



Determinants of Women's Empowerment: an Extensive Review of Literature

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ABSTRACT

Background: The present study is based solely on existing literature. A qualitative study can be conducted to delve deeper into the specific aspects studied. Incorporating additional studies could yield more comprehensive results.

Purpose: Women are playing an important part in the overall growth of social system. Women's economic and social contributions are essential for every nation's development. Women empowerment refers to empowering or enabling women to make decisions in life and let them do what they want. Women empowerment is much more significant to any nation's progress.

Methods: The current research approach is review-based descriptive research that relies heavily on secondary sources of data. The study looked at a number of research publications on the key determinants of women empowerment.

Results: An extensive past literature is reviewed in order to get final results of the study. The study came up with several determinants of women empowerment in the society.

Conclusions: Women have undergone and suffered much more in the male dominated society. Women became more aware of their importance as time passed. Women's independence arrived as a breath of fresh air because they were not permitted to make decision making for them. There are several factors which affect the empowerment of women in the society.



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1. Introduction

Many approaches have already been proposed and executed by both commercial and public businesses around the globe to reduce the challenges of low-income women or, in the longer run, to increase female empowerment. As a result, women will be able to fulfill important social & economical roles in contemporary nations (Irhoumah, Ayedh and Echchabi, 2020).

Modern females are a primary driving factor underlying people's involvement in community. Women not only make up the bulk of the demographic but they also serve an important role in economy as both specific role models for future generations and providers of products and activities (Kasomo, 2012). Women's empowerment is already linked to a variety of viewpoints, ideas, initiatives, and outcomes. Because of the differences in the cultural environment which determine how empowerment occurs, there appears to be no generally acknowledged concept of empowerment in the past literature (Khayyal *et al.* 2021).

Empowerment is often at the heart of the friendly and cooperative concept, in which the relatively weak members of society band together to achieve aims and objectives that they could not accomplish on their own. Women's

empowerment is essential for their independence and meaningful participation in decision making at all levels. Despite this, most of the literature believes that women's empowerment relates to enhancing women's societal, academic, and financial authority (Sebhatu, 2015). Women, particularly in poor nations, lack authority in the majority of areas of their lives. In a lot of different ways, they rely on the parents or partner. Without question, knowledge and a shift in society's mindset regarding women are the most effective tools for women's empowerment. Women's engagement in politics and societal events, as well as their role as decision-making authority in the home, economy, and health, can all help to raise awareness and strengthen women in the community (Tabassum, Begum, Rana, Faruk and Miah, 2019).

When it comes to fundamental values and sustainable growth, empowerment is among the most important societal issues. Women's empowerment, identified as an essential aspect of 2030 Agenda for sustainable development by UNDP, can only be fulfilled if all responsible authorities understand and collaborate in accordance with the elements examined. Therefore, for growth stage to be accelerated, the entire community must recognize women's abilities and

accomplishments (Batool, Rehman and Ashagar, 2020). The present study aims to explore women empowerment more deeply.

2. Review of Literature

The evolution of female empowerment as well as its impact on organizational effectiveness is a never-ending and ever-changing phenomenon. Women's empowerment, it can be argued, is critical for the greater economic and social growth of various nations and areas, as it allows for a significantly larger workforce and greater organizational productivity. In order to put women's empowerment into effect, consistent methods for measuring women's empowerment in various nations, areas, and societies are required (Raudeliuniene, Dzemyda and Kimpah, 2014). The government's position, organizations, funding, function of community organizations, knowledge, entrepreneurship spirit, support, cultural aspects, and quasi organizations were all found to have an impact on the achievement of rural women empowerment (Abdulmudy and Umanailo, 2020). Poor accessibility to funds, an absence of family assistance, an unfavourable societal system, education challenges, an inadequate industry network accessibility, a dearth of technological expertise, security concerns, and limited engagement in economical operations are all barriers to women being financially stable and self-reliant (Khalid, Mehta and Serfraz, 2020).

Women's empowerment seems to be a major issue for improvement around the world. Educational hurdles, access to good employment, and ownership of wealth are the most important social economic issues. All major socio-cultural issues are potential roadblocks to women's empowerment (Choudhry, Mutalib and Ismail, 2019). Microfinance plays an important role in women's empowerment. Beyond income-generating activities, financial inclusion fosters communication and cultural empowerment. Microfinance has a significant influence on trust, confidence, developing skills, & empowerment (Sultana, Jamal and Najaf, 2017). There seems to be a number of compelling factors to promote and evaluate women's empowerment. One of the main reasons is that women are responsible for home healthcare and nourishment. As a result, women's empowerment is critical for their personal well-being and the well-being of their families (Kolawole, 2014). The research findings of such studies reveal that educational quality, women's economic engagement, and access to employment promote women's empowerment. A factor, 'women keeping a checking account,' was also investigated in addition to the traditional factors, revealing a highly substantial and favorable effect on women's empowerment (Bushra and Wajiha, 2013).

Woman empowerment is influenced by the education or participation in earnings pursuits (both official and unofficial), as well as the household composition (single or expanded). Furthermore, the effect of women's empowerment on women's lives is multidimensional. It has an impact on her eating habits and spending habits. Decision to spend in women's education and provide job opportunities for women will considerably increase their empowerment, which would likely have some other positive effects within the home (Toufique, 2016). Despite the administration's initiatives, Indian women are largely powerless and have a lesser position than men. The acknowledgement of gender-based standards by women is still prevalent in the community. Women's empowerment can be facilitated by recognising that accessibility to quality education, work, and changing societal framework are simply enabling elements (Shettar, 2015).

2.1. Significance of the Study

Women's empowerment becomes important for the growth and success of the families, society, and country. Women should understand that opportunities do not fall into their hands. They have to figure out how to create them. They must struggle to reclaim their rightful place in Indian families and culture. People must work hard to exercise their privileges and ensure fairness and justice. They must fight tirelessly to eradicate poverty, dowry-related problems, incompetence, and ensure of all women's initiatives and legislation. As a result, a thorough examination of the different determinants of women's empowerment is essential.

3. Objectives of the Study

Women's empowerment is indeed about encouraging females to feel powerful by informing them that they can accomplish whatever they set their minds to. Women should work outside the house and have the freedom to decide their own preferences. Empowerment aids in the reduction of domestic violence by encouraging society to cherish and support women.

The prime objective of the study is to explore the various determinants of women's empowerment through an extensive literature survey.

4. Research Methodology

This is a descriptive research founded on a review. The researcher focused on the area of women's empowerment. The goal is to determine the various determinants of women's empowerment. The data is primarily gathered from secondary sources relevant to women's empowerment. Articles, magazine

articles, journal articles, reports compiled by government officials, as well as other organizations connected to industries and companies, and business journal articles on women empowerment, as well as reports posted by state authorities or other organizations, are examples of secondary sources. The outcomes of this research may be useful for the government authorities, welfare societies and other professionals in understanding the relevance and significance of women's empowerment, that can be perceived as transparent, decision-based, and conducive to long term development.

5. Analysis and Result

Women's participation, or rather independence, as well as improvements in their legal, economic, financial, and medical conditions, are all essential goals to strive for. Furthermore, it is necessary for achieving long-term improvement. In generative and reproductive living, both males and females must fully participate and partner sharing equal responsibility for child care and parenting, as well as household management. Women's roles, safety, & health are being jeopardized all across the globe as a consequence of overwork, lack of authority, and responsibility.

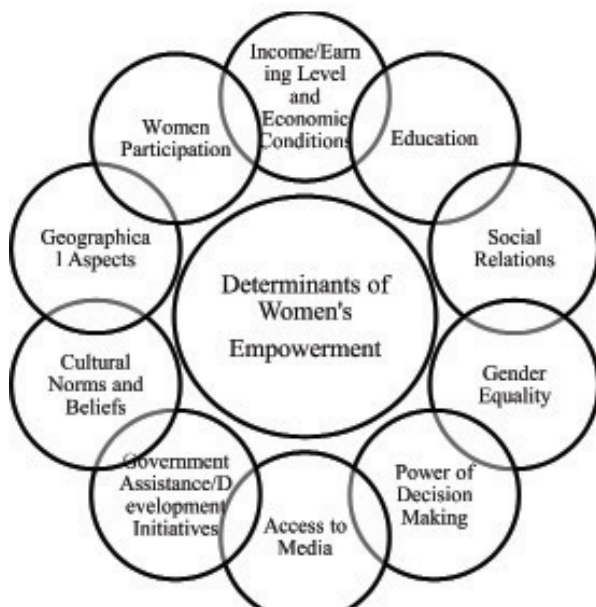


Figure 1: Determinants of Women's Empowerment.

5.1. Income/Earning Level and Economic Condition

The income level of women, economic condition of the family are the most important determinants in women's empowerment. Women's financial independence promotes productivity, diversifies the economy, and improves

economic freedom, among other positive development outcomes. Being economically disadvantaged can limit one's ability to gain influence. Reducing this disparity would put everyone on an equitable basis, with women gaining a greater amount of influence over physical, social, cognitive, and economic resources in general.

Following are the studies which talk about the income/earning level and economic conditions in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 1: Income/Earning Level and Economic Conditions in Women's Empowerment.

Determinant	Previous Studies
Income/Earning Level and Economic Conditions	Isa and Nor (2021); Kumar (2020); Irhoumah, Ayedh and Echchabi (2020); Kazembe, (2020); Batool, Rehman and Ashagar (2020); Marasabessy, Abdulmudy and Umanailo (2020); Soharwardi and Ahmad (2020); Hemachandra, Amaratunga and Haigh (2020); Khalid, Mehta and Serfraz(2020); Tabassum <i>et al.</i> (2019); Sell and Minot (2018); Sultana, Jamal, and Najaf (2017); Omotesho <i>et al.</i> (2017); Baig <i>et al.</i> (2017); Toufique (2016); Sebhathu (2015); Qanbari and Ansari (2015); Bushra and Wajiha (2015); Shettar (2015); Hossain (2015); Raudeliuniene, Dzemyda and Kimpah (2014); Kolawole (2014); Bushra and Wajiha (2013); Taimur and Hamid (2013);Jeckoniah, Nombo and Mdoe (2012); Haque <i>et al.</i> (2011); Khan and Awan (2011); Chaudhry and Nosheen (2009);Rahman, Karmaker and Mia (2009);Parveen and Leonhauser (2008); Kantor (2005); Jayaweera (1997).

5.2. Education

Women's education is a significant concern for both the administration and public community in India because educated females may perform a critical role in the nation's progress and growth. Women's empowerment begins with education, which helps women to adapt to challenges, face their established roles, and transform their lives. As a result, one must not overlook the significance of education in relation to women's empowerment or India's rapid ascension to global status. Women's education is one of the most significant tools for changing their social status. It has always been a pressing issue in India as education serves as the cornerstone for women's empowerment. Education helps reduce inequities, serves as a mechanism for elevating one's standing within the community, and fosters the idea of involvement.

Following are the studies which talk about the education in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 2: Education in Women Empowerment.

Determinant	Previous Studies
Education	Kumar (2020); Hemachandra, Amaratunga and Haigh (2020); Soharwardi and Ahmad (2020); Kazembe, (2020); Batool, Rehman and Ashagar (2020); Khalid, Mehta and Serfraz (2020); Marasabessy, Abdulmudy and Umanailo (2020); Tabassum <i>et al.</i> (2019); Choudhry, Mutalib and Ismail (2019); Sell and Minot (2018); Sultana, Jamal, and Najaf (2017); Baig <i>et al.</i> (2017); Omotesho <i>et al.</i> (2017); Awan and Naqvi (2016); Toufique (2016); Sahoo (2016); Sebhatu (2015); Shettar (2015); Qanbari and Ansari (2015); Bushra and Wajihha (2015); Hossain (2015); Dzemyda and Kimpah (2014); Kolawole (2014); Ibrahim and Zalkuwi (2014); Taimur and Hamid (2013); Chaudhuri, Yeatts and Cready (2013); Bushra and Wajihha (2013); Jeckoniah, Nombo and Mdoe (2012); Haque <i>et al.</i> (2011); Chaudhry and Nosheen (2009); Rahman, Karmaker and Mia (2009); Parveen and Leonhauser (2008); Jayaweera (1997).

5.3. Social Relations

One of the most visible forms of empowerment in mainstream media is social empowerment. It enhances women's community connections and their roles in society, providing them with a greater sense of responsibility beyond the household. Their contributions to community are recognised and appreciated, rather than being dismissed simply because they were initiated by a woman. Social empowerment also combats injustice by ensuring that persons with various abilities, races, nationalities, faiths, or personalities are no longer overlooked by what has been deemed 'normal.'

Following are the studies which talk about the social relations in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 3: Social Relations in Women's Empowerment.

Determinant	Previous Studies
Social Relations	Irhoumah, Ayedh and Echchabi (2020); Aghazamani, Kerstetter and Allison (2020); Batool, Rehman and Ashagar (2020); Marasabessy, Abdulmudy and Umanailo (2020); Soharwardi and Ahmad (2020); Hemachandra, Amaratunga and Haigh (2020) Tabassum <i>et al.</i> (2019); Sultana, Jamal, and Najaf (2017); Toufique (2016); Shettar (2015); Qanbari and Ansari (2015); Dzemyda and Kimpah (2014); Bushra and Wajihha (2013); Jeckoniah, Nombo and Mdoe (2012); Banerjee and Ghosh (2012); Khan and Awan (2011); Chaudhry and Nosheen (2009); Jayaweera (1997).

5.4. Gender Equality

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but also a prerequisite for a society that is pleasant, affluent, and healthy. The development of women is indeed a crucial component of attaining gender equality. This includes enhancing a female's sense of identity, decision-making power, access to employment opportunities and finances, leadership and influence in her personal life both within and beyond the household, and capacity to affect change. To achieve gender parity, societies must create a culture wherein males and females fully participate in the allocation of authority and status, as well as have equal access to education, healthcare, meaningful employment, and a means of subsistence. Gender equality promotes economic growth, which in turn contributes to social and national progress.

Following are the studies which talk about the gender equality in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 4: Gender Equality in Women's Empowerment.

Determinants	Previous Studies
Gender Equality	Khedri, Yazdanpanah, Forouzani and Baradaran (2020); Bushra and Wajihha (2015); Kasomo (2012); Jeckoniah, Nombo and Mdoe (2012); Jayaweera (1997).

5.5. Power of Decision Making

Empowering women involves granting them legitimate rights and permissions to fulfill their responsibilities. Empowered women are better equipped to engage in organizing and decision-making, as well as to commit to developmental initiatives and programs independently. One of the most significant aspects of women's empowerment is their ability to make decisions about all aspects of their lives.

Following are the studies which talk about the power of decision-making in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 5: Power of Decision Making in Women's Empowerment.

Determinants	Previous Studies
Power of Decision Making	Noor, Isa and Nor (2021); Irhoumah, Ayedh and Echchabi (2020); Kazembe, (2020); Tabassum <i>et al.</i> (2019); Khedri, Yazdanpanah, Forouzani and Baradaran (2020); Kumar (2020); Hemachandra, Amaratunga and Haigh (2020); Soharwardi and Ahmad (2020); Choudhry, Mutalib and Ismail (2019); Sell and Minot (2018); Baig <i>et al.</i> (2017); Awan and Naqvi (2016); Qanbari and Ansari (2015); Hossain (2015); Dzemyda and Kimpah (2014); Jeckoniah, Nombo and Mdoe (2012); Banerjee and Ghosh (2012); Haque <i>et al.</i> (2011); Rahman, Karmaker and Mia (2009); Parveen and Leonhauser (2008); Kantor (2005); Pippert and Comer (1998).

5.6. Access to Media

The influences of media for women include self-esteem or self-confidence. As a result, women can raise their voices. The significance of media in empowering women is critical since it promotes self-reliance and has a clear impact on many aspects of existence. They also discovered how well the media may promote women's involvement or accessibility to expression and decision-making. The greater the accessibility of women to the media, the more it is considered as empowerment of women. This depicts that woman have the power to make their own decisions and raise their voices against wrongdoings.

Following are the studies which talk about the access to media in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 6: Access to Media in Women's Empowerment.

Determinants	Previous Studies
Access to Media	Irhoumah, Ayedh and Echchabi (2020); Khalid, Mehta and Serfraz (2020); Baig <i>et al.</i> (2017); Haque <i>et al.</i> (2011).

5.7. Government Assistance/Development Initiatives

The government is taking sufficient steps to encourage women's empowerment by enacting several initiatives. and laws. These measures not only increase the socioeconomic standing of women but also serve as means to address other social ills such as mortality rates, female infanticides, or female feticides. Higher government assistance to women in improving their standard of living contributes to women's empowerment. In contemporary times governments are taking several steps forward to empower women.

Following are the studies which talk about the government assistance/development initiatives in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 7: Government Assistance/Development Initiatives in Women's Empowerment.

Determinants	Previous Studies
Government Assistance/ Development Initiatives	Isa and Nor (2021); Khayyal <i>et al.</i> (2021); Marasabessy, Abdulmudy and Umanailo (2020); Hemachandra, Amaratunga and Haigh (2020); Mlambo and Kapingura (2019); Omotesho <i>et al.</i> (2017); Chaudhuri, Yeatts and Cready (2013).

5.8. Cultural Norms and Beliefs

Culture is indeed the essence of a thriving community, manifesting itself in various ways people tell tales, enjoy, remember things, entertain themselves, and envisage

tomorrow. Culture has significant societal and economical worth in addition to its inherent significance. Women's empowerment focuses on female's ambitions, strengths, opinions, and situations within the connections and structures that influence their lives in an intentional and cooperative manner. In open cultures, women experience more empowerment whereas, in closed cultures, women have fewer opportunities for growth and empowerment.

Following are the studies which talk about the cultural norms and beliefs in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 8: Cultural Norms and Beliefs in Women's Empowerment.

Determinants	Previous Studies
Cultural Norms and Beliefs	Aghazamani, Kerstetter and Allison (2020); Batool, Rehman and Ashagar (2020); Marasabessy, Abdulmudy and Umanailo (2020); Hemachandra, Amaratunga and Haigh (2020); Mlambo and Kapingura (2019); Toufique (2016); Dzemyda and Kimpah (2014); Bushra and Wajiha (2013); Taimur and Hamid (2013); Jeckoniah, Nombo and Mdoe (2012).

5.9. Geographical Aspects

The place or the geographical area where a woman resides plays a significant role in her empowerment. Geographical location is an important determinant in deciding the empowerment of women and their ability to make choices. The backgrounds of individuals, the value system of the area, the types of facilities available etc. are all aspects of geographical location that influence women's empowerment.

Following are the studies which talks about the geographical aspects in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 9: Geographical Aspects in Women's Empowerment.

Determinants	Previous Studies
Geographical Aspects	Kazembe, (2020); Batool, Rehman and Ashagar (2020); Hemachandra, Amaratunga and Haigh (2020); Omotesho <i>et al.</i> (2017); Bushra and Wajiha (2015); Chaudhuri, Yeatts and Cready (2013); Banerjee and Ghosh (2012); Haque <i>et al.</i> (2011); Rahman, Karmaker and Mia (2009).

5.10. Women's Participation

Women's empowerment is essential for society's growth because it enhances both the number and quality of individuals and fosters skills for advancement. Women's empowerment and social parity are critical for the long-

term growth of society. The level of empowerment a woman possesses is determined by her participation in significant societal decisions.

Following are the studies which talk about the women's participation in women's empowerment in the past literature:

Table 10: Women's Participation in Women's Empowerment.

Determinants	Previous Studies
Women Participation	Batool, Rehman and Ashagar (2020); Khalid, Mehta and Serfraz (2020); Soharwardi and Ahmad (2020); Hemachandra, Amaratunga and Haigh (2020); Tabassum <i>et al.</i> (2019); Dzemyda and Kimpah (2014); Jeckoniah, Nombo and Mdoe (2012); Chaudhry and Nosheen (2009); Rahman, Karmaker and Mia (2009).

6. Conclusion

Exploring the determinant factors of women's empowerment has always been critical not just for women's empowerment, but also for the overall well-being of the community. Women who are empowered can indeed help communities reach their full potential and contribute to positive community development. There are multiple studies worldwide that examine the origins of women's empowerment.. The results of these studies show that that there are numerous determinants of women's empowerment. The present study identifies determinants such as economic condition, income levels, education, social relations, gender equality, power of decision-making, access to media, government assistance/development initiatives, cultural norms and beliefs, geographical aspects and women's participation. All the identified determinants are crucial and significant in determining women's empowerment.

7. Limitations and Future Scope

The present study has attempted to make a novel contribution in the area. However, it is not without certain limitations. These limitations of the present study will inform the future scope of the research. The following are the limitations of the present study:

The present study is based solely on existing literature. A qualitative study can be conducted to delve deeper into the specific aspects studied. Secondly, incorporating additional studies could yield more comprehensive results. Furthermore, future studies could expand by including more constructs beyond those presently considered.

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