

THE PRACTICAL POSITIVIST APPROACH OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN BANGLADESH: A FANTASY OR REALITY

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Article history:	Abstract:
Published: 10 th March 2022	Empowerment Refers to the "conscientisation" process, which involves individual developing critical analytical skills in order to acquire self-confidence and take charge of their lives. Because it addresses the structural and underlying reasons of subordination and discrimination, women's empowerment is a critical step in the reform of gender relations. The third Millennium Development Goal on gender equality and women's empowerment is discussed in this article. It delves into the notion of women's empowerment and shows how the indicators linked to this Goal education, employment, and political involvement can help to achieve it in Bangladesh. Because refers to a state of understanding of the disparities in women's and men's roles and relationships, as well as how these differences affect power dynamics, status, privileges, and needs.
Keywords: Women empowerment, political empowerment, Social empowerment, women empowerment in Bangladesh, Problems and Solutions.	

INTRODUCTION:

Bangladesh has always been known for its traditional arts and crafts, which reflect the country's cultural and traditional liveliness. Every region of Bangladesh has its own style and folk art, which is ethnic and basic but bright and lively enough to say volumes about the country's rich legacy. In certain poor landless farmer's families, women are frequently the primary or single breadwinners. In all emerging countries, the need of boosting women by involving them in economic activities is becoming increasingly apparent. Every woman is an entrepreneur because she runs her home and manages, organizes, and takes responsibility for it. Women's entrepreneurship is concerned with both the position of women in society and the function of entrepreneurship within that society. Women entrepreneurs confront numerous challenges, particularly in selling their products (including family obligations), that must be overcome in order for women to have equal access to possibilities as males. Women, it has been stated, play an essential part in caring for their families, sustaining communities, and managing natural resources all over the world. Empowering women through greater education, economic opportunities, and health-care facilities, including family planning, is vital to global progress, with far-reaching benefits for families, communities, and the world.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH PAPER:

1. To know the concept of women empowerment
2. To develop the acquaintance and awareness of the different categorizations of women empowerment.
3. To the obstructions to assure women empowerment in Bangladesh.
4. To provide legal commendations to women empowerment policy and guidelines of Bangladesh.
5. To identify the practical positions and solutions in women empowerment.

METHODOLOGIES

This study was based on secondary sources and always helpful analogical application of research method by balancing antithetic applicable rules on the main source of women empowerment applications. Books, journals, reports, news articles, and data from various official and unofficial sources are among the secondary sources that have been examined. The internet has also been utilized to gather data on the notion of global women's equality and justice. The recommendations and principles are based on primary sources from different legal systems around the world.

The concept of empowerment of women and womankind empowerment: Women's Empowerment entails giving women more control over their own will and desires, as well as making them financially independent and socially visible. In other terms, "women empowerment" refers to reducing the gender disparities that exist in society by giving women equal opportunities to earn, work, and make decisions as men. Empowerment, according to UNDP (1994), is the ability of people to choose the actions that they believe are critical to their development. Kare (1995) described empowerment as an individual and societal process. People must improve their knowledge and ability to

organize in order to take action and bring about change in women empowerment, which may be understood as a continuum comprising various interconnected and metrically reinforcing components.

Women Empowerment is "Securing the access to national empowerment from self-realization to self-ascertainment and participation to involvement in projects in a functional sense with control over all parts of one's life and livelihood," according to Shah Jubaer (2021). He also emphasizes how the strategy to empowering women focuses on alternative empowerment and alternative power structures at the local level, which may be accomplished by founding and strengthening women's groups, in his presentation.

During our research, we discovered that women in general and poor women in particular, are helpless because they lack these controls. Because of various social and cultural backwardness, discrimination against women frequently obstructs opportunities for socioeconomic development, participation in various activities, access to educational facilities, and various other development programs aimed at improving life style and quality of life. Women are also denied rights in the decision-making process in their family issues due to social and cultural restraints imposed by their families that are not part of the conventional civilization system. Women are restricted from participating in certain social and cultural programs, as well as from leaving their homes for various reasons. Women's engagement in various activities such as education, work, political system, and so on has been quite low even after the country's fifty-year independence due to the above-mentioned challenges imposed by our conventional system against them. Because rural areas are more backward and traditional social and cultural structures predominate, women's conditions in rural areas are more dissatisfactory than in urban ones.

Women's empowerment (or female empowerment) can take several forms, including recognizing women's viewpoints or making an effort to seek them out, as well as boosting women's status through education, awareness, literacy, and training. In the face of societal difficulties, women's empowerment equips and empowers women to make life-changing decisions. They could be able to reshape gender roles or other related obligations, giving them greater freedom to pursue their own objectives.

Political Empowerment: Despite the fact that women have the right to vote and run for public office in practically every country, they only made up 21% of parliamentarians globally in 2013, and only 24 countries had female heads of state or government. Talented women who might become effective public leaders are excluded from the pool of potential candidates due to financial, social, and legal barriers, to the detriment of their communities. Water, infrastructure, sanitation, roads, education, and health are among the public goods prioritized by women in public office.

When female political leaders are present, women and minorities are more likely to report crimes against them, and adolescent girls' professional aspirations and educational attainment improve while their time spent doing home chores decreases. Due to gendered behavioral norms, women face different political issues and opportunities than men. When voters regard female politicians as power-hungry, they react negatively with moral outrage. Despite the fact that women's leadership is crucial for their communities, especially for other women and adolescent girls, a number of cultural constraints prohibit women from participating in politics. In recent research, gender discrimination, a lack of female role models, aversion to competitive settings, family responsibilities, and social standards have all been offered as explanations for the lack of women in leadership positions. These difficulties could be addressed by implementing structural changes to political frameworks and social adjustments in how we expect women and leaders to behave, which could lead to more women entering political careers.

Gender equality is at the heart of human rights and lays the groundwork for long-term progress. Despite the fact that women and girls account for half of the world's population, they are routinely excluded from politics and decision-making that has a direct influence on their lives. Increasing women's political participation and leadership are key steps toward realizing women's human rights. It has been proven that increasing women's participation in leadership and decision-making benefits global economic and social growth. Women's overall labor force participation, the fraction of public employment opportunities assigned to women, and women's access to public facilities like roads and health care have all been found to improve with more exposure to women's political representation.

Social empowerment: Social empowerment is defined as the process of developing a sense of autonomy and self-confidence, as well as working individually and collectively to transform social relationships, institutions, and discourses that exclude and keep poor people in poverty. Individual assets (land, housing, livestock, savings) and capabilities of all kinds (human (such as good health and education), social (such as social belonging, a sense of identity, leadership relations), and psychological (such as ability to hold others accountable) all have a significant impact on poor people's empowerment and ability to hold others accountable (self-esteem, self-confidence, the ability to imagine and aspire to a better future (Jayaweera, S. 1997). Voice, organization, representation, and identity are all important collective assets and capacities. The process of establishing a sense of autonomy and self-confidence, as well as acting individually and collectively to change social relationships, institutions, and discourses that exclude and keep poor people in poverty, is referred to as social empowerment. Individual assets (such as land, housing, livestock, savings) and capabilities of all kinds (human (such as good health and education), social (such as social belonging, a sense of identity, leadership relations) and psychological (such as ability to hold others accountable) strongly

influence poor people's empowerment and ability to hold others accountable (self-esteem, self-confidence, the ability to imagine and aspire to a better future). People's collective assets and capabilities, such as voice, organization, representation, and identification, are also crucial.

Economic Empowerment: Gender equality, poverty alleviation, and inclusive economic growth can all be achieved through investing in women's economic empowerment. Women make significant contributions to economies, whether they work in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees, or at home providing unpaid care. They continue to be disproportionately affected by poverty, prejudice, and exploitation. As a result of gender discrimination, women frequently find themselves in precarious, low-wage jobs, and they make up a small percentage of individuals in positions of power. It makes it difficult to get economic assets such as land and loans. People's power to influence economic and social policies is hampered. Women also have less time to pursue economic opportunities because they are responsible for the majority of domestic responsibilities.

Women and men's ability to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from economic processes in ways that value their contributions, respect their dignity, and allow for a more fair distribution of growth's benefits is referred to as economic empowerment. Economic empowerment increases women's access to resources and opportunities such as jobs, financial services, real estate and other productive assets, skill development, and market information.

Obstructions to enforce women Empowerment in Bangladesh and the Global Principles: In South East Asia, poverty is a big issue for women. The majority of South Asian rural tea garden works live in deplorable conditions due to the systematic and socially designed placement of women in rural areas, as well as the underdevelopment of infrastructure in these areas (Cook, S., & Pincus, J. 2014). Women were disempowered by apartheid laws, which were combined with repressive norms and traditions, in ways that would take generations to change. While the democratic government has passed enabling legislation, it must now focus on implementation in order to relieve and ultimately eliminate poverty (Foo, G. H., & Lim, L. Y. 1989). As per the guidelines of the United Nations, there are few common principles of women empowerment:

Principle	Details
Principle-1	Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
Principle-2	Treat all women and men fairly at work, respect and support human rights and non-discrimination.
Principle-3	Ensure all the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers.
Principle-4	Promote education, training and professional development for women.
Principle-5	Implement enterprise-development, supply-chain and marketing practices that empower women.
Principle-6	Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
Principle-7	Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

Globalization, on the other hand, is a new world challenge. It is a system of redistribution of chances and benefits that can either assist the economy or exacerbate poverty by increasing inequality. The issue for South East Asia is to ensure that women in society are treated similarly to males. Furthermore, violence against women continues to be a severe issue in our culture. This is evidenced by the large number of female molestation cases, as well as other forms of physical and psychological abuse of women and girls (Sharma, S. 2018). The criminal justice and safety and security systems are now addressing the situation in a gender-sensitive approach (Jubaer, S. 2021).

Uneven gender, race, and class relations have altered access to fundamental needs such as education, housing, welfare, and water. Because of the disparity in power between men and women, unequal distribution of resources such as information, time, and cash has necessarily resulted. Since 1996, women's access to essential resources like as water and basic benefits has increased, but their control over these resources remains unsatisfactory. The Tea Garden districts' lack of infrastructure continues to be a barrier to women's access to basic supplies. As crucial components of development, science and technology are altering production patterns, assisting in the creation of jobs and new ways of working, and promoting the development of a knowledge-based society. Bangladesh must devise methods to engage women in science and technology, given the large number of women in the workforce, in order to increase their productivity and, as a result, the quality of national production. Women should be involved in the formulation, design, development, implementation, and assessment of policies related to the aforementioned economic and social reforms.

To become a global role model for gender equality, it is necessary to follow these steps:

1. Complete your commitment welcome kit and profile page, formalize it, and share it. Welcome to the headquarters, regional, and country offices.
2. Create and convey the WEPs action plan, then get to work on implementing it.

3. Through an Interview or Case Study, develop and express experiences, lessons learned about the workplace, marketplace, and community.
4. Enlist the help of your business partners, vendors, and suppliers to create a value chain that is gender responsive and inclusive.
5. Report on your company's success in implementing your WEPs action plan.

Women Empowerment and Journey

Action

Share

Capture

Engage

Sign

It is necessary to put legislation into effect. Bangladesh has enacted sophisticated rights-based legislation with clear reference to gender equality, drawing on experiences from other areas of the world. A significant problem exists in making these rights available to all women through the supply of information and the development of the knowledge and skills that women require to use the legal remedies' processes. Although Bangladesh's National Gender Machinery is widely regarded as a "best practice," it is likely to be ineffective due to a lack of skills, resources, and an integrated coordination framework with clear lines of communication and accountability. It will be unable to fund well-coordinated activities that can make a significant difference in the problems listed above.

Recommendations and prospective approaches for women empowerment in Bangladesh: This document's concepts and standards are derived directly from a consultative process. These national consultations proposed that the newly formed "New Bangladesh," as the country was then known, could advance the integration of gender considerations into the country's transformation by ensuring that:

1. All people are treated equally, and non-sexism and non-racism are enshrined in Bangladesh's Constitution.
2. It is recognized that women are not a monolithic group. All policies and programs aimed at achieving gender equality must be guided by this notion. Distinctions based on race, class, sexuality, handicap, age, and other factors should not be neglected or assumed.
3. Women's rights should be considered human rights.
4. The right to equality is applied to customary, cultural, and religious practices.
4. Women-specific affirmative action measures should be established and implemented.
5. Women's economic empowerment should be encouraged.
6. Attention should be paid to modifying rules and practices that have hampered women's access to basic needs, the economy, and decision-making in the past.
7. Parliament and other legislative bodies have already passed enabling laws. Additional legislation should
8. To ensure that the policy is implemented, effective machinery should be established at the national and provincial levels, as well as in public and private organizations. To ensure program implementation, enough structures and resources must be set aside.
9. All policymakers, strategic and operational managers should receive suitable training in gender analysis and gender equality to improve their knowledge, abilities, and attitudes.
10. It is necessary to develop effective collaborative strategies to improve relationships between formal political structures such as the Cabinet, Ministries, Government Departments, the Commission for Gender Equality, the Office on the Status of Women, the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on the Quality of Life and Status of Women, and other Portfolio Committees. Be drafted as needed to enable women's empowerment and gender equality to be achieved.

Additionally, the consultations on gender equality aspirations were always accompanied by a discussion of the institutional structure required to make such a vision a reality. to a situation in which men and women have equal opportunities to realize their full human rights and potential, to contribute equally to national political, economic, social, and cultural growth, and to benefit equally from the outcomes. Gender equality means systematically identifying and removing the underlying causes of discrimination in order to provide women and men with equal chances. Gender Equality, as defined in this policy framework, takes into account women's existing subordinate

positions within social relationships and attempts to restructure society to eliminate male dominance. As a result, equality is regarded to encompass both formal and substantive equality, rather than simply equality between males.

CONCLUSION:

Women's empowerment is defined as the process of improving the economic, social, and political position of women, who have traditionally been marginalized in society. It entails creating a culture in which women can express themselves freely without fear of exploitation, anxiety, discrimination, or the general sense of persecution that comes with being a woman in a traditionally male-dominated environment. Empowerment is a dynamic process that results in shifts in one's beliefs and views, as well as increased awareness of one's rights and chances for self-development in all areas of life. It gives women more access to information and resources, more decision-making autonomy, and more power to plan their futures, freeing them from the shackles of irrelevant norms and constructed practices. The female workforce accounts for only 32% of the total female population. Women make up only 9% of the overall number of self-employed people. Bangladesh's constitution recognizes the role of women as a valuable human resource. Economic development is critical to the growth and development of any society. Women have a vital role in providing economic support to their families; the more women who work for a living, the higher the proportion of household income coming from their earnings. Welfare, access, conscientization, mobilization, and control are the five components of the women's empowerment framework, or we might say that empowerment is about shifting the power balance. Control over resources (physical, human, intellectual, and personal) and control over ideology are two simple definitions of power (ability to determine belief, values, attitudes, confidence, ways of thinking and perceiving situations). Traditional societies provide a variety of chances for their male family members while women are marginalized. In truth, women are predominantly exploited by society for a variety of reasons, despite the fact that they perform the majority of home tasks alone. Women's rights have recently become a source of national and international concern around the world. Since Bangladesh's independence, various initiatives have been launched to improve women's conditions. The majority of these programs, however, were welfare-oriented (Cornwall, A. 2016).

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