

Women empowerment in bangladesh

[Countries](#), [Bangladesh](#)



Women's empowerment is defined as "women's ability to make strategic life choices where that ability had been previously denied them" (Kabeer 1999). Women empowerment now is often accredited as an important aim of international development policies, and many donor agencies include women's empowerment in their development strategies.

Although empowerment is often conceptualized as a process (Cueva Beteta 2006; Kabeer 2001; Malhotra and Schuler 2005), most quantitative studies have been cross-sectional, comparing individual women with others in their communities or societies (Malhotra and Schuler 2005). In the development of indicators it is usually implicitly assumed that higher levels of empowerment represent a change from a pre-existing situation in which women have more limited power, influence, freedom, or autonomy; but such changes have rarely been measured using a common set of indicators.

Such studies can be valuable for cross-national comparisons (UNDP 1995; Ibrahim and Alkire 2007) and for documenting change over time, particularly at the macro- or meso- levels, but I would argue that the meanings and salience of empowerment indicators are likely to evolve over time both in developing interventions to foster women's empowerment and in documenting empowerment processes.

A woman's level of empowerment is defined here as a function of her relative physical mobility, economic security, ability to make various purchases on her own, freedom from domination and violence within her family, political and legal awareness, and participation in public protests and political campaigning (Sidney Ruth Schuler and Syed M. Hashemi, 1994). Women empowerment in Bangladesh means giving women of the country

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the power to rule and govern their own lives, away from traditional and social constraints. The women empowerment movement in Bangladesh focuses on giving women the power and authority they need to be men's equals.

The structures of sub ordinance that have keep women in the dark for so long must be eliminated. Women must have intellectual resources that can be acquired through good education and material resources that can be accumulated with the help of a solid job. Women in Bangladesh work in rural areas and do most of the manufacturing labor as well as most of the harvesting. This traditional practice needs to stop. The violence against women must also stop. Women need to gain a lot more power over their decision making process. They should not be seen as fertility machines that have only the goal of reproducing.

Most of the violence against women that takes place in Bangladesh is located in urban and rural households. Violence against women is an old, patriarch practice that focuses on establishing the balance of power in the family. The system of early marriage for girls is also a cause for violence against women because little girls are forced into new families from an early age. There, they have to work like adults. Bangladesh is a society that perpetrates the myth of the mother as a divine creature. Women who do not get pregnant are considered inferior because they can't bear children.

This is a male tradition that limits the mobility of women all over the country. Global NGO's that are working towards helping women get empowered in Bangladesh are still facing difficulties because Bangladesh is a closed society which allows very few changes. In Bangladesh, gender inequalities are a

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social construction that can be eliminated with time. History of Women Empowerment: Bangladesh accomplished independence from Pakistan's economic exploitation, political and cultural suppression in 1971 after a long period struggle.

Though the country has homogeneous culture, language, and social norm, but social hierarchy is divided by the gender, especially women, and classes of the society. Post-independence (i. e. after 1971), women's organisations focused on a broad range of issues such as political empowerment, economic equality, legal reforms of customary and gender biased laws, violence against women, reproductive rights, etc. (Jahan 1995; Kabeer 1989). Then women are involved themselves in variety economic, household and nonproductive activities that always remains them under reported.

The real unexpected truth is that this types of work women always overlooked by women themselves. The main important thing is that women are the major forces behind the development of today's civilization for extending their contribution without earning in the economic, political, social and cultural process of the modern civilization. However, women's work always remains under reported; especially women's non? market homestead based economic activities. Theoretical perspective of the study: Credible documentation of women's participation in economic activities is problematic particularly for women belonging to farm households.

Several theoretical frameworks have been on board to explain issues surrounding women's work and the sexual division of labor. Marxists have distinguished between productive and reproductive labor, economists have conceptualized the difference between market production and subsistence

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production and between wage and non-wage labor, and sociologists have drawn a line between work at home and outside home (Ferber 1982; Sachs 1988). Neoclassical economic tradition emphasized the activities undertaken to meet the demand of the markets. On that count, women's work outside labor market has often been overlooked and excluded from economic analyses.

In recent years, empirical research have tried to document the extent of women's participation in specific responsibilities, and their contribution to GDP, economic growth, household management, education, health& politics, but the argument regarding the complication of women's task and the interconnectedness between different types of functions remains. This paper presents some empirical evidences of recent changes in women roles in socio-economic activities, and impact of women's participation on their empowerment and the socio-economic conditions of the household.

A recent study on Bangladeshi women's empowerment presents that the theoretical issues related to the measurement of women's empowerment, and describes findings from a recent study in the villages exploring the current salience of indicators developed for a 1992 survey. The paper mainly focus on the types of social, economic, and political change that affect the measurement of women's empowerment; propose and explain a new set of indicators for the rural Bangladesh setting; and discuss implications for measuring women's empowerment in other settings. (Sidney Ruth Schuler, Farzana Islam, and Elisabeth Rottach, 2011)

Another study of UNDP on women empowerment also addresses the conceptual and methodological issues related to women's empowerment,
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the trends in women's empowerment over the last 20 years in key areas such as education, health, economic and political participation, and finally the best practices of state and non-state actors in empowering women.

The trends in women's empowerment over the past 20 years show that while there have been gains in primary and secondary education, in political representation at the national level, and in waged labor, and a decline in fertility and maternal mortality, violence against women and HIV/AIDS continue to be endemic and these trends vary across regions and within countries urban and rural poor, ethnic minorities, and older and disabled women fare worse on all indicators with the current economic crisis reversing many gains (Manisha, 2010).

Statement of the problem

Are new articulations or pathways to women's empowerment emerging as a result of these changes? What are the emerging pathways? This article is concerned with the question of women's empowerment where empowerment is conceptualized in terms of multidimensional processes of change rather than some final destination.

These processes touch on many aspects of women's lives, both personal and public: their sense of self-worth and social identity; their willingness and ability to question their subordinate status in society; their capacity to exercise strategic control over their own lives and to negotiate better terms in their relationships with others; and finally, their ability to participate on equal terms with men in reshaping society to better accord with their vision of social justice.

Each of these changes is important in itself, but it is through their mutual interactions that the empowerment of individual women is most likely to translate into broader struggles for gender justice and social transformation. The pathways through which processes of empowerment occur are neither predetermined nor random. They occur within specific contexts and are shaped by them. In particular, they are shaped by the gender-related structures of constraint which prevail in a given context.

Since these structures influence the pace, substance and direction of social change, as well as defining areas of 'inertness', pathways of empowerment are generally characterized by a certain degree of path dependence. They carry the imprint of the societies in which they occur.

Significance of the study

The socio-cultural situation and family structure of our country remains unchanged for centuries. Peoples belief and understanding have not changed despite of modernization and ongoing changes all around. Their life style still follows the pattern that has been followed by their ancestors for thousands of years.

As women become economically productive, their spheres of influence increase. Evidence from Demographic and Health Surveys suggests that in some developing countries much of the impact of women's overall decision making power is concentrated at the community level. Across the developing world, studies show that women's participation in community initiatives can have long lasting benefits for women. Considering this view, this study was aimed to assess the women decision making power or empowerment in the household issues. The findings of the study would help in.

Empowerment as delegation of power to someone has been a mechanism to increase personal and work life quality of woman in recent decades. Higher education and occupation is effective instrument to empowerment of women but culture role can't be denied in this relation. Social norms can directly or indirectly limited women empowerment. In this article the role of higher education and occupation in psychological empowerment of women in Tehran has been questioned. Current research is a descriptive-practical research. Education and occupation were independent variable and empowerment was dependent variable.

Random sampling was used and 600 questioners were completed by women in Tehran city. To determine validity of scale we took advantages of construct validity and factor analysis. The reliability index of Cronbach's alpha was 0.8945 and spearman correlation and structural equations model was used for statistical analysis. Results of research indicate the Objective of the study The aim of this article is to explore how processes of women's empowerment and broader struggles for gender justice have played out in the specific context of Bangladesh.

By drawing on women's own accounts of these changes, it seeks to provide insights into what empowerment might mean in this particular context. There is no exact equivalent for the concept of empowerment in the local language. However, when women talk about forms of change in their lives that they value, and when these changes undermine the prevailing structures of patriarchy in some way, they are providing us with their own highly articulate narratives of empowerment, ones that are grounded in their

local realities and everyday lives. Scope of the study The structure of the article is as follows.

The first section explores the gendered structures of constraint in the Bangladesh context, both to understand what gives these structures their resilience as well as to theorize about how they might shape the possible pathways of change. The second section documents the changing nature of state and society in Bangladesh. This includes a number of positive changes in women's lives, including processes of individual empowerment, but as the paper notes, there is little evidence to suggest that these changes have enabled women from poor rural households to articulate and act on their vision of social justice.

One exception to this generalization suggested by the author's field research are women's groups organized by development NGOs committed to social change. It is the experiences of this subset of women that inform the analysis in this article. The third section then examines the impact of the strategies adopted by these organizations on women's capabilities as defined by their material position, their cognitive capacity and their relationships with others, while the fourth section explores how they have used their enhanced capabilities to take collective action against gender injustice.

The concluding section draws out the theoretical implications of these findings. It suggests that the analysis of women's strategies for dealing with various manifestations of injustice in their lives provides important insights into the values and motivations which shape their efforts to navigate change in different domains of their lives. It notes that there are injustices which

they are prepared to deal with through open confrontation but others where they seek compromise and conciliation.

This caution on their part testifies to the uneven pace of change in the wider structures of constraint and the risks associated with the pursuit of autonomy. Finally, it highlights some government best practices such as quotas, cash transfer programs, gender budgeting, and community based micro enterprises, some movement practices, i. e. , local women run community based programs to combat violence and HIV/AIDS and transnational exchanges, unions campaigns such as Decent Work for Women and corporate practices such as gender equality seals and corporate social responsibility.

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