in terms of attitudes on violence towards women.

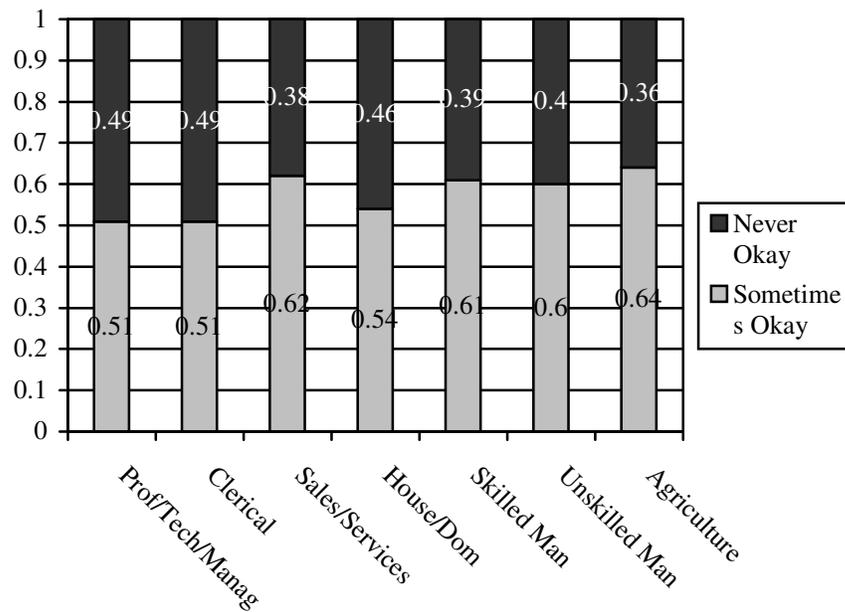


Figure 4: Views on Violence against Women Predicted Probabilities for an "Average" Woman by Occupation for Model Specification 2

Even for professional/technical/managerial, clerical, and household and domestic work we see a limited or even a negative association with views on violence against women. For professional/technical/managerial and clerical work there is no significant association with higher levels of women's empowerment and there is a significant negative coefficient (-.113) for household and domestic work. These results demonstrate that women working in occupations that are the most common to women in India have a greater likelihood of justifying wife-beating relative to women who do not work at all. Working, when broken down by occupation, is associated with an increased likelihood that women will have attitudes that support domestic violence against women and therefore lower levels of empowerment. No matter what occupation a woman works in, there seems to be a fairly high acceptance of violence against women.

The predicted probabilities for views on violence against women shown in Figure 4, display the probability of reporting that wife-beating is never justified as opposed to sometimes justified for each occupational category. The probability of saying that wife-beating is never justified is much higher for women in most non-manual occupations. For example, women in professional/technical/managerial and clerical positions have about a 50-50 chance of saying that domestic violence is justified. Agricultural workers, on the other hand, only have a very low probability (.36) of saying that wife-beating is never okay. For professional/technical/managerial workers, the predicted probability of saying violence is justified sometimes is .51, but for self-employed agricultural workers, the predicted probability is .65. This difference demonstrates the variation in responses of women in one occupation relative to another and reveals the important relationship between occupation and women's empowerment in terms of attitudes towards violence against women.

Model Specification 3

Model Specification 3 gives a clearer picture of what is going on in Model Specification 2 by including an interaction between select occupations and who the respondent works for. While in Model 2, professional workers looked to be about the same as non-workers in terms of views on violence against women, in Model 3 we see that this holds for women working for others and that are self-employed, but not for professionals working for their families. These women are much less likely than non-workers to say that wife-beating is never justified and it appears the working for family is quite limiting. Similarly for sales/service positions, women working for someone other than family are much better off than those that work for family or are self-employed, but they still rank far below non-workers on views on violence against women.

Table 18: Predicted Probability of Views on Violence against Women by Occupation, Who the Respondent Works for and Socio-Demographic Characteristics for Model Specification 3

Ideal Types	Sometimes Okay	Never Okay
Illiterate, rural, young		
Agriculture, works for family	.74	.26
Agriculture, works for someone else	.73	.27
Skilled Manual, works for family	.68	.32
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.70	.30
Sales/Services, works for family	.73	.27
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.67	.33
Professional/Technical, works for family	.67	.33
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.62	.38
High School, urban, older		
Agriculture, works for family	.44	.56
Agriculture, works for someone else	.43	.57
Skilled Manual, works for family	.37	.63
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.39	.61
Sales/Services, works for family	.42	.58
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.36	.64
Professional/Technical, works for family	.36	.64
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.31	.69

For agricultural workers, there is not a huge difference in likelihood of empowered views on violence against women by who the respondent works for, but women working for others or that are self-employed are more likely to say that violence is never justified than women than work for family, but still much less likely than non-workers.

Interestingly, this pattern does not appear to hold for all women in all occupations and in the case of skilled manual workers, the largest penalty of empowerment appear to be for self-employed workers followed by women working for someone other than family. Skilled manual workers that work for family members are more likely to say violence against women is not okay. It is unclear from the data why this might be the case.

Looking at the predicted probabilities in Table 18, we see that who the respondent works for appears to have a larger affect on views on violence against women for sales/service and professional workers, regardless of socio-demographic background. For women sales/service and professional work, the probability of saying wife-beating is never justified increases from .06 and .05, respectively, for women that work for someone other than family as opposed to family. For agriculture workers the increase is only .01 and for skilled manual workers the probability of empowerment actually decreases by .02.

The predicted probabilities also demonstrate that women in agriculture and manual work, regardless of background, are at a disadvantage relative to women in professional and sales/service occupations. They are at even more of a disadvantage when they are young, rural and illiterate as opposed to older, urban and more educated. So while who the respondent works for seems to matter little for agriculture and manual work, it does make a difference for women in other occupations and socio-demographic factors are important for all women.

Model Specification 4

Previous models have demonstrated that women's attitudes towards wife-beating, in all occupations and work situations, differ very little or in many cases are much worse than for women that do not work at all. This propensity towards saying that wife-beating is justified is to some extent mediated by the type of employment is engaged in. This model considers the interaction between contribution to total family income and women's views on violence against women and suggests that more than other factor, financial contribution can positively impact women's attitudes to wife-beating, although the affect is modest. While women that contribute half or more of family income are no different in their attitudes from women that contribute much less, women that contribute all of their family's income are 1.19 times more likely

Table 19: Predicted Probability of Views on Violence against Women by Occupation, Who the Respondent Works for and Total Contribution to Family Income for Model Specification 4

Ideal Types	Contributes Less than Half of Family's Income		Contributes All of Family's Income	
	Sometimes Okay	Never Okay	Sometimes Okay	Never Okay
Agriculture, works for family	.66	.34	.62	.38
Agriculture, self-employed	.64	.36	.59	.41
Agriculture, works for someone else	.64	.36	.60	.40
Unskilled Manual, all	.61	.39	.56	.44
Skilled Manual, works for family	.58	.42	.54	.46
Skilled Manual, self-employed	.64	.36	.60	.40
Skilled Manual, works for someone else	.60	.40	.56	.44
Household/Domestic, all	.55	.45	.50	.50
Sales/Services, works for family	.64	.36	.60	.40
Sales/Services, self-employed	.67	.33	.63	.37
Sales/Services, works for someone else	.58	.42	.53	.47
Clerical, all	.52	.48	.48	.52
Professional/Technical, works for family	.58	.42	.53	.47
Professional/Technical, self-employed	.52	.48	.48	.52
Professional/Technical, works for someone else	.51	.49	.47	.53

than low contributors to say that wife-beating is never justified. Although this is fairly small, it is the only significantly positive factor (that is also large) that improves women's likelihood of more empowered attitudes.

The predicted probabilities in Table 19 better illustrate the difference in empowerment by both work situation and contribution to family. The results indicate that there are modest increases (from .04 to .05) in the probability of saying wife-beating is never okay for women in all occupations, no matter who they work for,

when we move from contributing less than half of family income to being the sole contributor. Differences by who the respondent works for are not as consistent and for agricultural and skilled manual workers there is hardly any difference at all in attitudes when a woman works for family or if she works for someone else. Who the respondent works for appears to have a large impact for sales/service and professional workers. For sales/service workers we see an increased probability of .06 for low contributors and .07 for significant contributors by shifting to working for someone other than family and for professionals, these numbers are .07 and .06. So while who the respondent works for matters more for some than others, financial contribution can affect women's attitudes towards violence against women across all occupations.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are consistent with a number of other studies on employment and women's empowerment, but also add new insights into this complex relationship. Like previous studies, socio-demographic background is extremely important to women's empowerment. Being widowed, separated or divorced, having higher levels of education, being older, and being from an urban area are associated with higher levels of empowerment in terms of decision-making, freedom of movement, control over resources and view of violence against women. While caste is not always significant, being a member of a scheduled caste, scheduled tribe or other backward caste tends to be associated with a decreased likelihood of empowerment for all four indicators. The most important demographic factors are education level, marital status and being from an urban or rural area. Demographics play a huge role in empowerment and certainly the traditional approaches of increasing education, delaying age at marriage and targeting empowerment programs at women and girls in rural areas is supported by these findings.

While the assumption is that working is important to improving women's empowerment, and some studies support this view (Dutta 2000; Salway 2005), a number of studies find that working alone is not enough (Kabeer 1997; Kantor 2003; Sen 1999). The results from this study reveal that the answer to even this most basic question may not be so straightforward. For the four empowerment indicators analyzed – decision-making, freedom of movement, control over resources and justification for wife-beating – I find three very different results. In the first case, decision-making power in the home, I find no relationship between employment status and the ability to decide about obtaining healthcare and about visiting friends or family. For control over resources and freedom of movement, the relationship between employment status and empowerment is positive, although of different

magnitudes, but for views on violence against women, we see that working actually decreases the likelihood empowerment relative to not working at all.

The findings from Model Specification 1 are extremely interesting because they show two significant positive relationships, a significant negative relationship and no relationship at all. These results are for a representative sample of around 90,000 women in India and the only difference is the empowerment indicator being looked at. The substantial difference in results by empowerment indicator demonstrates not only how a woman can be empowered in one area and not another, but also that employment matters differently to different dimensions of empowerment. While these findings somewhat complicate the question of whether working is important to empowerment, the results raise a number of interesting questions: How can employment improves women's decision-making power in the home? Does the increase in women's mobility as a result of employment allow women to challenge patriarchal controls? Why do working women justify violence? Is increased violence the price that women pay for their labor force participation?

Overall, the results confirm that sweeping generalizations about the link between employment and empowerment cannot be made and that while there is a relationship, it differs by empowerment indicator. The results also confirm the literature that says that working is not enough to empowerment women, with the exception of empowerment in terms control over resources, and to a greater extent, mobility.

With regard to occupation, women in non-manual occupations (professional/technical/managerial, clerical, sales/services) are more likely than non-workers to have greater decision-making, freedom of movement, control over resources and to say that violence against women is not justified than non-workers. The results for women

working in household and domestic work are more closely aligned with the findings for non-manual workers rather than manual workers and in some cases, these women have a greater probability of having empowerment than women in professional-type jobs.

Women working in manual and agricultural labor, on the other hand, are not likely to be empowered in terms of decision-making or views on violence against women and for agriculture workers in terms of control over resources. In most cases, women working in these occupations are not more likely to be empowered than non-workers and are virtually the same or even worse than women that do not work at all. The standout is freedom of movement however, because all working women, regardless of occupation are more likely than non-workers to have mobility.

What Model Specification 2 reveals is that working in the occupations that are most available to women, manual labor and agriculture, is very limiting to women's empowerment. This is not surprising considering our understanding of the working conditions, wages and status associated with these professional categories, but these results suggest that it may be difficult for employment to serve as a catalyst for empowerment if opportunities for women in non-manual and non-agricultural work do not open up. Even then, work may not necessarily be that empowering as in the case of views on violence against women.

Some of the most interesting results are found when looking deeper into the various employment factors that may be associated with women's empowerment. Model Specification 3 expands four of the occupational categories to include who the respondent works for and suggests that this employment characteristics matters more for some occupations and for some empowerment indicators than it does for others.

The literature that looks specifically at the affect of who the respondent works for on empowerment finds that working outside of the home is important to women's empowerment both in terms of mobility and because it expands women's opportunities to interact with the market and in the public sphere (Kantor 2002). Consistent with Kantor's findings, the results show that working outside the home is positively associated with an increased likelihood of full mobility, but where a woman works is not significantly related to either decision-making power or to women's views on wife-beating. Other studies suggest that working independently of male family members and outside of the sphere of family increases women's control over their labor and wages and is important to women's empowerment (Whitehead 1985).

In this study, for whom the respondent works is found to have some impact on empowerment and in general, working for someone other than family increases the odds of having a say in household decisions, of being able to go out without permission, of having control over resources and of saying that wife-beating is never justified relative to women who work for their family. Interestingly, being self-employed does not increase the likelihood of decision-making, mobility or more empowered views on violence against women, but for control over resources, being self-employed is extremely important and in the case of agriculture work, self-employment has a larger impact than working for someone other than family. For skilled manual and sales/service workers, the odds for self-employed women are about the same as women that for work for someone other than family.

It appears that for control over resources, self-employment is a means to greater empowerment. This could be because of the nature of self-employment, allowing greater autonomy when it comes to setting money aside; however, more research that looks specifically at this issue could do more to illuminate this finding.

The results from Model Specification 3 also suggest that there are greater variations in empowerment by whom the respondent works for by occupation. For professional workers, there are huge variations by who the respondent works for and professionals that are self-employed or work for family are often more aligned with manual workers than they are with other professionals or non-manual workers. Being a professional worker only appears to pay off when the respondent works for someone other than family, despite being in an occupation associated with greater social status. For agricultural workers, on the other hand, we see little variation in decision-making and views on violence against women by who the respondent works for.

Model Specification 3 indicates that while working for someone other than family is often associated with greater empowerment, the relationship between whom the respondent works for and empowerment is mediated by occupation and by the empowerment indicator in question.

With regard to contribution to total family income, resource theory says that women's contribution of their wages should increase their negotiating and Kabeer (1997) concludes that women's wage contribution to their family makes a difference for women's empowerment in the home despite the lack of dramatic challenges to patriarchy. According to Kabeer (1997), women felt that their contribution allowed them to increase their security in their relationship, improve chances for their children and gave them more negotiating power. The results of this study suggest that contribution to total family earnings is associated with women's empowerment, except in the case of women's mobility. Contribution to family earnings does not appear to increase the likelihood of women's freedom of movement.

Specifically, this study finds that women who contribute all of their family's income, as opposed to less than half, are more likely to have greater decision-making

power in the home, are more likely to be able to set money aside and are less likely to say that wife-beating is justified. While these results suggest that women's contribution to their families *can* be important to empowerment, there are considerable limitations to this relationship. It is only when women contribute significantly to total family earnings, in most cases it takes contributing all of family's income, that wage contribution increases the likelihood of decision-making power, control over resources and more "empowered" views on violence against women. Contributing even half or more of the family's total income is not enough to increase empowerment.

So while the results indicate the potential for women's contribution to be empowering, it probably has limited implications for women since most women will not be in position to provide all their family's income. In this situation, a woman may face a number of other barriers to empowerment though and, as the sole provider for the household, is likely to have to live with the realities of extreme poverty and the burden of supporting her entire family on very few wages. This situation is far from empowering and so contribution to family earnings, although potentially important, does not necessarily lead to women's empowerment.

So what does this all mean for women's empowerment? This study indicates that while women's empowerment is linked to employment, the relationship is complex and not nearly as straightforward as is often assumed. This means that in order to understand the relationship between employment and empowerment closer attention needs to be paid to employment as a process: What makes a woman seek employment? What type of employment is available to her? How does the work distance a woman from familial control? Do the woman's wages play a large role in supporting her family? And, what happens to these wages once in the family, does the woman retain control over these wages? Paying attention to the employment process

draws attention to the many ways in which employment can be empowering *and* when it fails to challenge gender structures. This research only looks at pieces of this complex relationship, but suggests that all these steps are important to the potential for employment to empower women.

This research also suggests that employment is most successful in terms of behavioral measures of empowerment. It may be more likely for employed women to increase decision-making, control over resources or mobility, but changing women's "disempowered" attitudes is quite another thing. While there certainly appears to be a connection between employment and views on violence against women, when we look deeper at what all employment consists of, the challenge remains that most women, regardless of work experience and regardless of background, still report that wife-beating is justified. This finding illustrates how multifaceted empowerment is and that being empowered in one area does not mean that a woman will be empowered in another.

CONCLUSIONS

So based on the results of this study, what can we say about the relationship between employment and empowerment? The results suggest that there are a few broad conclusions that can we draw when considering the role of employment in empowerment outcomes: 1) type of work matters; 2) the proximity of work to the domestic sphere matters if women's work is to create independence from the control of male family members; 3) only significant contributions to family's income are likely to be enough to improve women's empowerment; and 4) empowerment is multifaceted and decision-making power, freedom of movement, control over resources and women's justification of wife-beating, all interact with employment uniquely. This last point is especially salient because it is not enough to say that work empowers women, or that anything empowers women for that matter, without discussing *how* it empowers women and the ways in which it allows women to make better choices in their life and challenge existing power structures.

What cannot be underestimated when looking at the results of this study is the lack of empowerment in all areas for women in India. Women have limited decision-making power, limiting mobility, limited control over resources and a high acceptance of domestic violence. While this paper demonstrates that employment can play an important role in the process of improving women's empowerment in India, there are numerous barriers to overcome, and employment, even under all the right conditions, is only one piece of the puzzle. In order for employment to be more empowering to women and for women's empowerment in India to be facilitated in general, the structural barriers to women's rights and equality must be addressed in the household, the community, the state, the nation and around the globe.

A number of fundamental changes must occur for employment to be more empowering for women. First, while increasing the jobs available to women is an important step to improving women's empowerment through employment, these jobs must go beyond what is traditionally available to women and the opportunity structures for women in all positions must be enhanced. Second, the most successful economic empowerment programs are those that provide not only jobs skills training or financial assistance to start small businesses, but those that incorporate rights awareness education, provide a network of supportive peers and those that work to improve women's self-esteem. Improving women's self-esteem and knowledge about their rights can increase their negotiating power and their ability to assert themselves and make choices that best meet their and their children's needs. Third, the importance of education for women and girls cannot be underestimated. Education not only expands women's economic opportunities, but it has repeatedly been shown to delay age at marriage, delay age at first birth and improve women's capabilities on a whole host of issues. Ensuring women and girl's education is fundamental to improving women's empowerment and furthering women's rights and equality. Fourth, policies must be put in place that guarantee women's rights and protect women in the workplace, the home and the community. These four points are only some of the things that must occur for work to be more empowering and to continue the push from empowerment as a process towards empowerment as an outcome.

We cannot forget that empowerment is a state of being as well as state of mind and before full empowerment can be realized, women need to not only act differently, but to think differently, to value themselves more, and to really believe that they are equal. Of course the challenge lies not just in individual women, but also in society and so while promoting individual women's empowerment is incredibly important, it is not enough to change the environment for women in India or in other developing

countries. As so many scholars have noted, empowerment must occur at all levels of society. Women must mobilize and fight for their rights, men must participate in the process, and governments must actively support women's equality in all spheres of life. Globally and at a local level, women must be empowered in the home, in the community, in the economy and in politics.

When thinking of women's empowerment in this way, it is easy to see why individual women's empowerment is so important: it is a seed for change at the most basic level. The importance of individual women's empowerment in the home cannot be underestimated and understanding the connections between employment and empowerment is necessary in order to understand the barriers to empowerment and to understand how employment can make a difference in women's lives.

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