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Women Empowerment: A Multidimensional Approach

Dr. Meghna Jain*

[*]Associate Professor Gyan Ganga Institute of Technology & Sciences, Jabalpur, India

Corresponding Email: [*]meghnajain13@gmail.com

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Abstract: ***Women's empowerment is a broad, multifaceted term. It has to do with the social, political, economic, and other facets of existence. Given its breadth, it implies that all facets of life require empowerment. It appears that empowerment in all areas of life will begin at the same time. At numerous levels and in all facets of life, empowerment manifests. Importantly, the idea incorporates ideologies into its development. It is founded on gender equality, the capacity for assertiveness, and the facilitation of skill development. The phrase has been used to refer to a broad range of ideas and to characterise an abundance of results. The oppression of women under patriarchy, together with the harsh treatment and lack of appreciation for their achievements, are the roots of women's empowerment. It is crucial to support women's positive contributions to global development by facilitating meaningful engagement on their part. Importantly, advancing women's empowerment raises questions about the development goals of freedom, social justice, and equality. In its publications, the World Bank (2001) identifies gender equality as a means of promoting growth, reducing poverty, and improved governance as well as a development goal in and of itself. Women's empowerment could contribute to a country's overall growth in this way. The study makes an effort to define the concept of empowerment in general and women's empowerment in particular.***

Keywords: Empowerment, Patriarchy, Gender Equality, Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment has been acknowledged as a key factor in defining both their position and progress. In this context, the Human Development Report 2003, which discusses the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and places a strong emphasis on women's empowerment (Peerzade & Pande, 2007). Women's empowerment is a universal idea. The action plan for the four world conferences on women conducted in Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985), and Beijing (1985) was planned over the last 30 years of the 20th century (1995).

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During these conferences, the socioeconomic, political, and legal facets of women's roles have been strengthened. The summit in Mexico declared the years 1975 to 1985 to be the decade of women. The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the UN in 1979 and by India in 1993. The term "Empowerment" was first used in 1985 during the Nairobi International Women's Conference. A shift of social power and resource control in favour of women was the conference's definition of empowerment. Inevitably, the focus on women's empowerment stems from their inferior status in the patriarchal system and the concomitant unfair treatment and lack of appreciation for their achievements. Women experience discrimination, violence, exploitation, marginalisation, exclusion, and other forms of abuse on a global scale.
In the household and in society, women have been demoted to a supporting role. So, their status needs to be elevated. The three components of empowerment, status enhancement, and development contribution are interconnected. In this regard, there are two ways to look at how women are developing: first, from the perspective of their status, and second, from the perspective of their involvement in the process. And there is empowerment content on both sides.

Objectives of the Study
1. To comprehend the idea of empowerment.
2. To concentrate on various facets of women's empowerment.
3. To discuss about different aspects of women's empowerment.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is descriptive and analytical in nature. Books, journals, and news publications are used to gather secondary data.

Review of Literature
According to Zairab Rahman's 2007 book, "Empowerment of Rural Indian Women, a Study of Uttarakhand," women in patriarchal societies are becoming exploited in all aspects of life. As a result, she contends, women need empowerment, which would be gauged by how free they are to live their lives and their command over available assets.
The essay in the edited book "Women Empowerment: Problems and Solutions" by M. Lakshmipathi Raju (2007) discusses different viewpoints on women's empowerment, as well as the challenges and issues they face.
Neeta Tapan (1998) explains the Schemes proposed by the Government and assisted by NGO throughout implementation in her book titled "Needs for Women Empowerment." Examine the numerous ways in which gender inequality exists in society and impedes the advancement of women.
In her 2008 book "Women Empowerment," author Susena Srivastava outlines the tactics and programmes used to enable women to overcome discrimination, attain complete equality, good health, and involvement in decisions that affect their lives and the future of society.

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3. DISCUSSION

Literally, empowerment refers to gaining power. In a general sense, empowerment refers to giving someone, a group, or an entire community power so that its members can decide on, participate in, gain access to, and enjoy liberty to choose in areas where they are excluded or refused access under the current system. In a nutshell, women's empowerment is an action that challenges preconceived notions about how women should behave in terms of authority, assistance, achievement, and success. Rowland (1995; 2001; Kabeer).

The process of women's empowerment improves a person's or a group's capacity to make decisions and translate those decisions into desired outcomes and actions. In essence, empowerment emphasises personal initiative for change (Tapan 2010:50). Development Options with Women for a New Age originally stated the empowerment strategy in detail in 1985. (DAWN). It is currently a popular term in the conversation surrounding development in every country on earth. It conceptualises a method for bringing about a shift in the balance of power. As a result, the term "empowerment" is frequently used to refer to a process in which those who are weak or disempowered are given a greater share of influence over resources and decision-making. This is so because the word power is present in the term empowerment, which makes it the most understandable.

Power comes in many forms. Every aspect of power has a role in the empowering process. In Table No. 1, the implications of various power dimensions are briefly discussed.

Table No. 1 Power Relation and Implications

Type of power relation	**Implication for an understanding of Empowerment**
Power Over: Ability to coerce and influence	Alterations in the fundamental assets and ability to overcome limitations.
Power to: Organize as well as change the existing hierarchies.	Increased access opportunities and personal capacity.
Power With: Greater power resulting from group effort.	Increased cooperation to refute underlying presumption.
Power from Within : Increase in individual's consciousness.	Greater consciousness and a need for change.

Source: Rowlands (1997)

As was previously stated, when analysing the four different types of relationships and their accompanying implications, empowerment is inherently about power and shifting the balance of power. It is also referred to as "a process wherein women become able to organise themselves to strengthen their own self reliance to assert their autonomous right to make decisions and to manage resources which would assist in challenging and eradicating their own subordination" by Keller and Mowers (1991). In its broadest definition, empowerment is a process that aids and supports women in understanding who they are, what they are capable of, what their strengths and power are, and how to use those things in their daily lives in a variety of spheres of their social and individual lives. There are two unique but linked ideas on women's

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empowerment. These viewpoints outline the components of women's empowerment. The triadic aspect of empowerment is the main subject of Rowlands' (1997) and other authors' works.

Empowerment in this sense might be

- Personal/Individual Empowerment.
- Group/Collective Empowerment.
- Empowerment of relationships.

In society, there is a process called empowerment that affects many aspects of daily life. In order to exercise one's rights and freedoms in social, economic, political, and other spheres of life, one must be enabled. Details about a number of aspects of women's empowerment are provided in Table No. 2.

Table No. 2 Commonly used dimensions of Women Empowerment

Dimensions	Household	Community	Boarder Areas
Economic	Women's control over finances, resources for the family, etc.	Women's representation in local organisations and access to property ownership.	Women's representation in executive positions, female CEOs, etc.
Socio-Cultural	Freedom of movement for women, absence of discrimination, etc.	Women's access to and presence in social networks, public spaces, etc.	Literacy rates among women, access to a wide range of educational opportunities, etc.
Inter-Personal/Familial	Power over sexual relationships, decision-making in the home, etc.	Self-selection of Spouses, neighbourhood anti-domestic-violence activities.	Options for a safe abortion, divorce, and other reproductive health services.
Legal	Legal rights awareness and domestic support towards exercising of rights.	Rights-related community improvements, awareness-raising campaigns, etc.	Promotion of laws and rights, use of the legal system to address rights violations, etc.
Political	Voting rights and political system knowledge.	Participation of women in local politics, representation of women in local government, etc.	The representation of women in local and federal governments, power in elections, etc.
Psychological	Self-worth, self-efficacy, and	Possibility for mobilisation and	Women's perceptions of equality, entitlement, etc.

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	psychological health.	general awareness of injustice.	

Source: Rowland (1995 & 1997)

Women Empowerment: A multidimensional Approach

There are six common characteristics of women's empowerment that can be taken into consideration when categorising things based on facets of life:-

- Social Empowerment
- Legal Empowerment
- Economic Empowerment
- Physical Empowerment
- Political Empowerment
- Psychological Empowerment

These factors play a big role in the conceptual framework of women's empowerment. All of these outline the range and character while also highlighting the necessity of empowering women in all spheres of life like the financial, political, legal, etc.

- **Social Empowerment:** The status of women both within and outside the house determines how empowered they are. Yet, patriarchal values that are reinforced by conventions, media, and other sociopolitical institutions significantly reduce the position of women. Changes should be made in how women view themselves, according to research.

- **Legal Empowerment:** Legal empowerment is the creation of a strong legal framework that supports the empowerment of women. Women need protection from a variety of things, including health discrimination, superstition, cultural barriers, patriarchal dominance, etc. So, it is crucial to use one's legal rights wherever necessary to educate women about their civic and political rights. Women's human rights are a concern of this empowerment. Women's rights are now widely accepted as human rights, according to the slogan.

- **Economic Empowerment:** The ability of a woman to manage, control, and earn money is empowerment. It is the key component of the empowerment idea. The best path to gaining overall empowerment is through economic empowerment. Women's economic empowerment will foster a climate for social change and give them the tools they need to fight injustice and prejudice. Samata (2005).

- **Physical Empowerment:** The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a full state of physical, mental, and social well-being. In particular for women, health is a social status indicator as well as a crucial component in achieving status. Economic and political empowerment for women is impossible without strong physical and mental health. Many research on women have demonstrated that the health of women is not only a result of biology but also reflects the sociopolitical, economic, and religious context of their life. By making changes to women's reproductive health, it is necessary to empower women.

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- **Political Empowerment:** Political empowerment refers to the fair representation of women in formal and informal decision-making processes as well as their voice in the creation of laws that affect their society. Political empowerment of women because it enables them to have a say in how decisions are made.
- **Psychological Empowerment:** The cornerstone of the family and society is made up of women. Several studies demonstrate that women frequently have a poor perception of their importance and potential as a result of societal beliefs about the inferior status of women in various nations. Strong willpower, an aggressive personality, motivation, and other traits all contribute to psychological empowerment, which is crucial for the empowerment of all women.

Women's empowerment is a multifaceted idea. It manifests on several levels and in all facets of life. Importantly, the idea is built on gender equality and the capacity for self-assertion, and it incorporates ideological beliefs into its development. The ability to assert oneself is not only a challenge against patriarchal authority but also an effort to advance or achieve the psychological well-being of power.

4. CONCLUSION

Women's empowerment should primarily be seen of as a process rather than a fixed state that challenges preconceived notions of power and promotes women's success. As a result, those who lack authority or influence have a bigger say in how decisions are made and how resources are allocated. This is so because the word "power" is the most notable aspect of the term "empowerment". Clearly, empowerment discusses power dynamics and the effects they have in a variety of contexts. It also places a focus on how women might use these ideas in their day-to-day lives as citizens of their own communities and countries. In other words, women's empowerment places a strong emphasis on theoretical perspective, real-world application, and empirical support. Because of this, the philosophy and practise of empowerment have been intertwined with development objectives. Together, the various aspects of women's empowerment—economic, sociocultural, legal, political, physical, and psychological—present a thorough and comprehensive discourse on the patriarchal power structure, perspectives on equal rights, and participation in and contribution to the development process. Each component is important on its own and essential for empowering a woman overall, taking into account all of her practical needs. Evidently, empowerment is understood differently depending on the context. The concept's definition is up for debate. Empowerment is simple to describe by its absence, but it is challenging to define in practise since it can take many various forms depending on the individual and the situation (Rapport 1884).

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