

Women Empowerment: Concept Paper

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Abstract

Women empowerment is the ability to say out views without belittling the other part. This involves the process of mutual dialogue, negotiation done to meet social needs. Empowerment is the Process on a continuum to raise awareness, capacity building that leads to greater variety of participation, greater decision making power, control and transformative action.

Objective: The objective of the concept paper was to have an in-depth description of women empowerment.

Materials and Methods: Walker and Avant model of concept analysis was used in helping describing the concept of interest. Literature search was done from 1-30 August 2017 using women empowerment journal, PubMed, Medline, PMC, NCBI and Reference Manager. And 40 studies were found to be relevant to define and describe the concept of interest.

Results: Women empowerment definition and description was confined to the theoretical realm and mistaken as a form of dominance.

Key words: Women, Empowerment

1.0 Introduction and Background

Power is defined as having dominion, influence and control over someone or something (Chandler, 1992). In order to understand the process of empowerment there is need to understand that power takes different dimensions such as power over victimization, power to be generative or productive, power with others in tackling problems, power from within which give spiritual strength and uniqueness seasoned with self-acceptance and self-respect (Ratmen,2013). Empowerment is the process of raising awareness, capacity building that lead to greater variety of participation, greater decision making power, control and transformative action (Ratmen, 2013). Empowerment is also known as raising the spiritual, educational, social, economic and political strength of individuals in all spheres of life (Ratmen, 2013)

Women empowerment means mutual dialogue, negotiation and ability to say out views without belittling the other part (Ratmen, 2013). Absence of women empowerment is one of the most critical attribute behind increase of maternal mortality and morbidity that can be prevented. Women empowerment should surpasses stating of facts regarding an event but should involve critical synthesis of facts, meaning, interpretation and application of these into practice seasoned with ethical considerations of rights of the other. It is an art of the ability to act out principles stated at the Beijing Conference Women Rights in a mutual manner that fosters understanding and growth between the parties involved (Beijing Conference Women Rights, 1995).

Accepting one's capabilities and limitations for the proper growth of the global society at large is of paramount importance. Empowering women socially, economically by training them to do self-help projects and accessing health care services are among the appreciated dimensions. Most rural women are the stewards of the natural resources hence they need to be empowered to use safe water supply, good sanitation practices, and use of mosquito nets

in malaria zones. Women need to educate girls and boys to prevent child marriages and unwanted pregnancies. Counselling women on prevention of sexual gender based violence and promotion of gender equality is of importance in terms of women empowerment (Yesim Global Compact, 2017). These skills are important in preventing disempowering of women which can help raise maternal and neonatal survival (Yesim Global Compact, 2017). Researchers have proven that women empowerment through educational, economical, sociocultural, reproductive and political has the potential to reduce maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality (International Planned Parenthood, 2017). On the same note, child marriages, unwanted pregnancies, all forms of women abuse can be averted. The overall goal of women empowerment is to strengthen women security against sexual gender based violence, gender justice, combat HIV/AIDS, increase peace in the homes, expanding citizenship, participation and leadership. Customs and traditions that oppress women should be abolished, emphasizing gender equality and women empowerment (International Planned Parenthood, 2017).

Studies done in Turkey Bursa Platform Butterfly training revealed that 22% of girls and women are victims of abuse at least once in their lives, 25% physical, 27% psychological, 82% victims of violence not reported. Then 1; 5 sexual abuse (WHO, 2016). Sexual abuse is 3 times higher in girls in high income countries (UNICEF, 2014). This information gives clearly the outcry for women empowerment. In schools more girls are harassed, experience sexual violence, emotional abuse, domestic labour and child prostitution (UNICEF, 2016).

Worldwide about 150 million girls are engaged in child labour, on farming estate household chores (UNICEF, 2016). About 40% of employed women reported physical violence since age of 15 versus 30% of unemployed women (ZDHS, 2016). About 89% victims of violence shared with family, 79% victims of workplace abuse and law enforcement took over, 50% of

victims of at work abuse do not share the information. (Yesim Global Compact, 2017).All these point out the need for women empowerment globally.

Women remain the world's most unemployed resources(Tulika Tripalli ,2011).Women comprise of 50% of world population but however they only hold less than 12% of parliament seats. Out of 177 countries on the world only 14 countries of the women hold more than 30 seats in their national parliament(Md.Aminur Rahman ,2013).Dependent personality traits and poor negotiating skills place women on the negative side of women empowerment(Benotsch& Sinha ray ,2017).Disabled women need nurse advocates to stand for them in cases of oppression(Rottercum ,2017).

According to Human Resource Development, 2017 discrimination against girl children start in the womb and untold number of female foetuses are aborted in prenatal sex selection stage hence the need for women empowerment not to destroy life. This is an unethical practice that is done under the umbrella of women empowerment. Ewer ling, 2017 in the survey-based women empowerment index SWPER in Africa strongly suggest that sustainable development goals should focus on equity. Goals should empower all women and girls reinforcing the need to have a reliable indications to track progress.

About 34 countries in Africa are targeting 3 dimensions of women empowerment; attitude to violence, social independence, decision making and having moderate to high correlation with gender development index. This also points out the gaps in women empowerment. Another gap was pointed out by Gribbes et al, 2017 where he outlined the negativity of intimate partner violence while Geysmen, 2017 in a study "is something missing from antenatal clinic" emphasize the need for addressing urinary incontinence, pelvic floor disorders, pelvic floor exercises anenatally.Lastly Khali, 2017 postulated the importance of nutrition in HIV

mothers and their children to prevent stunting. All these are gaps crying for women empowerment. See.

Adolescents' girls 15-24 are at highest risk of sexual and reproductive health problems with more than 15 million (M) girls having HIV infection. About 5 million girls aged 15-19 years have abortion every year, 40% of abortions performed under unsafe conditions. About 2 million girls undergoing Female genital mutilation (FGM) every year resulting in many birth complications. Young women and girls are vulnerable to all forms of abuse (Adolescents Transition to Adulthood (ATA), 2017). Adolescents aged 15-19 give birth every year and many of the pregnancies are unwanted resulting in abortions and 17% of sexually active adolescents do not use any form of contraception and 1 in 20 adolescent girl's contract a sexually transmitted (STI's) each year (Adolescents and Transition to Adulthood (ATA), 2017). Most boys are socialized to believe that dominant behaviour towards girls and women is part of masculinity with girls becoming victims of sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS (Women Empowerment, 2016). This information spells out the magnitude of the need for deeper exploration and analysis of the definition of women empowerment. Finding out whether women really understand what women empowerment entails...

About 40-47% of reported rapes are perpetrated against girls 15 years and below while in Costa Rica 95% of pregnancies under 16. Pregnant unmarried adolescent's girls faces school dropouts, become single parents, experience social disapproval, economic hardships and are at risk of complications or of dying in childbirth hence the outcry for women empowerment (Women Empowerment, 2016). About 15-19 girls are 5 times more likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth than women aged 20-24 and risk is even higher in younger girls in developing countries. More than 1/2 a million women die every year from pregnancy related causes, when births are too soon, too close, too many or too late. Women who marry at a young age are likely to marry older husbands and difference in age reduces their participation in decisions

about sex, child bearing, child spacing or negotiating the use of contraceptives (Adolescent and the Transition to Adulthood, 2017). About ½ m women of child bearing age (WCBA) die each year due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth with 99% occurring in developing countries (hence there is need to equip women of bearing age to know the critical principles of safe motherhood using women empowerment strategies. (Safe motherhood, 2016) Zimbabwe's maternal mortality crisis 2014 says 3,000 mothers die every year due largely to lack of access to quality health care and about 1/3 of women in Zimbabwe deliver babies at home. Zimbabwe maternal death is currently at 443 per 100 000 while sustainable development strategy is aiming at 70 per 100 000 by 2030. To reduce maternal mortality while the introduction of bonds has worsened the plight facing mothers as foreign currency is hard to come by and women are currently not able to afford basic health care, free maternity treatments (Women Empowerment, 2016).

1.1 Problem statement

There are conflicting operational definitions regarding women empowerment. From the researcher's points of view, women empowerment is being mistakenly understood as dominance leading to an increase of domestic violence. Domestic violence in pregnancy accounts for 0, 9-20.1% (Moura Bessa et al, 2016). Intimate partner violence accounts for 10-70% worldwide. In Africa physical violence ranges from 23-40%, sexual 3-27%, and emotional 25-49 % (WHO, 2014). Empowerment is no longer yielding positive outcomes as society anticipates. A lot of detrimental effects are occurring such as increased rate of divorces, with Zimbabwe having higher rate of divorce 60%. (Population Development Review, 2015) The in depth definition of women empowerment is not fully understood.

1.2 Identifying uses of the Concept

Historically some women have difficult acknowledging their own power and this reluctance has explained inability of some women to properly control their own life (Layachi Anser, 2010). The new millennium is upon us with many advances in different disciplines such as technology and health care but little has changed in terms of understanding the definition of women empowerment embracing the three domain, cognitive, psychomotor, affective and five ways of knowing women empowerment. This concept explored the in-depth descriptions, explanations engraved in the phrase women empowerment. The positive and negative truth about the concept cannot be proven if the concept is not fully defined. One will understand the ups and down of women empowerment principles if one fully understand that women empowerment is a continuum as well as its essentiality and evolutionary (MacEwen & Wills, 2014). Midwives can only agree that they fully understand the pros and cons of women empowerment when they critically analyse its definition.

1.3 Purpose of Statement

The purpose of the concept paper was to have an in depth description of women empowerment.

1.4 Methodology

Walker and Avant model of describing a concept was used. Walker and Avant, (2011) stresses the importance of antecedents and critical attributes in describing a concept of interest. The researchers conducted literature search from 1-30 August, 2017, using Women empowerment journals, PubMed, MEDLINE, CRAM, Reference Manager, Google Scholar search engines. Forty studies that were found relevant to the concept of interest were included in the exploration of the definition of women empowerment. Women empowerment was

cognitively appraised in most studies. Researchers focused on the description of the term women empowerment by assigning antecedents and attributes to the term.

1.5 Defining Antecedents

Walker and Avant postulates antecedents as preliminary events that should be present before occurrence of the concept of interest (Walker & Avant, 2011). In the context of this paper, women empowerment the antecedents include; having an opportunity for advancement, access to information about all facets of the organization of women empowerment, access to support one's job responsibilities and decision making, access to resources as needed by the women, mutual dialogue. Negotiation skills, illiteracy, low self-esteem, lack of educational, social, economic, political, psychological power. Lack of education and training, self-determination, child marriages, unwanted pregnancies, high rates of sexual gender based violence, reduced sense of potency, and reduced self-reliance, courage, critical thinking and respect of diversity in women empowerment.

1.6 Defining Attributes

Critical attributes are those characteristics that describe the concept of interest in a more tangible way (Walker and Avant, 2011). Women empowerment in the context of this study was defined as acquisition of educational, economic, social, political and reproductive rights.

1.7 Results

Forty articles were reviewed and all of them had information on women empowerment. However not all articles described and analysed women empowerment definition in greater depth. Thirty articles were considered in the description and analysis of women empowerment

tconcept(Chandler,1992,Chaplain,1997,Coxal,2008,Caper,1975,Kanter,1993,Rodwell,1996,Ryles,1999&Benner,2001,Versiveux,2012,Manojlovict,2007,Ratmen,2013,MacEwen&Wills,2

014, Tulika Tripathi, 2011, Rawland, 1917, Yesim Global Compact, 2016, Paulo Freire, 1996, Layachi Anser, 2010, Yesim Global Compact, 2017, International Planned Parenthood Federation, 2017, Adolescent Transition to Adulthood, 2017, Women Empowerment, 2016, Safemotherhood, 2016, World Health Organization, 2016, UNICEF, 2016, Benotsch, 2017, Rottercum, 2017, Oxford dictionary, 2017.

All researches defined what women empowerment was (Oxford dictionary, Layachi, 2017, Ratmen, 2013). Three authors described the concept of power (Chandler, Chaplain, Ryles, 1999). Two authors described different types of power (Rawland, 1917, Yesim Global Compact, 2016). One author eluded on male and female dominance. Two authors described the statistics of women empowerment (WHO, Adolescent Transition to Adulthood, 2017) All the thirty articles described the need for women empowerment. In the view of concept of interest ten articles were dropped due to lack of adequate information.

1.8 Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to give an in depth description and analysis of women empowerment definition with its pros and cons that can be clearly understood by all health care providers locally, regionally and globally. The definition of women empowerment by most studies did not assign antecedents or attributes to the term women empowerment for the purpose of clarifying the concept. Sociologically women empowerment refers to methods used to solve social problems emanating from powerlessness (Katajisto, 2003). While Kekkonen et al, 2003, refers psychological women empowerment to the inherent qualities, efforts and values of personal growth development. There was no in depth description of what entails women empowerment, that is equipping women negotiation and decision making skills in a mutual manner that respects the values of the other part and works towards positive global transformation in all aspects commencing from the nuclear family. In tandem to this

definition, the fruits of women empowerment should reflect in all spheres of interaction as stated by Arundhadi Chthopadhyaya, 2005, World Health Organisation, 2017, UNICEF, 2017 who defined women empowerment as a state of complete health, education, economic, social and political integrity.

1.9 Benefits and Consequences of Women empowerment

Women empowerment reduces incidences of child abuse, domestic violence, child marriage, unwanted pregnancies. A lonely husband of the empowered woman then find comfort from the maid who at times is shouldered with the special duties of the working mother.

Adolescents Transition to Adulthood(ATA),2017, emphasize the need for women empowerment as lack of it results in high risk of sexual reproductive health problems such as contraction of HIV infection, exposure to all forms of abuse, unplanned pregnancies, unsafe abortions and complication of female genital mutilation. Most being socialized to believe that dominance behaviour towards girls is part of masculinity as eluded by Women Empowerment,2016).This further results in unmarried women to have school dropouts, become single parents who can neglect the unwanted babies, experience social disapproval ,economic hardship and risk dying during delivery.

About ½ million women are illiterate showing a gap in the cognitive domain. Gibbes et al, 2017 argues that there is cognitive, practice and affective gap in terms of addressing issues of urinary incontinence, fistulas and uterine prolapse problems. Versiveux, 2012 in a study on population control confirms that women are being used as a tool for population control like what happened in Germany were the population was over controlled that they now critically encouraging women to bear children with an incentive in view of need to reduce spending. However on the other arm a well-planned, spaced, timed family is easy to manage in terms of financial and social burden.

The how part of the application of women empowerment strategies can result in women dominance. Women dominance can cause high rates of divorces if the behaviour of the empowered women is not controlled by ethical principles, social and cultural values. The women personality traits and limitations as eluded by Benotcsch, 2017 are critical in understanding the definition of women empowerment and its application in the global arena as some women take top positions and fail to uphold their integrity resulting in flopping of reputable organizations and institutions. This notion fits well with women empowerment that allows in depth understanding of the social and cultural ties that are critical for its success.

Women attitude to violence remains a nagging issue with about 34 countries in Africa targeting to address women empowerment: attitude to violence, social independence as most women have stayed long on the subordinate side and decision making with moderate to high correlation with gender development index. Some women are still affected by the historical reservation personality which can result in them even if they take top positions they remain unproductive back benchers. Women need to be assertive, have control, dialoguing, negotiating skills of their lives and families in a positive way.

A health professional nurse who critically analyse and explore the definition of women empowerment takes on board the pros and cons aspects of women empowerment. The aesthetic component of knowing is only demonstrated when the health professional nurse is able to identify the critical gaps which have a negative bearing on its application in women empowerment. Critical thinking, exploration and analysis of women empowerment definition should be able to answer all the why need of women empowerment locally, regionally and globally. All the scientific researches of women empowerment demonstrate scientific evidence justifying the need for women empowerment. An empowered women should be able to have mutual dialogue, negotiating skills and the ability to express point of own view assertively using effective communication skills in women empowerment.

In the context of women empowerment, many health professionals have been enriched with women empowerment information and so many organizations, policies in Zimbabwe have been put in place to address issues of women empowerment. The question is whether women empowerment definition is totally and critically understood.

Totality of women empowerment embraces the three domains of women empowerment, knowledge, skills and behaviour and the five ways of knowing. The need for women empowerment should be an intrinsic personal motivation need from her spheres of personal influence emanating from the in depth definition of women empowerment and not from peer pressure. When women are convinced that women empowerment is the best indicator for them then they are obliged to correctly and confidently use the three domains of women empowerment and the five ways of knowing. Women should be able to select areas where they need to be empowered taking into cognisance the why, where, how and when women empowerment is needed.

Women empowerment should be characterized into the women of the 21ST century. This should be shown by societal progress globally. Women empowerment in depth understanding of the definition should not remain hanging in the theoretical framework but should be decentralized into skills and valued actions which are acceptable in the family, marriage, community and society at large.

The road map for women empowerment is visible with a bright light at the end of the tunnel in terms of women empowerment. Women forms a very important part of the nation. Swami Vivekananda in the Tribune 2014 highlighted that “the best thermometer to measure the progress of a nation is its treatment of women.

Women and adolescent girls need recognition in the household, communities, societies, nations, regions and globally. The United Nation, World Health Organisation and other

nations should join hands and empower girls and women in all spheres of life (social, psychological, economical, educational and political). The Tribune argues that an educated woman is a lamp that has double strength light that can light every household, community, society and nation at large. Lack of funding as well as the poverty is drawing setbacks to women empowerment strategies globally.

2.0 Cases

Concept analysis of empowerment is development of defining attributes to clarify further what is and what is not the concept of women empowerment. Aids understanding and leads to further refinement of defining attributes. (Walker Avant, 2011). The application of Walker & Avant, 2011, to case scenarios aids understanding (Paley, 1996). Walker & Avant, (2011) emphasize the importance of identifying critical attributes for synthesis of a concept analysis. Incorporating diverse cases, consisting of model, related, borderline, contrary and cases, allows for pertinent validation of the analysed concept. A description of a situation, experience or event that provides a precise and consistent depiction of the analysed concept (Walker Avant, 2011)

2.1 Model Case

Doric young woman was born from a rich Christian family background of 2 girls and 1 boy. Her father was a pilot engineer and the mother an accountant at a certain private company. Both parents had a positive personality and well educated. Doric grew up in a positive, social, psychological, political, spiritual and economic environment. She was aware and used the reproductive rights. Doric climbed the ladder of acquisition of education at reputable schools and Universities of academic excellence from kinder garden to masters, PHD level where she recently graduated. Doric was self-determined, confident, had the zeal to excel in her studies and has high social networking nationally, regionally and internationally. She was chosen to

be associate board members of many non-governmental organizations and universities. She holds a top position in the government seats of her country and is at the for-front of empowering women. She has influenced and supported many oppressed women and also in the process of writing a book about the lived experiences of an empowered women. She eventually married at 30years and has one baby girl aged three.

2.2 Analysis

In the model case all the attributes were included such as the educational, economic, social, political and reproductive rights.

2.3 Related case

Instances that exemplify a different but comparable concept, depicting certain criteria such as a single word, to distinguish it from the model case(Chinn&Kramer,2011).The related case do not contain all the defining attributes of concept being analysed(Walker and Avant,2011).

2.4 Related case

A 19 year old girl graduate executive secretary at a reputable company was pregnant and was booked within a private hospital. She informed the husband and the in laws who encouraged her immediately to seek care. The husband immediately drove her to a local clinic where the skilled birth attendant midwives examined her and saw that she had a breech presentation and the cervix was fully dilated with strong contractions. The woman really wanted to deliver at the hospital where she had booked. The visiting Gynaecologist was informed who came and manoeuvred the breech and delivered a baby boy with Apgar 7-9/10. She did not report that she had taken African oxytocin that she was given by her mother and was not aware of the consequences. Both mother and baby were taken to postnatal in a healthy condition.

2.5 Analysis

The educational, economic and social attributes were in the case but the political and reproductive rights were not addressed.

2.6 Borderline

Borderline cases are constructed to help illustrate what is nearly but not quite meant by the concept. In a borderline case of women empowerment some of the attributes of women empowerment are missing (Walker and Avant (2011)).

Gender equality has made great strides in achieving positive effects on educational, economic growth globally but most women still have owing unpaid care especially in homes and domestic work where the women works more than the men hence there is need to achieve the Sustainable development Goals-5 in years to come 2030.

2.7 Analysis

In a borderline case some of the attributes for women empowerment are missing making some of the elements of economic empowerment to lag behind. Such as hours of work and the corresponding payments.

2.8 Contrary case

Cases that might be similar to the model case in regards to same aspects but definitely are not instances of the concepts (Chin& Kramer, 2011)

Opponents of women empowerment open doors to unqualified, inexperienced and less interested women to hold office thus reinforcing the stereotypes about women's lack of skill and performance. This doubles the edged argument that points at lack of qualification, lack of opportunities and discrimination which keeps women in a vicious circle (Tambiah, 2003).

2.9 Analysis

The contrary case is the opposite of women empowerment with no attributes of women empowerment. There is lack of cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains of women empowerment. These are high risk opponents of women empowerment which keeps women in vicious circle.

3.0 Empirical References

Empirical referents of a concept are classes or categories of actual concept that their existence demonstrates the occurrence of the concept (Walker & Avant, 2011). Determining the empirical referents for the defining attributes is the final step of a concept analysis (Walker & Avant, 2011). There are several published women empowerment measurement instruments in existence. For this paper, the key parameters of women empowerment are to specify empirical referents for the women and adolescents girls in the household, communities, nationally, regionally and globally.

The parameters of women empowerment include raising self-esteem and self-confidence, elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and girls, building and strengthening partnership with women's organisation, enforcement of constitutional and legal provisions protect rights of women, building a positive image of women in the society and recognize their contributions in social, economic and political spheres, developing ability among women to think critically, fostering decision making and collective action, enabling women to make informed choices, ensuring women's participation in all walks of life and providing information knowledge, skills for self-employment and prevention of dominance on either part. (Mamta Mokta, 2014).

3.1 Consequences

Walker and Avant (2011) described consequences as defining outcomes as a result of the concept. An empowered women will experience increased decision making. Women be stored with education. Empowered to make informed decisions and have freedom to contribute to household, community, national, regional and global destiny. Women empowerment refers to acquiring knowledge, understanding gender relations and how the relations may be changed, developing a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life, gaining the ability power and developing ability to organize, influence direction of educational, political social, economic and reproductive rights changes locally regionally and internationally Layachi Anser, 2010).

3.2 Conclusion

The goal of the researchers in writing this paper was to have an in depth description of the definition of women empowerment. In the context of this paper, women empowerment antecedents include; having an opportunity for advancement, access to information about all facets of the organization of women empowerment, access to support one's job responsibilities and decision making, access to resources as needed by the women, mutual dialogue. Negotiation skills, illiteracy, low self-esteem, lack of educational, social, economic, political, psychological power. Lack of education and training, self-determination, child marriages, unwanted pregnancies, high rates of sexual gender based violence, reduced sense of potency, and reduced self-reliance, courage, critical thinking and respect of diversity in women empowerment. The critical attributes include the educational, economic, social, political and reproductive rights. Consequentially a woman who is educationally, economically, socio-culturally, politically and is well aware of the reproductive rights is an empowered woman.

Explanation and analysis of the definition for the purpose of clarifying the definition. Women empowerment in the context of this study was defined as acquisition of educational, economic, social, political and reproductive rights. Consequently an empowered women will experience increased decision making. Women be stored with education. Empowered women make informed decisions and have freedom to contribute to household, community, national, regional and global destiny. Layachi Anser, 2010 postulates that Empowered women acquire knowledge, understanding gender relations and how the relations may be changed, develop a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life, gaining the ability, power and developing ability to organize, influence direction of educational, political social, economic and reproductive rights changes locally regionally and internationally.



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