

Possibilities and Constraints in the Empowerment of Women
A Case Study of selected villages in the Gampaha district in
Sri Lanka.

Dissertation submitted to the Open University of Sri Lanka as partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Development
Studies and Public Policy

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June 2010



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ABSTRACT

Most of the urban women are better positioned in understanding the discriminations against them and know how to express them. The advantage is that they are exposed to daily regular information and communication. They are also involving themselves into different forums and have become active members in those forums. Their advantages are that they have opportunities to meet with other women and discuss the issues pertaining to them at large.

The poor women in the village do know little about the inequality treatment against them. They have not bothered to know about what all these jargons. The women in the village have spoken little of women issues. Their sincerity and loyalty towards the family and the house is much worthier than talking about the issues. They are fine with the present life.

The needs of the women living in town is different from the needs of the women living in typical villages. The research study covered women from the semi-urban setup which is somewhat mixture of all these. The gender related issues of women are generally affecting all women.

This research study was planned to identify the “Possibilities and Constraints in the Empowerment of Women”. The assumption is that the empowered women would have developed leadership qualities by which they could lead a group or a community to achieve expected target. Those women who have access to income and other resources are stronger and can fearlessly take decision.

The methodology used in this research study was by collecting data from selected sample of a number of women and collecting information through specially prepared structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was made ready by incorporating the mixture of qualitative and quantitative aspects. Before filling the data the questionnaire was rectified through pre-testing with the selected small group of women.

The research team was mandated to discuss the questionnaire with the selected women and get them filled, also collected observatory data for the analysis. The gathered data were processed carefully and has found out the appropriateness of the questionnaire.

The recognition comes through social acceptance. The women needs to work hard to build up their image. The image of woman is somewhat positioned in the wrong place. The women have to improve their productivity. To be productive women have to improve the resources utilization patterns. What has been observed was that the women seem to be less organized and have shown minimum level of resources management including time.

The social acceptance creates opportunity for women to become leaders. The social acceptance is necessary for a woman to get the support of other women. With the little inputs of management ideas the woman will be able to conquer the constraints of empowerment pertaining to their improvement.

When women improve their profitability through better productivity, the economic value of her family and the society improve automatically. The woman should be showing interest in making use of the opportunities available around her to improve her skills. This opens the way for either find job or develops self employment. While aspiring for higher position the woman needs to attend urgently the image building and value addition to improve productivity and profitability.

Mainstreaming and empowering the needs of women are fine. These two approaches will certainly bring women to some level of recognition. But the women selected for research study in addition to what the MDGs proposes should concentrate primarily developing their own image building for improving social acceptance. The women need to add value to their life.