



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***PARTICIPATION IN CROP MAXIMIZATION PROJECT, EMPOWERMENT
AND WELL-BEING AMONG SMALLFARMERS OF SINDH PROVINCE,
PAKISTAN***

GHULAM MUJTABA KHUSHK

FEM 2017 9



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EMPOWERMENT AND WELL-BEING AMONG SMALLFARMERS OF
SINDH PROVINCE, PAKISTAN**

By

GHULAM MUJTABA KHUSHK

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

January 2017

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DEDICATION

To the whole humanity



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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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January 2017

Chairman : Associate Professor Asnarulkhadi bin Abu Samah, PhD
Faculty : Human Ecology

The ultimate aim of community development is to improve the quality of life and well-being of community members. Achieving the well-being of community members through participation and empowerment approach is claimed to be effective in developing countries. These approaches of community development aim to engage or involve members of the community in the process of improving their life conditions. It is also used as a strategy by government at the local level to provide a platform to improve the standard of living and quality of life of the people. Like other developing countries, the government of Pakistan through its agricultural department launched various development projects/ programs (i.e. Micro-finance schemes, food security programs, poverty alleviation program, farmers' field school, crop-maximization projects, etc.) in order to improve the standard of living and quality of life of small farmers communities. In line with this, the present study focused on establishing the relationship between participation, empowerment and well-being among small farmers who participated in crop maximization project. This quantitative study surveyed 455 small farmers from six districts of the Sindh province of Pakistan who participated in crop maximization project using multistage cluster sampling technique. The result of this study showed that the socio-economic conditions of small farmers of the Sindh who participated in crop maximization project were low. The study revealed that, the level of participation was high but both empowerment and well-being were moderate. Further, the analysis of structural equation model indicated that the standardized path coefficient were consistent with the hypothesized model by indicating a large effect sizes which means that, participation contributes significantly to empowerment ($\beta = .546, p < .05$) and well-being ($\beta = .585, p < .05$). The first layer of analysis indicated that participation was statistically significant and positively related to empowerment ($p < .05$) and well-being ($p < .05$). In addition, the analysis of structural equation model indicated that the standardized indirect path coefficients of empowerment was significant to participation ($p < .05$) and well-being ($p < .05$) which indicated that, empowerment was a mediator in the relationship between participation and well-being. Based on the results, the researcher concluded that, there

is a significant relationship between participation, empowerment and well-being; and empowerment also leads to the well-being of the small farmers of the Sindh province in Pakistan. This study also supported the theories that established a link between participation, empowerment and well-being. Findings of this study can be used by the Sindh/Pakistan government, agricultural department of the Sindh, Pakistan, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and policy makers to develop their policies and strategies for the betterment of the peasant communities in future.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENGLIBATAN DALAM POTONG MEMAKSIMUMKAN PROJEK,
PENDAYAUPAYAAN DAN KESEJAHTERAAN PETANI BERSKALA
KECIL DI WILAYAH SINDH, PAKISTAN**

Oleh

GHULAM MUJTABA KHUSHK

Januari 2017

Pengerusi : Profesor Madya Asnarulkhadi bin Abu Samah, PhD
Fakulti : Ekologi Manusia

Matlamat utama pembangunan komuniti adalah untuk meningkatkan kualiti hidup dan kesejahteraan hidup komuniti. Bagi mencapai kesejahteraan komuniti, pendekatan penyertaan dan pendayaupayaan dikatakan berkesan di negara-negara membangun. Pendekatan pembangunan komuniti ini bertujuan melibatkan ahli komuniti dalam proses memperbaiki keadaan kehidupan mereka. Ia juga merupakan strategi digunakan oleh kerajaan pada peringkat tempatan sebagai platform untuk meningkatkan taraf dan kualiti hidup komuniti. Seperti negara-negara membangun yang lain, kerajaan Pakistan melalui Jabatan Pertaniannya telah melancarkan pelbagai projek pembangunan/program (seperti skim kredit mikro, program keselamatan makanan, program pembasmian kemiskinan, sekolah peladang, projek memaksimumkan tanaman, dan lain-lain) untuk meningkatkan taraf dan kualiti hidup komuniti petani berskala kecil. Kajian ini memberikan fokus kepada penyertaan, pendayaupayaan dan kesejahteraan petani berskala kecil yang mengambil bahagian dalam projek memaksimumkan tanaman. Kajian ini memberi tumpuan untuk menentukan perkaitan diantara penglibatan, pendayaupaan, dan kesejahteraan dalam kalangan petani berskala kecil yang menyertai projek memaksimumkan tanaman. Kajian kuantitatif ini telah menjalankan survei ke atas 455 orang petani berskala kecil di tiga buah daerah di wilayah Sindh, Pakistan yang mengambil bahagian dalam projek memaksimumkan tanaman dengan menggunakan teknik pensampelan kelompok berstrata. Hasil kajian menunjukkan keadaan sosioekonomi petani dari wilayah Sindh yang mengambil bahagian dalam projek memaksimumkan tanaman adalah rendah. Kajian mendapati tahap penglibatan petani adalah tinggi, tetapi tahap pendayaupaan dan kesejahteraan adalah sederhana. Analisis model persamaan struktur menunjukkan pekali lintasan seragam didapati konsisten dengan model yang dihipotesiskan dan memberikan kesan saiz yang besar, yang juga menunjukkan penglibatan memberikan sumbangan yang signifikan kepada pendayaupaan ($\beta = .546$, $CR = 13.171$, $p = .000$) dan kesejahteraan ($\beta = .585$, $CR = 9.261$, $p = .000$). Tahap pertama analisis menunjukkan penglibatan mempunyai kaitan yang signifikan dan

positif dengan pendayaupayaan ($p < .05$) dan kesejahteraan ($p < .05$). adalah signifikan dan berkadar langsung dengan saiz kesan yang lebih besar ($p \leq .05$) terhadap pendayaupayaan dan kesejahteraan. Di samping itu, hubungan antara pendayaupayaan dan kesejahteraan menunjukkan pendayaupayaan sebagai perantara kesejahteraan. Berdasarkan dapatan kajian, penyelidik menyimpulkan bahawa terdapat hubungan antara penglibatan, pendayaupayaan, dan kesejahteraan, serta pendayaupayaan juga telah membawa kesejahteraan kepada para petani di wilayah Sindh, Pakistan. Kajian ini turut menyokong teori yang menunjukkan terdapat hubungan antara penglibatan, pendayaupayaan dan kesejahteraan. Dapatan kajian ini boleh digunakan oleh kerajaan Sindh/Pakistan, Jabatan Pertanian di Sindh, Pakistan, pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO), dan penggubal dasar untuk membangunkan polisi dan strategi untuk memperbaiki lagi keadaan masa depan komuniti petani.



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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 18 January 2017 to conduct the final examination of Khushk Ghulam Mujtaba on his thesis entitled "Participation in Crop Maximization Project, Empowerment and Well-Being among Small Farmers of Sindh Province, Pakistan" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

Members of the Thesis Examination Committee were as follows:

Ahmad Hariza bin Hashim, PhD

Professor
Faculty of Human Ecology
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Mohd Ibrani Shahrinin bin Adam Assim, PhD


Associate Professor
Faculty of Human Ecology
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Ma'rof bin Redzuan, PhD

Associate Professor
Faculty of Human Ecology
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Iraj Malek Mohammadi, PhD

Professor
University of Tehran
Iran
(External Examiner)



NOR AINI AB. SHUKOR, PhD
Professor and Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date: 22 March 2017

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Asnarulkhadi bin Abu Samah, PhD

Associate Professor
Fakulti Ekologi Manusia
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Nobaya bt Ahmad, PhD

Associate Professor
Fakulti Ekologi Manusia
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

Hanina Halimatusaadiah binti Hamsan, PhD

Senior Lecturer
Fakulti Ekologi Manusia
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

ROBIAH BINTI YUNUS, PhD

Professor and Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

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Signature: _____
Name of Chairman
of Supervisory
Committee: Associate Professor Dr. Asnarulkhadi bin Abu Samah

Signature: _____
Name of Member
of Supervisory
Committee: Associate Professor Dr. Nobaya bt Ahmad

Signature: _____
Name of Member
of Supervisory
Committee: Dr. Hanina Halimatusaadiah binti Hamsan

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGFI	Adjusted Goodness –of-Fit
AMOS	Analysis Of Moment Structures
API	Agriculture Policy Institute
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CMIN	Minimum Value of the Discrepancy Function, C
CMPII	Crop Maximisation Project phase II
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FFS	Farmers Field Schools
GFI	Goodness-of-Fit Index
GoP	Government of Pakistan
GoS	Government of Sindh
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Surveys
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	Incremental Index of Fit
ILO	International Labour Organization
MINFAL	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
PRHPS	Pakistan Rural Household Panel Survey
PRHS	Pakistan Rural Household Survey
PSLM	Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SCOPE	Society for Conservation and Protection of the Environment

SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SES	Socio-Economic Status
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
WeD	Well-being in Developing Countries
WFP	World Food Programme



CHAPTER 1

PARTICIPATION IN CROP MAXIMIZATION PROJECT, EMPOWERMENT AND WELL-BEING AMONG SMALL FARMERS OF SINDH PROVINCE, PAKISTAN

1.1 Introduction

The introductory chapter one contains the background of the study, problem statement, the research questions, the research objectives, the conceptual framework, conceptual and operational definitions of used terms, theoretical framework, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study and organization of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

The population of Pakistan in the year 2014 was 188.02 m, whereas the urban rural distribution was 72.50 m and 115.52 m respectively (Economic survey of Pakistan, 2014). The significant majority of 67.5 % Pakistan's population lives in remote rural areas and is connected with agricultural based activities for their livelihood (GoP, 2012). Pakistan is in the low Human Development Index (HDI) at 146 out of 187 countries in the year 2014 and 44.2 % of households lives in multi-dimensional poverty (UNDP, 2014). In Pakistan, poverty has been higher in rural areas 38.65 % as compared to urban areas having 22.39 % and the majority of these are the small farmers (Sabir *et al.*, 2006). The most affected community from poverty in rural areas is the small farmers, who have limited livestock ownership and land (IFAD, 2011). Being a Third World country, Pakistan is facing lack of education, food shortages and also suffering from shelter and health facilities (Yasmeen *et al.*, 2011). Food insecurity is a common phenomenon and it is increasing day by day in rural areas of Pakistan (Bashir *et al.*, 2010). The majority of the farmers are illiterate, deprived, excluded and marginalized. There are 42 million children between the age of 5-19 days old those do not go to school and one third of the population is living below the poverty line (living on less than one US \$ per day) (Australian Aid, 2010). The health conditions of rural communities are not satisfactory because less health facilities especially in Sindh province. It has been reported that there are 1,099 persons per doctor and 1,647 persons per hospital bed (PSLSM, 2011-12). In general, in rural areas, water supply and sanitation are as follows: only 14 % of population has facility to avail tap water, 42 % hand pump, 32 % motor pump, 4 % dug well and 8 % for others, respectively. For the type of toilet; 58 % have house hold flush, 14 % have non-flush toilets and 27 % have no toilet. The type of sanitation system; 3 % underground drain, 3 % covered drain, 45 % open drain and 49 % no system (PSLSM, 2011-12).

Agriculture has a central place in the economic growth and development of Pakistan. Agriculture is the dominant sector of the country with its contribution in GDP at 21.4 % and the country's labor force in this sector is 45 % (Economic Survey of Pakistan, 2012-2013). It is the country where an overwhelming majority of farmers is small farmers' communities having less than 12.5 acres of land for cultivation. Pakistan is a

small farms country having 93 % farm holding and the vast scope exists for the development of agriculture sector by addressing the issues relating to the small farmers (Khan, 2006; Gafoor, 2010). These small farmers play a vital role in the economy and they cultivate the area of 19.79 m acres out of 40.76 m acres and that is 48.65 % of the total cultivated area of the country (GoP, 2000). There is an absence of land reforms where the landlords or large land holders enjoy the incentives given by government and the small farmers suffer a lot (Huq, 2012). The politically influenced progressive farmers in the country take advantages from government subsidies programs in the agriculture sector and also avail benefits from technology improvement programs due to their large farms, whereas the small farmers lagged behind to enjoy these benefits (World Bank, 2003). This category of small farmers suffer more due to flood, disease outbreak and heavy insect attack because there is no insurance policy for these farmers and losses of crops and yield result in a low standard of living or a low socio-economic status (Ahmad *et al.*, 2013). There is no doubt that the small farmers are productive and innovative but due to poor organization, inadequate information, lack of skill and knowledge, face hazards and risk, thus, these factors ultimately have an impact on their crop productivity, competitiveness and their livelihood (Umesh *et al.*, 2010). Small farmers' farm land comprises of less than 12.5 acres (Zulqarnain, 2013) and the majority these have meager facilities to purchase agricultural inputs like fertilizers and sprays. Furthermore, they have large family member with low income (Din, 2011).

The Sindh province of Pakistan is the second most populous province after Punjab with literacy rate of 60 %. The literacy in urban area is high at 78 % and low in rural area at 41% (PSLM, 2011-12; Economic Survey of Pakistan, 2013-14). The overall monthly household expenditure in rural Sindh is Rs. 18, 651 and nearly 74 % of the total expenditure is on food items and tobacco (PRHPS, 2012). The small farmers of the province are living in very pitiful conditions and considered as a poor community in the country. Due to small land holdings, less participation, lack of capacity building and other related issues which make them powerless, less control on their lives and required attention regarding their quality of life and well-being. Although, small farmers are in the majority, but due to social, political, economic and psychological factors they are neglected stratum of the society. The small farmers live in village communities and the overall conditions of these communities and their dwellers are not satisfactory (IFAD, 2011), where they have a large family size and live in a joint family system. The majority of 75.6 % people of rural Sindh live in a joint family system and only 24.4 % live in a nuclear family system (Asim *et al.*, 2012). Small farmers have low status in society because they have less access to markets, lack of crop inputs, limited access to health facilities and gender discrimination are witnessed in their communities. Besides this, the community of small farmers is facing unequal distribution of assets and resources. They pay high prices for their inputs and receive low prices for their outputs furthermore they have lack of access to take credit from markets and banks as compared to large farmers (Arif & Farooque, 2011).

Looking to the socio-economic conditions of small farmers of the Sindh province, there are many factors involved for the low standard living, lack of happy life and well-being of these marginalized people. Being a dominant feudal society those who have created many cultural, political, psychological and economical traps to keep

the small farmers to be more subjugated of the system and remained a vulnerable stratum of the society. About 50.8 % of rural households do not have their own lands for cultivation and are victim of feudalism since centuries in the province (SCOP, 2014). Due to subjugation, the poor is becoming more poor and rapidly dividing into smaller and more excluded groups within the society. Therefore, it is very important to know and understand the ground realities and socio-economic conditions/background of these small farmers and their level of participation, empowerment and well-being.

Well-being is an emerging concept since 19th century and it means the quality of life of the people of any community or society (Murphy, 2010). The well-being of small farmers of the Sindh province is in dire need of time and to accomplish these goals, the government has launched various programs such as micro-finance schemes, food security programs, poverty alleviation programs, farmers field schools, crop-maximization projects etc. The well-being of communities can be studied as an outcome of the quality of life that includes someone's personal experiences and all aspects projects/programs run for empowerment and well-being of small farmers' communities. Well-being means of their lives such as friendship, family relationships, work and leisure, physical health, social well-being, economic/financial well-being and psychological well-being (Schwartz & Strack, 1999; Kane, 2003). It has been reported by Stutz (2006) that well-being basically consists of three elements such as welfare (the basic needs for body flourishing i.e. food, drink, medical care and shelter), contentment (stable sense of satisfaction) and freedom (the right to live and choose his/her own destiny). The term well-being has been defined by different people according to their interest of fields and it is basically the name of good conditions of people for an individual or group such as happiness, healthy life, prosperity and wealthy life. Whereas, community well-being has also been explained differently that means social, cultural, economical, environmental and political conditions identified by community members or communities themselves and these conditions are essential for the development of their communities. Furthermore, it also exhibits four major aspects/ core values such as material conditions, quality of life, human solidarity and sustainability/ ecological sensibility.

Participation has a significant role as it is a dictum of well-being and empowerment. Bowen (2008) explained that community participation has been regarded as a sign of success or hallmark for empowerment since long before in the democratic society. In the same way, Xu (2007) was of the view that for the success of a community development project, participation is a very important component of that development projects and he further explained that participation means participation in planning, decision-making and implementation of the project activities by the local people. Community participation and empowerment both are considered very important to achieve community support and to achieve desired results from community development projects (Cole, 2007). Because, there will be no sustainable change unless communities themselves are given the power and responsibility to take action (Taylor, 2000).

The empowerment level of small farmers of the Sindh province (the study area) is an equally important to the study like participation because both concepts are interrelated to each other. Participation and empowerment both are the processes that involve and engage community members for their local development (Cornish, 2006). To study the empowerment level of small farmers is also a need for time, because the rural areas of the Sindh province has been stratified since generations ago. In the same locality, one can easily observe the two different strata that makes discrimination between group of rich farmers and poor farmers. The people having large strip of land have more power and prestige than the people having less or small piece of land. The gatekeeper (head of village) is always selected as the person who have more land than the all villagers thus in a rural area having more land is the sign of power and authority. The more poverty stricken rural areas belong to traditionally feudal areas of Sindh, southern Punjab, Khyber Pakthunkhawa and Balochistan provinces of Pakistan, where people having large land or landed elites have decisive influences over people and the large size of land holding is regarded as the more powerful person in the community (Arif & Farooque, 2011). By revealing the facts regarding socio-economic background it is imperative to know the factors influencing the participation, the level of participation, empowerment and well-being and their relationships among small farmers of Sindh.

In the light of above discussion it could be concluded that the small farmers of the Sindh province of Pakistan need more participation, inclusion, culture of sharing and equity regarding their empowerment and well-being to improve their socio-economic conditions. The Agricultural Department of Sindh province with support by The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MINFAL) launched The Crop Maximization Project-II (CMP-II) few years back in six districts of Sindh province. This project was further implemented with the collaboration of two Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) named as National Rural Support Program (NRSP) and Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO). The main targeted districts were Larkana, Khairpur, Nawabshah, Naushero feroz, Sanghar and Mirpurkhas. However, three districts such as Khairpur, Nawabshah and Mirpurkhas were randomly selected for this study.

1.3 Problem statement

In the present research study, the researcher tried to find out the outcomes in the shape of well-being as a result of participation of small farmers communities in the study area. Besides this, the level of participation, empowerment and well-being was also determined among small farmers who participated in CMP-II. The main features of CMP-II include organizing and empowering farmers' communities, extensive trainings of farmers, capacity building for improvement of crop productivity, building linkages of farmers group to the main marketing chains, providing facilities to access soft agricultural loan and establishing small enterprises.

There have been various such projects launched by concerned government for the empowerment and well-being of small farmers but outcome of such projects that could assess the impact of such programs on farmers' have not been studied thoroughly.

Furthermore, the level of participation, empowerment and well-being of small farmers in a particular project like CMP-II is required to determine. Plenty of work has also been done about the relationship between participation and empowerment but less have been done regarding the relationship between empowerment and well-being and the mediating role of empowerment between participation and well-being that could be consider as a main research gape of such studies.

The small farmers have to change their position/status from being passive recipient to the active participant and the controller of their resources and responsible for their own development. Beside this, they must be equally partners to the resource providers (Umesh *et al.*, 2010). The government institutes, organizations, NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) are working for capacity building and trainings for the participation, empowerment and well-being of small farmers. These organizations have also established many programs however the majority of the small farmers of the Sindh province of Pakistan still seem powerless, excluded, have less control on their lives and have no say in these projects or programs. Unfortunately, there has been a problem of patronage for such projects/programs by the target clients or beneficiaries. The success of project like CMP-II can only be achieved if there be more participation and patronage by the local (targeted) people as their empowerment and well-being could be assured through these projects or programs. Further, hardly any study was conducted that could assess the issues related to the participation.

Participation is a tool through which people can achieve control of their lives and communities can build their capabilities, capacities, empowerment and well-being. Participation is pertinent for making and affecting changes in community life and those positive changes became a cause for a better quality of life (Abu Samah, 2006). The agriculture extension department of Pakistan is responsible for the participation of farmers (small, medium and large holder farmers) in capacity building and other programs of agricultural development. Unfortunately, this department has shown failure even in the dissemination of knowledge regarding agricultural technology and other related required information to the farmers of the country (Mari *et al.*, 2011). The participation of small farmers in various agricultural related programmes is still questionable. In the present senario, the required information regarding more crop production is not assured to the farming communities of Pakistan (Naveed *et al.*, 2012). The researcher is of the opinion that the small farmers' communities can be developed, empowered and availed a better quality of life and well-being through participation because their participation can be a good instrument for empowerment and well-being of any community.

The well-being can be possibly achieved through the active participation of people in the developmental projects and programs to enhance the quality of life. The participation in these programs will increase and enhance the empowerment and well-being of people (Friis-Hanson & Duveskog, 2012). However, due to the low level of participation by small farmers in projects/programs launched by government and NGO's in the developing countries, they face deprivation to get benefits from developmental projects to build their empowerment and well-being. In addition, the act of less participation or non participation results unawareness regarding new

technology and its adaptation process which may affect their crops yield productivity, less control over the resources, isolation, powerlessness and less integrate into the mainstream of development. The small farmers have less knowledge about the use of pesticides, fertilizers and advance techniques with the new technology in farming (Chhachhar *et al.*, 2012). This situation of less participation exclusion has disempowered the small farmers and due to that they do not take part in the decision-making of their development project and they have a little control over their lives. So, the questions is aroused/raised here that what are the socio-economic background of the small farmers? What is the level of their participation, empowerment and well-being? And how participation influence on their empowerment and well-being through government initiated program like CMP-II?

Empowerment of any community relies on the more participation of its citizens in development programs launched for the well-being of the community, and even the literature confirms that participation is a strong sign of empowerment and empowerment ultimately leads to well-being (Speer, 2000; Christens *et al.*, 2011; Christens, 2012; Friis-Hansen & Duveskog, 2012). The previous literature has shown empowerment as a mediator and it has a relationship and influence on well-being (Tsey *et al.*, 2007; O'Brien *et al.*, 2009; Biron & Bamberger, 2010; Cattaneo & Goodman, 2010; Larsen *et al.*, 2010). But the issue here is that, if the people of any community are powerless and marginalized, then how is it possible for them to achieve the required benefits (well-being as outcome) from development programs? The powerless people, either subjectively or objectively, cannot participate actively in decisions regarding the well-being of their own lives (Hollnsteiner, 1979). With especial concerned to Sindh province of Pakistan, various studies have been conducted that display very low socio-economic conditions of small farmers which further decline day by day. Tanwir *et al.* (2006) revealed that the status of small farmers are becoming low due to more land distribution among family members as they are large in family which affect the socio-economic conditions of these people. Thus, the status of small farmers of Sindh is worse in society because of their low income, having less basic health facilities, maximum percent of illiteracy and low quality of life (HDI, 2014).

In the context of participation and community development, the government of Pakistan formulates policies and makes efforts for poverty alleviation, empowerment and well-being of small farmers at the larger level and claim the participation of all stakeholders in the development and well-being programs. Besides this, there is also a plethora of claims of developmental agencies regarding community empowerment and well-being of small farmers in the country but there are no considerable signs of inclusion, equity, empowerment and well-being of small farmers in the country that are supposed to be known as significant. For example, the government and the partner of developmental organizations have established farmers' field schools to develop knowledge and skill, so they may be able to understand, define and solve their problems by themselves (Khan *et al.*, 2010). But, looking to the ground realities about rural communities of the Sindh province of Pakistan, the actual situation/reality is different than the claim made by the developmental organizations working in these areas and there is no significant empowerment and well-being among beneficiaries of programs. Therefore, through this study the researcher attempted to know about the

problem and the claim made by development organizations regarding the empowerment and well-being of small farmers' communities of the province. In addition, the empowerment has been taken as a mediator with assumption that the empowerment itself is not an outcome of participation but it is an output of participation that might lead to well-being as an outcome. In the community development most of studies emphasized on the relationship between participation and empowerment whereas in present study efforts have been taken regarding the relationship between participation, empowerment and well-being altogether.

Finally, through this study, the researcher tried to find out the socio-economic conditions/background, the level of participation, the level of empowerment and the level of well-being among small farmers involved in the project of CMP-II in Sindh province in order to understand the problem. Besides this, the main objectives of this study were to determine the relationship between participation and empowerment, relationship between participation and level of well-being and the role of empowerment as a mediator. The selected variables were further categorized as a socio-economic background (anecedent variables), the level of participation (decision-making, implementation and benefits as independent variables), empowerment (Capacity building, self-esteem, and self-efficacy as a mediator) and well-being (material conditions, quality of life, human solidarity and sustainability as the dependent variables) of small farmers' communities. In addition, the Structural Equation Model (SEM) was developed to observe the relationship between variables and also measured the mediating effect of empowerment between participation and well-being. The present study was conducted in a socio-cultural context of the local communities of the small farmers of the Sindh province and that will fill the research gap between local, regional and national level. Thus, this body of knowledge will also contribute towards the cumulative knowledge of community development among peasants.

1.4 Research questions

Throughout this study, the researcher attempted to find out answers of the following questions:

1. What are the socio-economic conditions/ background of small farmers?
2. What is the level of participation, empowerment and well-being among small farmers; who participated in the crop maximization project?
3. What are the factors influencing participation of small farmers?
4. What is relationship between participation, empowerment and well-being of small farmers?
5. What is the role of empowerment as a mediator between participation and well-being?

1.5 Objectives of the study

1.5.1 Main objective

The general objective of the study is to study participation, empowerment and well-being among small farmers.

1.5.2 Specific objectives

1. To describe the socio-economic conditions/ background of small farmers
2. To identify the level of participation, empowerment and well-being among small farmers.
3. To identify the influencing factors in participation of small farmers.
4. To determine the relationship of participation, empowerment and well-being.
5. To determine the mediating effect/role of empowerment between participation and well-being.

1.6 Theoretical framework

Theoretical framework means the structure that supports the theories that are the guidelines for research work or the proposed study. The theoretical framework also explains the rationale behind the justification of the undertaken study (Khan *et al.*, 2010). The theoretical framework can be used to justify the reasons behind the selected theories or models. In meeting this purpose, for this study, the theoretical framework is also used for the following reasons: (1) to answer the raised questions that will be investigated and (2) to provide justification about the findings based on the concept, approaches and suggested theories/models for the undertaken study (Ziedler & Sadler 2007). In the light of this argument, the experts of research or research scientists suggested that for a good research, there must be a systematic way and logical conclusion so that the researcher should consider and give preference to the already established concepts, approaches, models, and theories that are relevant to the undertaken study for the understanding of phenomenon of his/her study, Johnson & Chirstensen (2008).

The selected study was conducted under the umbrella of the Structural-functional theory and by merging the following working frameworks, approaches or theories such as Theory of participation (Cohan & Uphoffs, 1977), Theory of empowerment (Zimmerman & Warschausky, 1998) and WeD approach of well-being (Gouh & McGregor, 2007). The people who participated in activities with the intention to achieve some target/outcome is the case in present study where people participate in project or program (crop maximization project) to be empowered and that empowerment ultimately leads them towards a better quality of life and well-being as an outcome of that project. Therefore, the target or goal of well-being is not possible without the participation of people in various activities. Participation is an active way through which beneficiaries or stakeholders influence not only the direction but also the implementation of a project for the enhancement of their well-being (Paul, 1987).

In line with this, to understand the what, who and how of participation, there is a framework of participation given by Cohen and Uphoff (1977) that provides a greater understanding of the concept of rural community developmental programs as in the case for the present study. The crop maximization project is rural-oriented in which the participation, empowerment and well-being of small farmers were studied. Cohen & Uphoff (1977) have also presented their work about participation in decision-making, participation in implementation, participation in benefit and participation in evaluation, which was why this theory/framework was selected for this study. In connection with this, the empowerment Theory of Zimmerman was suitable to study self-efficacy, self-esteem and capacity-building, and through this theory, the researcher tried to study the process of empowerment that enabled more participation in community change and societal change that ultimately lead to the better quality of life and well-being. Empowerment theory includes a process that enables effective participation in community change efforts (Zimmerman, 2000).

As far as the dependent variable of this study is concerned, the multi-dimension theory of well-being was used because well-being development (WeD) research group from the United Kingdom had conducted researches on well-being in four developing countries and suggested the combined theoretical approaches of well-being. According to Gouh & McGregor (2007; Dean, 2009). in order to understand well-being in developing countries, one has to understand the social and cultural construction of well-being. In developing countries, while constructing conceptual and methodological framework, the researcher has to combine universal and local perspective, combine objective and subjective approaches, and combine research into outcomes and process. Furthermore, Gouh & McGregor (2007) discussed about the three main types of well-being such as Subjective Well-being (Diener & Seligman 2004), Objective Well-being (Maslow, 1943; Sen, 1985; Nussbaum, 2011), and Eudaimonic Well-being (Eric Fromm, 1942; Deci and Ryan, 2008). These above given types are basically the approaches and theories of well-being.

1.6.1 Structural-Functional Theory

In sociology, the structural-functional theory is a popular theory and popularized by Herbert Spencer and Talcott Parsons (Black, 1962; Giddens, 2013; Parsons, 2013). This theory focuses on the social structures at a broad level and claims that society is like organs that work together for the proper functioning of body. In this theory, the society is considered as a complex system and its parts or subsystems (social units) work together for solidarity and stability. The structural functionalism is a macro-sociological approach focusing on the structures of society that shapes society as a whole (Midgley, 2006). The word 'structure' generally refers to a set of relatively stable and planned relationships of social units, and 'function' refers to those consequences of any social activity that make a given structure or its component parts (Vego, 1999). Parsons (1961) considers a society is stable when the relations between its structures and process goes on within its environment and relatively remains unchanged. Usually, in a dynamic society, there is a continual process which neutralizes the stability within its environment that can be either endogenous or exogenous source of variability that may change the structure (Parsons, 1961). Parsons (1961) further explained that there are two main processes of change; exogenous

process as the component change that come from outside the society which is contemporary to developing countries and endogenous which, on the other hand, happens when change occurs from within the society initiative.

As far as this study is concerned, exogenous component is considered as the basis of social change because it deals with the development process from outside of the society. Midgley (2006) said that exogenous change has been used to transform most of developing societies through planned development projects/programs and policies. Through foreign interventions, the local scholars and policy makers search solutions of problems of the society from outside experiences. Similarly, the crop maximization project was also the foreign intervention for the improvement of crop production and better quality of life of small farmers of the Sindh province. This project was launched by the government of Sindh with the initial support of IFAD.

1.6.2 Participation Theory

Cohen & Uphoff (1977) developed the framework for participation in the field of rural development that becomes a guideline for the people who are interested in community development programs under the rural development arena. According to Cohen and Uphoff (1980), “it is essential to rural development that people must participate and involve in decision-making, contribute their resources in development activities, and they must have assurance that they will get help and will be benefited from interventions”. Furthermore, Cohen & Uphoff (1980) explained that in the context of rural development, people participated in projects or programs by their involvement in decision-making, by contributing their resources or cooperating in activities, by sharing benefits of projects or programs, and by evaluating such projects or programs for the betterment of their life. In connection with the framework of participation of this study, the participation theory given by Cohen & Uphoff (1980) is a very comprehensive model that provides four basic and fundamental dimensions of participation. In these dimensions, what is meant was the kind of participation that takes place (participation in decision-making, implementation, benefiting, monitoring and evaluation), who are the participants (residents, local leader, government or state personnel and foreign personnel) and how the process takes place (occurrence of participation or the way the participation is occurring on the basis of participation, the form of participation, extent of participation, and effectiveness of participation).

Moreover, in the theory of Cohen & Uphoff (1977), the types of participation have been described and the issues of participation are made clarified that the participation is voluntary or induced, coercive or manipulative. Besides this, people received real empowerment or not while participating in program or project because participation, as a process, ultimately leads toward empowerment and that can be helpful to develop peoples’ capabilities, improve their inherent potential, and provide them with a lot of opportunities to influence and share power, not only the power to decide but also the power to gain control over their own lives (Samah & Aref, 2011). In the same way, Jones (2003) and Xu (2007) argued that it is the participation of people in all stages of project that makes community development projects successful and people can empower themselves and gain control over their lives. Thus, the participation of

people in community development projects is actually another form of empowerment, as Iqbal (2007) said that empowerment is a multilevel process that includes people's involvement in decision-making and organizational development and in community change as well. Community participation in development programs/projects can lead to the development of capacities of local people or the members of the community and also empower the community itself (Parveen & Leonhauser, 2004; Tosun, 2005; Ying, 2009). Dale (2000) described that the concept of participation, capacity building and empowerment are inter-related, inter-linked and partly inter-dependent.

Furthermore, Cohen & Uphoff (1977) also pointed out the socio-economic, cultural, historical, natural and social factors that shape the nature of participation. The research framework of participation given by Cohen & Uphoff (1977) was suitable for the present study because, 1) Cohen & Uphoffs (1977) study was about rural farming communities of developing countries, the same as the present study, 2) the framework touched the planned rural development projects (intervention), so was the case in the present study, 3) the framework provided the relationship of participation, empowerment and the outcomes (consequence/results of empowerment) in detail and which was also the aim of present study. In the same context, Cohen & Uphoff (1980) argued that participation as the active involvement of people in activities and actions ultimately enhance their quality of life and well-being, and the main objective of this study was also to study the relationship of participation and well-being of small farmers of the Sindh province of Pakistan. Besides this, there were many evidences of literature (Hughey *et al.*, 1999; Oliver *et al.*, 2006; Smetana *et al.*, 2006; Greenfield & Marks, 2007; Stubbe *et al.*, 2007; McCabe *et al.*, 2010) that confirmed the relationship of participation and well-being through mediating by different factors such as the research conducted by Cicognani *et al.* (2008) on three different groups of students (American, Italian and Iranian), where in this research, the researchers attempted to see the relationship between participation, sense of community and well-being, by using a simple model of relationship among participation, sense of community and well-being where the sense of community was used as the mediator variable between participation and well-being. It was also found in this study that participation positively affected well-being through the mediation of the sense of community. The researchers had taken the theoretical support for this study from the theoretical literature of (Hughey *et al.*, 1999; Smetana *et al.*, 2006

1.6.3 Empowerment Theory

Theories of empowerment include process and outcomes, suggesting actions, activities and structures (Swift & Levin, 1987). Empowerment theory includes a process that enables effective participation in community change efforts (Zimmerman, 2000). A process applied at the organizational level suggests an internal structure for engaging individuals in decision-making and external policies for creating social change (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004). Zimmermen & Warschausky (1998) argued that "participation is a central component of empowerment theory at individual, organizational or community level of analysis". Furthermore, Zimmerman & Warschausky (1998) presented three categories of empowerment: 1) individual empowerment, 2) organizational empowerment, and 3) community empowerment. The individual empowerment integrates the perception of personal control by

participating with others for the achievement of goals and the individual's critical awareness of factors that decries/increase or enhance his/her efforts to exercise control in life. Organizational empowerment is the processes and structures that improve participation of members and enhance organizational efficiency to achieve specified or targeted goals, whereas community empowerment is a joint and collective action to improve the quality of life of community members with the collaboration of community organizations and agencies. Zimmerman (1990 & 2000) and Zimmerman & Warschausky (1998) postulated the theory of empowerment based on three categories of empowerment in the following dimensions; 'Value, process and outcomes'. Zimmerman & Warschausky (1998) further explained that empowerment as value is a belief system that tells how client and authorities work together and it is only possible to materialize with the collective efforts of local community members and government agencies. In connection with this idea Midgley (2006) is of the opinion that the community problems can be solved through deliberate and planned human efforts that stresses the need for collective interventions by people's and government's efforts.

Keeping in the view with this idea, the undertaken study of participation, empowerment and well-being of small farmers was conducted on the crop maximization project launched by the government with the collaboration of non-governmental organization. The main objective of the crop maximization project was to enhance the capacity of farmers by increasing their production, so it will only become possible if there were participation and collective efforts made by the government and community members. The community development projects that mobilize local people should be given priority (Blakely, 1992; Walzer, 1995; Midgley & Livermore, 1998) so is the case of the crop maximization project. Therefore, the empowerment theory as process given by Zimmerman & Warschausky (1998) was suitable to use in present study.

Furthermore, empowerment as a process explained by Zimmerman & Warschausky (1998) was the mechanisms of gaining control over issues and problems by people, organization and communities. Besides, empowerment process brings awareness regarding their environment and provides a sense of participation in decisions that affects their lives. So, in the light of this explanation, interventions and projects build the capacity, ability, self-efficacy, self-esteem and awareness of people to cope and control the problems and issues. Sen (1985, 1992) said in his capability approach that people must have capabilities to do the things they reason to value. In line with this, Abu Samah & Aref (2011) said that people should be given the chance to formulate their own development projects and they must have influence or to have say in the decision-making process in those projects.

Moreover, for the third dimension of empowerment, Zimmerman & Warschausky (1998) mentioned that as the benefit or outcome of empowerment process and as a result of participation in a program, there will be expected benefits or outcomes, and for those outcomes and benefits, Sen (1985, 1992) named them as 'human capabilities'. However, after participating in a program or project, the participant expected to become empowered or avail capabilities (Sen, 1992). There must be an

impact of that achieved empowerment in the shape of a better quality of life or well-being of community, because empowerment is not the complete end of the process. In this regard, Zimmerman & Warschausky (1998) are of the opinion that there must be the consequences of empowerment process, in the same way as Cohen & Uphoff's (1977) explanation on how participation and empowerment process in planned rural development project provide benefit and make positive impact to the beneficiaries.

The empowerment itself is not an end of the process as mentioned by Sen (1985, 1992) but it can be translated into human capabilities. Here, the role of empowerment is looked upon as the mediating role (Biron & Bamberger, 2010). In examining the mediating effect of self-efficacy between structural empowerment and employee outcome, the researcher found an impact of structural empowerment on individual's performance and well-being. "If our goal is to promote well-being in communities, power must be taken into account. Incorporating psychological empowerment into frameworks for the evaluation of community development programmes makes power a more central consideration" (Christens, 2012). In line with this, psychological empowerment has been found to be associated with a greater level of community participation and psychological sense of community (Speer, 2000; Christens *et al.*, 2011) and to have protective effects on psychological well-being (Zimmerman *et al.*, 1999; Cristens & Peterson, 2012). Community participation can increase psychological empowerment that has protective mental health effects. The psychological empowerment approach promotes not only subjective well-being but also objective changes in the local system (Christens, 2012). Esbern & Deborah (2012) argued and firmly believed that well-being is the final product of the participation process by mediating the role of empowerment, and empowerment is not the end product of participation but it is the route to well-being. Friis-Hansen & Duveskog (2012) conducted a study on 'The empowerment route to well-being', where the researchers analyzed the relationship between Farmers Field School (FFS) participation and well-being; between farmers field school and empowerment; and the relationship between empowerment and enhanced well-being. Thus, in the light of the available literature, empowerment has taken the role of the mediating variable in this study to assess the mediating role between participation and well-being.

1.6.4 Theory of WeD approach of well-being

Well-being as an outcome or dependent variable (DV) was employed in the study, whereas empowerment had a mediating role while the participation was the independent variable (IV) in this study. According to Gouh & McGregor (2007), to understand well-being in developing countries, one has to understand the social and cultural construction of well-being. In developing countries, while constructing conceptual and methodological framework, the researcher has to combine universal and local perspective, combine objective and subjective approaches, and combine research into outcomes and process. MacGillivray (2007) and Diener (2009) were of the opinion that well-being is not only a multidimensional construct but also covers all aspects of human life, so to comprehend people's motivations and behaviours, there is a greater importance of multidimensional definition of well-being (Dawson, 2013). Well-being is a multi-dimensional construct (Diener, 2009) which accentuated happiness, positive effect, low negative effect, and satisfaction with life (Orden &

Bradburn, 1969), positive psychological functioning and human development (Waterman, 1993). Furthermore, well-being is a process rather than a state; it provides 'win-win' solutions, oriented towards positive-sum, can be measured individually and collectively (household, community, or nation) and always measure the outcome of interaction (White, 2009).

As far as this study was concerned, the Well-being in Developing Countries (WeD, 2007) approach developed by Gouh & McGregor (2007), a research group of the University of Bath, UK was selected, where the WeD (2007) approach had practically been applied in research of several developing countries; Bangladesh, Peru, Thailand etc (Copestake & Camfield *et al.*, 2009). The WeD (2007) approach basically had multidisciplinary influences such as sociology, social psychology, economics and political science (Gough & MacGregor, 2007). The well-being definition given by this group was "a state of being with others, which arises when human needs are met, when one can act meaningfully to pursue one's goals, and when one enjoys a satisfactory quality of life" (McGregor, 2006). In line with the given definition, WeD (2007) approach described well-being as being determined by "what a person has, what they can do," and in addition, "how they think and feel about what they both have and can do," (Grantham-McGregor *et al.*, 2007). In addition, well-being approach in developing countries (WeD, 2007) had more holistic objectives; searching and seeking to understand the ways through which the people themselves conceptualise well-being, facilitating individuals' abilities to meet basic needs and their future goals (Dawson, 2013). The framework of WeD (2007) approach provided guidance of developmental work, increase transparency, reveal peoples' values and focus interventions (White, 2009).

Moreover, the well-being domains selected for the present study are material conditions (economic aspect), quality of life and contentment (psychological aspect), and human solidarity and sustainability (social/relational aspect) of small farmers. Under the WeD (2007) approach, there were four main domains: 1) economic; material, 2) psychological; subjective (self-esteem), self-efficacy 3) social; relational, and 4) political; relational (White, 2009). The WeD (2007) approach was suitable to determine the well-being of people because it considers the most important aspects of people's well-being further it explained by McGregor (2007) that it exhibits what the 'people' have or don't have (material aspects); what they can or cannot (relational aspect) and what they feel (subjective aspect) or do not. The WeD (2007) approach was broader that provided greater understanding toward poverty occurrences and its intricate reasons, provided attention to basic needs, towards the issue of recognition and power, and empowerment and changes that enabled the individual or group to improve their well-being (Dawson, 2013).

In light of the participation theory/framework by Cohen and Uphoff (1977), empowerment theory by Zimmerman & Warschausky (1998) and WeD (2007) approach of well-being by Gouh & McGregor (2007), the research framework for the present study was built because there was hardly any established theory (except on some papers) that clearly showed the relationship of participation and well-being by mediating empowerment. Thus, by combining these already established frameworks,

it would be possible to not only cover all the given (IVs) and (DVs), but to also determine the influence between them. Moreover, these theories provided connectedness of participation and well-being in one way or another. The influence of participation has been observed in previous studies; according to Stubbe *et al.* (2007) there was an association of exercise participation with life satisfaction and happiness, and this association was non-causal and mediated by genetic factors. Besides this, the exercise behavior and well-being were both influenced by the mediator. Thus, the indicators for measurement for participation, empowerment and well-being will be developed under the guideline of the works done by Cohen & Uphoff (1977); Zimmerman & Warschawsky (1998) ; Gouh & McGregor (2007).

1.7 Conceptual and operational definitions of terms

The following terms are used in the present study;

1.7.1 Participation

a. Conceptual

Participation is a process of the involvement of people in community development activities, projects and programs through which they could improve their capacities, gain control over resources, empower their own communities and achieve well-being. In other words, participation means the involvement of people in decision-making process, implementation of project/program, benefit and evaluation in community development activities or programs (Cohen & Uphoff, 1977).

b. Operational

Participation in this study has been considered as a ‘mean’ and as well as an ‘end’. It displayed that participation is defined as the small farmers’ involvement in three kinds such as participation in decision-making, in implementation and in benefits sharing in the crop maximization project. Further detail is as under;

1) Participation in decision-making

It is defined as the small farmers’ participation in initial decisions, on-going decisions and operational decisions. Through initial decisions, the needs and priorities are set; the fundamental decisions can be taken regarding the selected problems and it is also decided that which problem should be addressed most urgently. The small farmers’ involvement can be measured to know the level and type of engagement in decision-making in development programs. In this study, the small farmers’ participation will be measured by using a 6 point Likert scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree.

2) Participation in implementation

It means the small farmers' ability to run/execute programs by resource contribution, administration and coordination and also how the small farmers can apply their knowledge, skills and experiences that they learnt from agricultural activities or programs built for them independently. Here, the researcher has to assess that after acquiring knowledge and skills, how did the small farmers become independent without getting support from external influences? Participation in implementation 6=strongly agree.

3) Participation in benefits

It is defined here as any material or non-material gain acquired by small farmers during the participation process in the development project/program such as material benefits, social benefits and personal benefits. Participation in benefiting will be measured using a 6 point Likert scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree.

1.7.2 Empowerment

a. Conceptual

Empowerment is defined as a process through which the capacity of individual or community be enhanced and through which people can control their own lives (Self-esteem, Self-efficacy and Capacity building). Empowerment is a process through which people gain control over their lives, that bring democratic participation among peoples' lives in a community (Rappaport, 1987) and provide opportunity to understand their environment (Zimmerman *et al.*, 1992). Empowerment is basically the ability of individuals that can be used to gain control psychologically, socially, politically and economically (Rappaport 1987; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988).

b. Operational definition

In this study, empowerment means the process through which the small farmers enhanced their ability by participating in the crop maximization project under the agricultural development program in the study area. Here, in the empowerment dimensions, the researcher perceived as a psychological empowerment such as self-esteem, self-efficacy and capacity building.

1.7.3 Psychological Empowerment

a. Conceptual

Psychological empowerment defined by Conger and Kanungo (1988) is the "motivational concept of self-efficacy". Thomas and Velthouse (1990) stated that empowerment is multifaceted and it has a set of four cognitions that are; meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. Psychological empowerment as defined

by Perkins & Zimmerman (1995) is the process through which individuals can gain control over their lives, develop critical understanding for their political and social environment, and also take a positive approach in their communities. Rappaport (1981) described that self-esteem means the ability of an individual through which he/she can build self-confidence regarding the changes in his/her life, (Bandura, 1977; Rappaport, 1981). Self-efficacy means the competence of an individual over how much competence he/she possesses and how he/she accomplishes or achieves the target or task (Bandura, 1977; Conger & Kanungo, 1988).

b. Operational

In the present study, psychological empowerment refers to internal and emotional empowerments of small farmers to involve or engaged in the developmental projects or programs. So, in this study, the internal or emotional gains are; self-esteem (self-satisfaction), self-efficacy (self-confidence), and capacity building. Psychological empowerment was measured by using a 6 point Likert scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree.

1.7.4 Self-esteem

a. conceptual

Self-esteem means how we value ourselves and it depends on our perception of how valuable we are for others and it also affects our work, our trust, and our relations to others. There are some signs of positive self-esteem such as optimism, good self-care, self-direction, confidence, feeling comfortable, showing independent behavior, non-blaming behavior, the ability to say yes/no, the ability to learn from mistakes, the ability to trust others, and the ability to solve the issue or problems. In other words, self-esteem includes self-integrity, self-respect, self-worth and self-regard.

b. operational

In present study self esteem was considered that how the small farmers of study area value themselves and what are their perception about themselves such as self-respect, self-worth and self-regard.

1.7.5 Self-efficacy

a. Conceptual

Self-efficacy is basically a person's belief in his/her ability for success in a particular situation or in a given environment (Bandura, 1977).

b. Operational

In present study self-efficacy is a perceived expectation of the small farmers of study area regarding their abilities through which they can solve a task, issue and they can also achieve a targeted goal as an active agent in a particular environment.

1.7.6 Capacity building

a. Conceptual

According to Sail & Abu-Samah (2010) the concept of capacity building means the development of capabilities and potentials of community members for their own well-being and quality of life. The ultimate goal of community development programs/projects always remained as the capacity building of targeted population. Through capacity building, members of the community can maximize resource utilization for their own benefits, both socially and economically. This could only be achieved by managing community development programs effectively through highly committed and well-trained/skilled professionals not only in their respective fields but also in community capacity building as well. Reid & Gibb (2004) are of the view that the community capacity building is necessary for participatory process and community development at a community level. Labonte & Laverack (2001) defined capacity building as “qualities of a capable community”. Capacity building means activities and actions that support and strengthen the capabilities of individual and groups (Craig, 2005).

c. Operational

In present study capacity building means the skills and trainings received by the small farmers of study area to develop their qualities, capabilities and potentials for the betterment of whole community.

1.7.7 Well-being

It is reported by Stutz (2006) that the well-being basically consists of three elements which are welfare (the basic needs or the requirements for body flourishing such as food, drink, medical care and shelter) contentment (stable sense of satisfaction) and freedom (right to live and choose his/her own destiny). Furthermore, the researcher added that for understanding well-being, one should understand these four core values; Material conditions, Quality of life, Human solidarity and sustainability. Well-being is multidimensional and it covers all aspects of human life (McGillivray 2007). “...a state of being with others, where human needs are met, where one can act meaningfully to pursue one’s goals, and where one enjoys a satisfactory quality of life” (WeD, 2007; White,2008). Well-being, happiness, utility and quality of life are often seen as one and these terms are frequently used interchangeably (Yassin *et al.*, 2012).

1.7.8 Material conditions

a. Conceptual

Material conditions of people mean the people's command over commodities. These also include income, assets and consumption, and besides this, how available resources are distributed among different people or groups (OECD, 2011).

b. Operational

In the present study, material conditions mean income, assets and consumption as well as available resources of small farmers of the study area. Material conditions of small farmers will be measured by using a 6 point Likert scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree.

1.7.9 Quality of life

a. Conceptual

Health status, education, jobs, human contacts, civic engagement, security, governance and free time fall under the category of quality of life, and these are also called as the peoples' subjective experiences of life (OECD, 2011). Quality of life is a broad term in which it includes economic, social, cultural and natural living environment of people. This term has been interchangeably used with happiness and well-being (Abu Samah, 2006).

b. Operational

In this study, the quality of life means health status, education level, human contact and civic engagement. The quality of life of small farmers will be measured by using a 6 point Likert scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree.

1.7.10 Human solidarity

a. Conceptual

Human solidarity is basically unity within the members of a group, community or in society. In other words, human solidarity means the homogeneity of individuals through which people feel connected to each other. Stutz (2006) said that well-being basically consists of welfare, contentment and freedom (the right to live and choose his/her own destiny).

b. Operational

In this study, human solidarity means the respondents satisfaction regarding connectivity and social relationship within the community and with the neighboring communities.

1.7.11 Sustainability

a. Conceptual

The available stocks of resources are not the property of present generation but these stocks of resources also belong to the future generations. It is not only the responsibility of the present generation to assess the available stocks of resources that shape well-being outcomes but also to make sure about the sustainability of these resources for future generations (OECD, 2011). Sustainable development means the better quality of life not only for the present generation, but also for the future generation as well and it recognizes that environment, economy and social well-being as interdependent (Mohit, 2013).

b. Operational

In this study, sustainability means environment sustainability, ecological sensibility and the ability to sustain the future of community/society.

1.8 Conceptual research framework

In this study, the conceptual framework is constructed on the basis of the literature reviewed. It is basically the organization of concepts derived from participation, empowerment and well-being theories. Psychological empowerment has been found to be associated with a greater level of community participation and psychological sense of community (Speer, 2000; Christens *et al.*, 2011) and to have protective effects on psychological well-being (Zimmerman *et al.*, 1999; Cristens & Peterson, 2012). Friis-Hansen & Duveskog (2012) conducted a study on 'The empowerment route to well-being', where the researchers analyzed the relationship between farmer's field school participation and well-being, between farmer's field school and empowerment and relationship between empowerment and well-being. Jibreen (2009) claimed that the conceptual framework is a plan or network of interconnected/interlinked concepts that provide a comprehensive information or understanding regarding particular phenomenon or phenomena. In this conceptual framework, the researcher tried to present the interconnectedness between socio-economic background of the small farmers and participation, the level of participation, empowerment and well-being, the relationship between the participation, empowerment and well-being and also mediating effect of empowerment between participation and well-being. Figure 1.1 illustrated the antecedents, independent and dependent variables of this study. Here, the socio-economic background of the small farmers (age, sex, education etc) represents the antecedent variables meanwhile the dimension of participation represents the independent variables. The dimension and domain of empowerment

represent the Mediator and well-being represents the dependent variables. The researcher tried to find out the relationship of independent variable (IV) to the dependent variable (DV) through empowerment as a mediator.

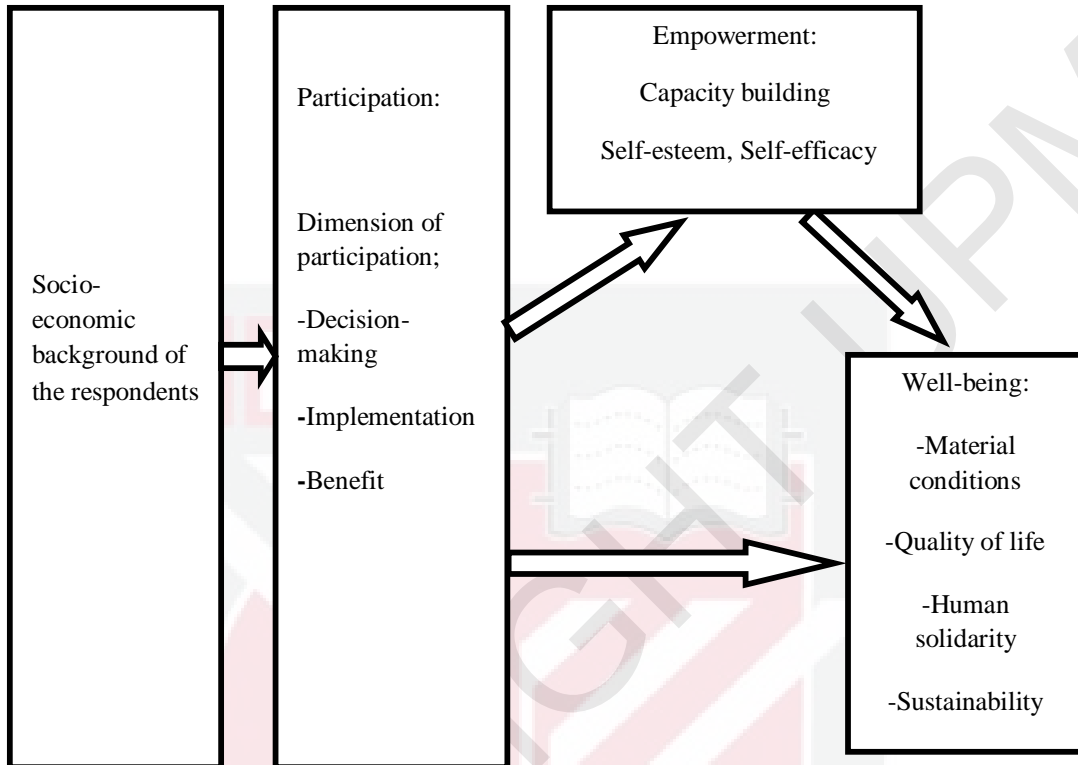


Figure 1.1 : Conceptual research framework

1.9 Significance of the study

This study is intended to provide a better understanding regarding the small farmers of the Sindh province of Pakistan and their socio-economic conditions, participation, empowerment and well-being level. At present, there is still lack of studies that has been conducted regarding the small farmers' communities in Sindh province. Therefore, this study has been carried out to determine the above mentioned factors. The study provided the insight facts regarding the small farmers' area through collecting primary information (data) in a scientific manner by acquiring facts and figures about their natural settings.

The proposed conceptual framework was developed on the basis of previous review of literature of community development. Through conceptual framework the researcher tried to determine the relationship between participation, empowerment and well-being, and mediating role of empowerment was also calculated. Further, the information was collected from respondents through direct interaction that provided the base line study for the field of community development.

Besides, this study aimed to present the situations of small farmers' communities after government and NGOs intervention for their better quality of life, well-being and community development. The government of Pakistan, provincial government of Sindh and other allied agencies have invested and launched various projects and programs for the betterment of small farmers' communities. Throughout this study, the finding could provide the real picture of the interventions and their results. The outcomes of this study further will add more information to the available literature about participation, empowerment and well-being. The findings may also help governmental and non-governmental organizations, donor agencies, policy makers and practitioners.

Practically, this study could be utilized the theoretical framework by merging three theories such as Cohen & Uphoff's theory of participation, Zimmerman & Warschausky's theory of empowerment and the WeD approach of well-being by Gouh & McGregor. Considering the importance of these theories this study has been carried out to provide the uniqueness by its theoretical framework. Because this work was attempted to study the relationship of participation, empowerment and well-being with the mediating effects of empowerment between participation and well-being.

Finally, this study will serve as a scientific research reference for the students of community development, sociology, social psychology, economics, political science, rural development and agriculture and for the interest of the general public. Moreover, the results of this study will also be helpful for planners and practitioners who wish to plan, monitor and evaluate the participation level, empowerment level and well-being level of small farmers' communities in the Sindh province of Pakistan. In addition, this research may provide the ground work for further research on participation, empowerment and well-being (people-centered development) and community development in the Sindh province of Pakistan.

1.10 Scope and limitation of the study

The present study focused the community development perspective by targeting small farmers' communities of the Sindh province of Pakistan. The participation and empowerment were both seen as the process of community development and well-being was considered as the outcome of the process. Under this study, the level of participation was determined through the dimension of participation; participation in decision making, participation in implementation and participation in benefits. Likewise, the level of empowerment was determined through capacity building, self-esteem and self-efficacy. Besides this, the level of well-being was determined through material conditions, quality of life, human solidarity and sustainability among the respondents. Furthermore, the relationship between participation, empowerment and well-being were also determined. The mediating effect of empowerment between participation and well-being was also determined.

This study was conducted quantitatively under a survey design by using the multistage cluster sampling technique. The respondents were selected from three districts of the Sindh province, so the findings of this study cannot be generalized to the whole population of the country, but at least the findings of study will be valuable for the local regional level. Furthermore, this study did not cover all farming communities of the province; it only covered the small farmers' communities. Therefore, this study can only be a representative of selected communities, but small farmers' communities were in the majority among the farming communities so the findings of this study can be beneficial or generalized for those that are involved or engaged in agricultural activities of the Sindh province.

This study was limited to only one province (Sindh) of Pakistan and within the Sindh province the target population was the small farmers of three districts who participated in the crop maximization project of government. In the Sindh province, the villages were considered as the farmers' communities. The farmers of those communities are further divided into large, medium and small holder farmers but the present study is only limited to small farmers. Further, in rural semi literate areas, it was not an easy job to interact with respondents directly without seeking permission from the gate keepers of the area. Subsequently, before data collection, the personnel of the village organizations were requested for co-operation and help to contact the respondents, because they had the lists of farmers who participated in the crop maximization project organized by the government. Hence, in order to collect the data, the researcher and his research assistants spared seven months to gather the required information. Furthermore, the data were collected from the three different zones of province (upper, middle and lower) and villages were far-flung and sometimes transportation and residential accommodations caused difficulties.

1.11 Organization of the study

This thesis work was organized in five chapters, references and appendices. Chapter one consisted of the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, conceptual and operational definitions of terms, conceptual framework, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study, and organization of the study; chapter two consisted of a detailed review of literature about well-being, empowerment, participation, small farmers, and community development; chapter three contained the research methodology including the research design, sampling procedure, instrumentation, preliminary data analysis, and procedures of data analysis; chapter four consisted of data analysis, interpretation and discussions; chapter five included the summary, conclusion, theoretical implication, contribution, policy implication and recommendations for future study; and at the end were the references/ bibliography and appendix of the research. The appendices were further sub-divided into five sections, namely A, B, C, D, E and F.

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