



## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AS A CONCEPT

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### ABSTRACT

Women empowerment is not a new concept as women from the beginning of history till now are struggling to change gender inequalities. Nowadays, many programmes have been implemented to bring awareness about the rights and value of women. Women empowerment as a concept has also been supported by many men who outraged at injustice against women. The concept has been placed to support women to make independence in aspects of mind, thought, rights, decisions and to consider the equality of women and men an essential tool for any nation to get the goal of development.

**KEYWORDS** : *The equality, freedom in decision-making, the realization of identity, authorize, freedom from customs and beliefs*

It is true that empowerment as a term is in usage since the seventeenth century and it is literary denotes to invest with power. Max Weber has recognized power to be the ability to make others do irrespective of their own wishes and interests while Lips has defined power as influence and control which explain the absolute and unchangeable characteristics. It is apparent that the term empowerment has been shaped with different definitions but it seems that all these definitions aim to recognize the term as a means to authorize. Gradually, the term has been used and understood as a means to empower the poor, the women, the vulnerable, the weak, the oppressed and the discriminated people and in today's global society pressures for women empowerment are growing and runs strongly through all the literature.

Women empowerment has become a much raised and discussed topic around the globe but at the same time some societies have misunderstood the real sense of that term while some have showed no attempt to bring it in practice treating it as mere concept or topic for their abstract sessions. The term now may be understood as the liberation of women from all forms of evils or may be understood as a process to enhance the status of women in the society in a way that enables them to realize identity, position, and power in all spheres of life as well as the term have been discussed nowadays to be also a process to grant women freedom in decision making in the matters concerning home, society; and even to help women achieve equality with men and to help them achieve freedom from customs, beliefs, and practices.

For some women, the term of women empowerment may mean a feminism revolution against the man who dominated for thousands of years; they assert the necessity now to establish their feminism era. Many women groups attempted with serious efforts to change the aspects of prevailing gender roles in which they assert to a certain degree that these gender roles are oppressive. Furthermore, various women groups denied the role of women to be just tied down in her characteristics as a female where those groups have aimed to achieve gender equality in society which enable them to enjoy like men the same opportunities, rights, obligations, and even the participation in the political decision-making process.

Although the wholesome development of any nation calls for optimum utilization of its human resources, women in the third world countries have been subjected to subjugation and subordination; meanwhile their right to occupy the equality in social, economic and political sphere has been denied. Cast, class, and gender are still affecting the status of women in the developing countries. The issue of women in development has been discussed seriously and distinct efforts have been done to clarify the capabilities and potentials of women with an aim to bring them into the main stream of development. Many programmes have focused on the way that enable women to discover their potentials as individuals and as groups and these programmes highlighted also the way to propel women to design their lives. The programmes have aimed to the advancement of women and the achievement of

equality between women and men. Furthermore, the programmes have considered the movement for improving women's status is a social justice.

Various international conferences have been held to deliberate on women's issues and they discussed the matters that may lead to involve women in total participation as well as the conferences whether national or international have recognized empowerment as the surest way of making women partners in the development. The year of 1975 has been regarded as the International Women's Year and from that time the concept of women empowerment have been discussing in form of awareness in the women in which this concept may help with its growing perception to aid women to change their state of oppression and exploitation in a patriarchal society, but at the same time a report by The Human Development Reports asserts that no country in the world treats women as per the measures of life expectancy; even more the effort taken to operate the concept of empowerment through a systematic and scientific procedure has been minimal.

It is significant to note now that men and women had been practically created to build life together and to complete one another all lifelong. The abilities of man and the faculties of woman make both male and female partner in this life; in other words, the relationship of man and woman is a human one and this relation had been built from a long time on the concept that both of them have to please and satisfy the emotional and physical needs of each other. It can't be ignored also that the feminine aspect of the woman in life is essential one as well as the human aspect of the woman makes the life turning into nobler one as by nature men are usually more aggressive and extremely oriented while women often stand to present the ideal of inner dignity and in this regard, it is necessary to note that the notion of inner dignity which addressed to women doesn't mean that women are weak as the real sense of has been estimated under the fact that the true human dignity is a strong, steady voice that speaks from within.