

Identifying Individual, Family, and Social Factors Contributing to Psychological Empowerment Among Women

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The final two paragraphs of the Introduction appropriately identify a gap, but the rationale for selecting Hungary remains insufficiently developed. The statement that “This gap is especially relevant in contemporary European contexts such as Hungary” is currently asserted rather than demonstrated. The authors should provide a concise, evidence-based contextualization of women’s circumstances in Hungary, focusing on labor-force participation, family and caregiving norms, gendered division of domestic work, institutional supports, or other features directly relevant to psychological empowerment. Without this contextual grounding, the geographic setting appears incidental, while the study’s stated contribution depends substantially on understanding empowerment within a specific sociocultural context.

In the Study Design and Participants paragraph, the manuscript states that “This study employed a qualitative research design using conventional qualitative content analysis.” The authors should justify why conventional content analysis was selected over alternatives such as reflexive thematic analysis, grounded theory, interpretative phenomenological analysis, or directed content analysis. This issue is especially important because the manuscript later develops an integrated “conceptual model,” describes reciprocal mechanisms, and interprets relations among levels. Conventional content analysis is suitable for

inductively organizing manifest and latent content, but the manuscript should clarify whether the analytical goal was descriptive categorization, explanatory model development, or theory generation, since the current analysis appears to extend beyond straightforward qualitative content analysis.

The manuscript reports that interviews were conducted “in a private setting or through a secure online video-conferencing platform according to participants’ preferences.” The authors should clarify whether interview mode influenced data collection and whether any differences were observed between face-to-face and online interviews in duration, depth, privacy, or disclosure. This is particularly relevant because several topics—family control, intimate relationships, financial dependency, and gendered restrictions—may be sensitive. For online interviews, the manuscript should explain how researchers attempted to ensure that participants were able to speak privately without family members or partners present.

In the Data Collection Tools paragraph, the statement that “Interviews conducted in Hungarian were analyzed in the original language, and relevant excerpts used for scholarly reporting were translated into English with attention to semantic equivalence” requires considerably greater detail. The authors should specify who conducted the interviews, the interviewers’ fluency in Hungarian and English, who translated quotations, and whether translation involved independent checking, back-translation, bilingual consensus, or another quality-control procedure. Because constructs such as agency, autonomy, empowerment, dependence, and self-respect can carry culturally and linguistically specific meanings, translation procedures are not merely editorial details but part of the study’s interpretive validity.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The participant sampling paragraph reports exactly 24 women from Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, and Pécs and states that maximum variation was sought in age, education, employment, marital status, family structure, and socioeconomic background. The manuscript should explain how participants were actually accessed and recruited. For example, it should state whether recruitment occurred through universities, workplaces, community organizations, social media, women’s associations, snowball referrals, or public advertisements. Recruitment pathways can systematically shape qualitative samples; recruiting largely through professional or educational networks could overrepresent relatively empowered women and underrepresent women facing severe social, economic, linguistic, disability-related, or relational barriers.

The sentence in the Study Design and Participants section stating that “Saturation was observed by the twenty-first interview, after which three additional interviews were conducted” needs methodological elaboration. The authors should explain how saturation was operationalized, who assessed it, whether saturation referred to code saturation or meaning saturation, and how the decision was documented. Because the study ultimately reports 683 initial codes, 27 subcategories, and nine major categories, a transparent saturation procedure is particularly important. A saturation matrix or interview-by-interview tracking procedure could be described in the Methods even if it is not presented as a supplementary table.

The manuscript indicates that participants “had resided in Hungary for at least three years,” but it does not clarify nationality, migration status, ethnicity, or language background. This criterion could permit both Hungarian citizens and migrant women, whose experiences of family expectations, social integration, employment, and empowerment may differ substantially. The authors should clarify whether the sample consisted exclusively of Hungarian women or included migrants and expatriates. If the sample was heterogeneous in this respect, such diversity should be described and analytically considered; if it was homogeneous, the terminology throughout the manuscript should accurately reflect that population.

In the Data Collection Tools section, the authors state that the semi-structured interview guide was developed “on the basis of the objectives of the study and a review of the conceptual literature on psychological empowerment, women’s empowerment, personal agency, family relationships, and social participation.” This process should be described more systematically. The authors should indicate how initial interview domains were generated, how many experts reviewed the guide, their disciplinary expertise, what criteria they used to evaluate questions, and what modifications followed expert review and pilot interviewing.

Providing several final core interview questions in the manuscript or supplementary material would substantially enhance methodological transparency and replicability.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.