

Original Article

Conceptualization of Women Empowerment Through 5S Approach: Complementary for Sustainable Development.

Mariam Abbas Soharwardi 

The Islamia University of Bahawalpur.



Copyright © The Author(s). 2023 This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.



DOI:10.29052/2413-4252.v9.i1.2023.33-40

Citation: Soharwardi M A.
Conceptualization of Women
Empowerment Through 5S Approach:
Complementary for Sustainable
Development. IJWE. 2023; 9(1): 33-40

Corresponding Author Email:
Mariam.abbas@iub.edu.pk

Funding: The author(s) received no
specific funding for this work.

Conflicts of Interests: The authors have
declared that no competing interests
exist.

Received 12/03/2023

Accepted 14/09/2023

First Published 01/12/2023

Abstract

Background: For promoting the gender equality in the modern era, women's empowerment becomes extremely important. Empowerment gives women the ability to participate in decision-making processes that affect their livelihood in a productive and effective way. When women have a say in daily chores, management of their household expenditure, resource allocation, and community development, it leads to more inclusive and sustainable practices. Women's involvement in decision-making also ensures that their needs, priorities, and perspectives are taken into account.

Methodology: There are numerous definitions and aspects of women's empowerment in literature; however, in the current study, 5S Approach is used to explored and conceptualize the women's empowerment. These five S's stand for self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-management, and self-decision. If a woman is able to achieve all five of these skills, she will be able to live and move through society as she deems fit. The prerequisites and outcome of empowerment are these 5S. This 5S approach aims to identify and manage women's self-empowerment by their own volition.

Results: Many women in poor and impoverished nations lack self-awareness; therefore, it is necessary to empower all women, make them capable of doing so, and make them aware of their respect for and commitment to their beliefs. By applying these 5S approach we can be able to empower the women from every aspect of their capabilities to make their lives worth full and valuable and covering the gender gap.

Conclusion: When women take control of their lives through 5S approach, they become more capable of taking on powerful roles and leadership positions within society—ultimately empowering not just individual households but entire communities to rise out of poverty and desperation. So, for every woman who desires a better future for herself or her family, as long as her self-awareness is essential in forging a brighter path for sustainable development.

Keywords

Women Empowerment, Self-Esteem, Self-Management.

Introduction

Women have always been the backbone of our communities, but they are often overlooked when it comes to women's empowerment, economic growth, and decent work^{1,2}. However, as we enter a new age in which we must focus on creating long-term sustainable systems of production and consumption with limited resources, women's perspectives can no longer be ignored^{3,4}. Women today still earn less than their male counterparts in equivalent jobs, occupy fewer roles at senior positions within companies or organizations, begin with lower levels of savings and asset ownership, and carry more domestic responsibilities without

adequate return or remuneration from their households - all leading to an unequal distribution of wealth that disadvantages women both now and into the future. Despite all these challenges, women's empowerment is essential for promoting greater gender equality and fostering a healthy, prosperous global economy⁵. Despite the progress made in recent decades towards leveling the playing field between men and women in key social areas such as education and health, woefully inadequate progress has been made when it comes to restoring balance in terms of economic power⁶. Empowering women will not only provide important rights but also fuel the global economy like never before!

Table 1: Operational Definitions and Dimensions of Women Empowerment.

Conceptualize Empowerment	Dimensions	Authors
As a Process to get control over one's life and ability to make choices and opportunities	Civil, political, and economic Participation, Education, employment, mobility, Health,	(7-9)
As a Goal to learn how to access and achieve control over resources	Community resources, collective decision making, resources mobilization skills,	(10) 1995
As a goal to attain self-determination	Self-esteem Self-confidence Decision making	(11-17)
As a goal to self-transformation	Autonomy Freedom	(14, 18, 19)
As a mean to achieve positive health outcomes as women and children	Autonym terms as power status, Agency (Decision Making)	(20, 21)
As a process to transfer the power to disempower	Resource (Physical and Human) Agency (Decision Making) Outcomes	(22-24)
As a Goal to get control over one's life, body, and environment	Education, employment, access to financial assets, family origin, and community.	-25
As a process to control power and awareness	Autonomy Knowledge	-26
As a process to give power to disempowered to enhance their abilities to make choices	Education Employment Political Participation	(27-29)
As a change in the structural context	Internal and Intrapersonal skills, access to resources	-30
As a process and outcome	Social and economic justice	(31, 32)
As a process to make structural changes	Social, economic and social assets, Informal and formal institutions	-33
As a goal to control one's health	Health (Physical and mental health)	-34

As a goal to control one's life	Health (Physical and mental health), Home (where one is live), leisure time, to whom have a close relationship, values (religion, political, economic and social)	-35
The process to acquire power at an individual and collective level	Assets, Income, knowledge, literacy, (at an individual level), leadership, access to opportunities (at community level)	-36
Process of binding resources and achievement	Decision Making	-37
As a Process and Outcome	Decision Making	-38
	Attitudes toward beating (Self-esteem)	
	Attitudes toward Violence	
	(Self-Confidence)	
The process of change covers personal and collective knowledge, behavior, institutions, and outcomes in the social and cultural context.	Economic	(39, 40)
	Socio-Cultural	
	Education	
	Health	

In developing countries, women still face numerous barriers to their empowerment. Despite the progressive steps that have been made in recent decades, the gender gap persists, with females facing systemic challenges such as limited access to education, poor job prospects, and unequal pay practices⁴¹. The lack of economic resources available for women has a direct effect on their overall well-being, not just financially but also psychologically and emotionally⁴². If women are given the appropriate tools to create financial security for themselves, it would be beneficial both economically and socially across all areas of life. There is a need to start more programs specifically designed to support their financial growth, such as microfinance initiatives and vocational training centers, allowing us to understand the mechanism behind female economic empowerment^{43,44}.

Conceptualization of Women Empowerment

Empowerment of women means that they have the skills and resources to improve their economic status and move out of poverty^{45,46}. In addition, it means that women and girls can decide how to

utilize their income and other resources and/or jointly make those decisions⁴⁷. Economic and social empowerment puts women and girls in a stronger position and gives them the agency to make decisions that promote their health and well-being, as well as that of their families.

It is essential to provide awareness about the conceptual approaches of women empowerment, and women should be empowered within the domains of women's accessibility through the "5S" Approach:

Self-Esteem: Knowing about her respect and worth and realizing her equal part in our society.

Self-Efficacy: Believing in her capacity to act in ways necessary to reach specific goals.

Self-Confidence: Being aware of their skills and capabilities.

Self-Management: The ability to manage behaviors, thoughts, and emotions in a conscious and productive way.

Self-Decision: The ability to make decisions in the right direction by herself.

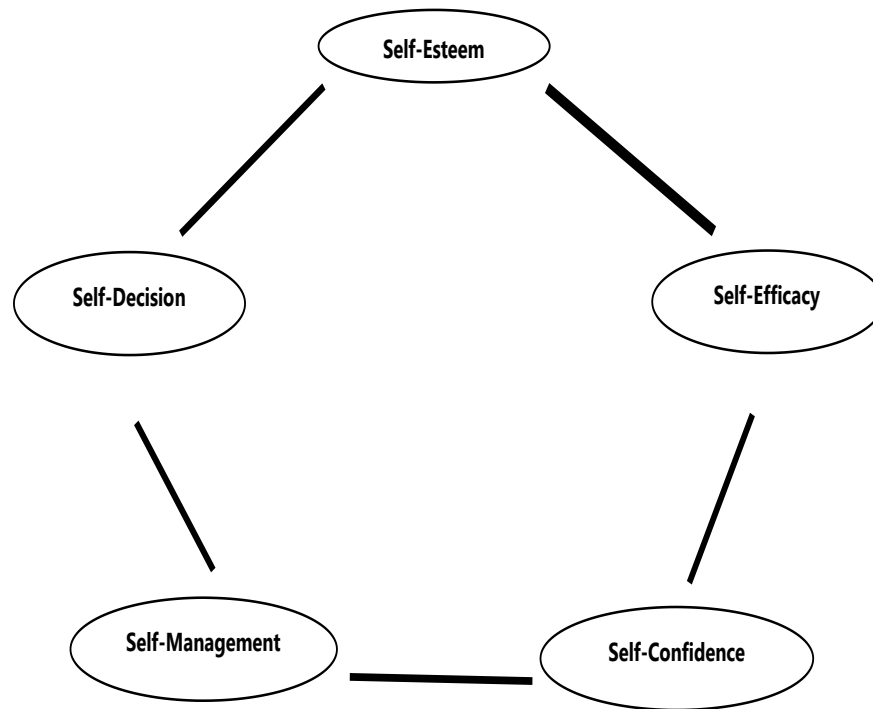


Figure 1: 5S Approach Author's Contribution.

Women Empowerment and Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is a continuous process which cannot be achieved without empowering the people in order to enhance their capabilities by 5 'S' Approach. These social arrangements should be evaluated primarily according to the extent of freedom people have to promote as well as achieving functions they value". Our World and Development is on a turning point and this transition toward sustainable and globular economy needs to focus on social, economic and

cultural changes to sustain the existing resources for the coming generation. This transition of economy along with societies can contribute to gender equality and youth employment, small and medium-sized enterprises, access to sustainable, reliable and affordable energy to produce, store, process and consume food, resulting in significant food losses in post-harvest stages. The current study is providing a framework and pathway which will help the countries to transit their economies in to sustainable economies catalyzing with empowerment for the sustainable development.

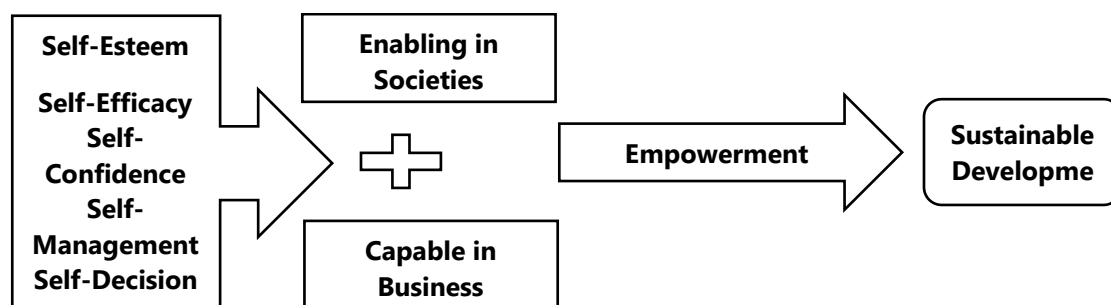


Figure 2: Women Empowerment Complementary for Sustainable Development

For too long, women have been underserved and undervalued in the economic sphere. With vast gender disparities still prevailing across many industries, it's clear that there is an urgent need to prioritize women's economic empowerment. After all, when women take control of their lives through education and financial independence, they become more capable of taking on powerful roles and leadership positions within society—ultimately empowering not just individual households but entire communities to rise out of poverty and desperation. So, for every woman who desires a better future for herself or her family, as long as her economic empowerment is essential in forging a brighter path for sustainable development.

Conclusion

It is essential to provide the awareness about the conceptual approaches of women economic empowerment and women should be empowered within the domains of women's accessibility through "5S" Approach. Women's empowerment is crucial for achieving gender equality. It involves creating equal opportunities, rights, and resources for women in all spheres of life, including education, employment, politics, and decision-making. Empowering women ensures that they have the same rights and opportunities as men, and it challenges the gender-based discrimination and inequalities that persist in societies. Women's empowerment is closely linked to economic development. When women are empowered and have equal access to resources, education, and employment opportunities, it leads to increased economic productivity and growth. Women's economic empowerment contributes to poverty reduction, sustainable development, and the overall well-being of societies. Empowered women have better access to healthcare, reproductive services, and information related to health and well-being. When women are empowered, they can make informed decisions about their health, access healthcare facilities, and prioritize their well-being. This has a positive impact not only on women themselves but also on their families and communities. Women's empowerment is closely linked to education and knowledge. When women have access to quality education and opportunities

for lifelong learning, it equips them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to actively participate in society, make informed decisions, and pursue their aspirations. Education empowers women to challenge gender norms, expand their horizons, and contribute to social and economic progress. Empowered women play a crucial role in political and social participation. When women are empowered, they can actively engage in decision-making processes, advocate for their rights, and contribute to shaping policies and laws that affect their lives. Women's participation in politics and leadership positions brings diverse perspectives, enhances democracy, and fosters inclusive and equitable societies.

Empowering women helps to reduce violence and discrimination against them. When women are empowered, they are better able to protect themselves from violence, challenge harmful social norms, and access legal and support services. Empowerment contributes to creating a society that values and respects women's rights, dignity, and safety.

Recommendations

Empowering women through self-esteem, self-management, self-decision, self-efficacy, and self-confidence can be achieved through the following recommendations:

- **Personal Development Workshops:** Organize workshops and training programs focused on personal development and building self-esteem. These workshops can cover topics such as self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-worth, and self-care. Provide women with tools and strategies to enhance their self-esteem and develop a positive self-image.
- **Mentoring and Coaching:** Establish mentoring and coaching programs where women can receive guidance and support from experienced mentors. Mentors can help women identify their strengths, set goals, overcome challenges, and build self-confidence. Coaching sessions can

focus on developing self-management skills, enhancing decision-making abilities, and managing personal and professional growth.

- **Skill-Building Programs:** Offer skill-building programs that empower women and enhance their self-efficacy. Provide training in areas such as entrepreneurship, financial management, leadership, communication, and negotiation skills. By acquiring new skills and competencies, women gain confidence in their abilities and increase their self-efficacy.
- **Peer Support Networks:** Create peer support networks or women's groups where women can connect, share experiences, and support each other. These networks provide a safe space for women to discuss challenges, seek advice, and celebrate achievements. Peer support can significantly boost self-confidence and foster a sense of belonging and empowerment.
- **Celebrate Achievements:** Recognize and celebrate women's achievements and successes. This can be done through awards, ceremonies, or public recognition. By highlighting women's accomplishments, you reinforce their self-confidence, self-worth, and self-belief. This recognition also serves as inspiration for other women, creating a ripple effect of empowerment.
- **Encourage Taking Initiative:** Encourage women to take initiative and step out of their comfort zones. Provide opportunities for them to lead projects, make decisions, and take on leadership roles. By empowering women to take charge and make things happen, you enhance their self-confidence and self-efficacy.
- **Role Models and Inspirational Stories:** Highlight stories of successful women who have

overcome challenges and achieved their goals. Share inspiring narratives and role models to motivate women and demonstrate what is possible. By showcasing real-life examples, you provide women with inspiration and role models to emulate, boosting their self-confidence and self-efficacy.

- **Continuous Learning and Growth:** Encourage women to embrace a mindset of continuous learning and personal growth. Provide access to educational resources, training programs, and professional development opportunities. By investing in their ongoing learning and skill enhancement, women build self-confidence and strengthen their self-efficacy.
- **Encourage Self-Care:** Emphasize the importance of self-care and self-awareness. Encourage women to prioritize their physical and mental well-being. Provide resources and guidance on self-care practices such as stress management, mindfulness, and work-life balance. By taking care of themselves, women can maintain their self-esteem, self-confidence, and overall empowerment.
- **Create a Supportive Environment:** Foster an environment that values and supports women's empowerment. Ensure equal opportunities, non-discriminatory policies, and inclusive practices. Address gender biases and create a culture that encourages women's participation, contributions, and growth. A supportive environment plays a significant role in nurturing self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.

By implementing these recommendations, women can develop a strong sense of self-esteem, self-decision, self-management, self-efficacy, and self-confidence. Empowering women in these aspects enables them to overcome barriers, pursue their goals, and actively participate in all spheres of life.

Acknowledgment

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed and supported me throughout this endeavor.

References

1. Stevenson-Hinde J. Attachment theory and John Bowlby: some reflections. *Attach Hum Dev*. 2007;9(4):337-342.
2. Al Khayyal AO, Alshurideh M, Al Kurdi B, Salloum SA, editors. Women empowerment in UAE: A systematic review. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Advanced Intelligent Systems and Informatics 2020*; 2021: Springer.
3. Desai S, Chen F, Reddy S, McLaughlin A. Measuring Women's Empowerment in the Global South. *Ann Rev Sociol*. 2022;48:507-527.
4. Sharma E, Das S. Integrated model for women empowerment in rural India. *J Int Devt*. 2021;33(3):594-611.
5. Abou-Shouk MA, Mannaa MT, Elbaz AM. Women's empowerment and tourism development: A cross-country study. *Tour Manag Perspect*. 2021;37:100782.
6. Priya P, Venkatesh A, Shukla A, editors. Two decades of theorising and measuring women's empowerment: Literature review and future research agenda. *Women's Studies International Forum*; 2021: Elsevier.
7. Asad A, Hameed WU, Irfan M, Jiang J, Naveed RT. The contribution of microfinance institutes in women-empowerment and role of vulnerability. *Rev Argent Clin Psicol*. 2020;29:223-238.
8. Giele JZ. Introduction: the status of women in comparative perspective. *Women, Roles and Status in Eight Countries* New York: John Wiley. 1977.
9. Mehra R. Women, empowerment, and economic development. *Ann Am Acad Pol Soc Sci*. 1997;554(1):136-149.
10. Moghadam VM, Senftova L. Measuring women's empowerment: participation and rights in civil, political, social, economic, and cultural domains. *Int Soc Sci J*. 2005;57(184):389-412.
11. Zimmerman MA, Rappaport J. Citizen participation, perceived control, and psychological empowerment. *Am J Community Psychol*. 1988;16(5):725-750.
12. Rappaport J. In praise of paradox: A social policy of empowerment over prevention. *Am J Community Psychol*. 1981;9:9-25.
13. Rappaport J. Studies in empowerment: Introduction to the Issue. *Prevention in Human Services*. 1984;3:1-7.
14. Rappaport J. The Power of empowerment Language. *Soc Policy*. 1985;16:215-221.
15. Rodwell CM. An analysis of the concept of empowerment. *J Adv Nurs*. 1996;23(2):305-313.
16. Bhandari TR, Chhetri M. Nutritional status of under five year children and factors associated in Kapilvastu District, Nepal. *J Nutr Health Food Sci*. 2013;1(1):1-6.
17. Bandura A. Self-efficacy mechanism in human agency. *American Psychologist* 1982;37(2):122.
18. Nayak P, Mahanta B. Women empowerment in India. 2008.
19. Narayan-Parker D, editor. Empowerment and poverty reduction: A sourcebook. World Bank Publications; 2002.
20. Sen G, Batliwala S. Empowering women for reproductive rights. 2000.
21. Mason KO. Gender and demographic change: What do we know? 1995.
22. Mason KO, Smith HL. Women's empowerment and social context: Results from five Asian countries. Gender and Development Group, World Bank, Washington, DC. 2003.
23. Kabeer N. Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Dev change*. 1999;30(3):435-464.
24. Kabeer N. Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment in 'Discussing women's empowerment: theory and practice'. *Sida stud*. 2001;3.
25. Kabeer N. Resources, agency, achievements: reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Dev Change*. 2002;30.
26. Mishra NK, Tripathi T. Conceptualising Women's Agency, Autonomy and Empowerment. *Econ Polit Wkly*. 2011:58-65.
27. Malhotra A, Schuler SR. Women's empowerment as a variable in international development. *Measuring empowerment: Cross-disciplinary perspectives*. 2005;1(1):71-88.
28. Kabeer N. Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal 1. *Gend Dev*. 2005;13(1):13-24.
29. Kabeer N. Contextualising the Economic Pathways of Women's Empowerment: Findings from a Multi-Country Research Programme. 2011.
30. Kabeer N. Women's economic empowerment and inclusive growth: labour markets and enterprise development. *IDRC*. 2012;44(10):1-70.
31. Johnson DM, Worell J, Chandler RK. Assessing psychological health and empowerment in women: The personal progress scale revised. *Women health*. 2005;41(1):109-129.

32. Batliwala S. The meaning of women's empowerment: new concepts from action. In: Sen G, Germain A, Chen LC, editors. *Population Policies Reconsidered: Health, Empowerment, and Rights*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Centre for Population and Development Studies; 1994.
33. Boehm A, Staples LH. Empowerment: The point of view of consumers. *Fam Soc*. 2004;85(2):270-280.
34. Alsop R, Heinsohn N. Measuring empowerment in practice: Structuring analysis and framing indicators: The World Bank; 2005.
35. Smith BJ, Tang KC, Nutbeam D. WHO health promotion glossary: new terms. *Health Promot Int*. 2006;21(4):340-345.
36. Tengland P-A. Empowerment: A conceptual discussion. *Health Care Anal*. 2008;16(2):77-96.
37. United Nations Development Fund for W. Progress of the World's Women: UNIFEM Biennial Report: United Nations Development Fund for Women; 2008.
38. Dhok RS, Thakre SB. Measuring undernutrition by composite index of anthropometric failure (CIAF): a community-based study in a slum of Nagpur city. *Int J Med Sci Public Health*. 2016;5(10):2013-2018.
39. Habibov N, Barrett BJ, Chernyak E, editors. *Understanding women's empowerment and its determinants in post-communist countries: Results of Azerbaijan national survey*. Women's Studies International Forum; 2017: Elsevier.
40. Richardson RA. Measuring women's empowerment: a need for context and caution. *Lancet Global Health*. 2018;6(1):e30.
41. Asaolu I, Alaofè H, Gunn JK, Adu A, Monroy A, Ehiri J, et al. Measuring Women's empowerment in sub-Saharan Africa: exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses of the demographic and health surveys. *Front Psychol*. 2018;9:994.
42. Noor S, Isa FM, Nor LM. Women empowerment through women entrepreneurship: a comparison between women entrepreneurs and fulltime housewife in Pakistan. *Iran j manag stud*. 2021;14(2):347-363.
43. Gupta M. Role of NGOs in women empowerment: case studies from Uttarakhand, India. *J Enterp Communities*. 2021;15(1):26-41.
44. Angelucci M, Heath R, editors. *Women empowerment programs and intimate partner violence*. AEA Papers and Proceedings; 2020: American Economic Association 2014 Broadway, Suite 305, Nashville, TN 37203.
45. Mogaji E, Hinson RE, Nwoba AC, Nguyen NP. Corporate social responsibility for women's empowerment: a study on Nigerian banks. *Int J Bank Mark*. 2021;39(4):516-540.
46. Batool SA, Batool SS. Impact of Education on Women's Empowerment: Mediation Role of Income and Self-Esteem. *JRRE*. 2018;12(1).
47. Mosedale S. Assessing women's empowerment: towards a conceptual framework. *J Int Dev*. 2005;17(2):243-257.
48. Tandon T. Women empowerment: perspectives and views. *Int J Indian Psychol*. 2016;3(3):6-12.