

Development And Validation Of Women Empowerment Scale

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ABSTRACT

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The World Bank has identified empowerment as one of the key constituent elements of poverty reduction, and as a primary development assistance goal. Investing in women's empowerment is essential in order to achieve sustainable improvements in health, as well as to ensure that women realize their full human rights.

There are many definitions of women empowerment as used by various authors, Sako (1992:32) defines empowerment as: - The process of strengthening the existing capacities of disadvantaged groups in society so as to enable them performs towards improving themselves, their families and the society as a whole. It evolves the provision of enabling environment for their productive and intellectual abilities to be realized In some societies where some groups have suffered discrimination for a long time, ways have been found to address this problem. Laws have been made to protect these groups against future discrimination with the goal of providing equal opportunities for all.

Fadeiye and Olanegn (2001:66) viewed women empowerment as: a process of enabling women to develop the capacity to actualize their potentials That woman should be looked at as individuals that possess some hidden potentials for greatness and so should be encouraged to develop such to the fullest. Enemu (1999; 233), quoting Sandbrook and Halfani, viewed empowerment as: a multidimensional process involving the transformation of the economic, social. Psychological, Political and Legal circumstances of the powerless. In the specific case of women, empowerment entails not only positive changes in these critical respects but also the dismantling of the cultural norms and traditional practices that devalue, disempowered and dispossess women. The process must necessarily also include the expansion

of women's access to educational opportunities, facilities for skills acquisition and positions of authority. In order to strengthen and standardize our measurement of women's empowerment in the area of development studies this Women Empowerment Scale has been developed which is a multidimensional quantitative survey tool.

The tool called (*Women's Empowerment Scale*) is designed for use with women at graduate and post graduate levels, and consists of domains critical to Economic, Interpersonal, Social political and legal aspects.

Several different efforts have been made in recent years to develop comprehensive frameworks delineating the various dimensions along which women can be empowered. In the present scale the essential elements of the major frameworks have been adopted. These frameworks employ different levels of specificity. For example, the CIDA (1996) framework includes four broad dimensions of empowerment, while Kishor's (2000) framework includes broad (e.g. Valuation of Women, equity in marriage) as well specific (e.g. lifetime exposure to employment) elements. The present Scale (Women Empowerment Scale) has been framed by synthesizing and listing the most commonly used dimensions of women's empowerment, drawing from the frameworks developed by these various authors. Allowing for overlap, these frameworks suggest that women's empowerment occur along the following dimensions: economic. socio-cultural, interpersonal, legal and political.

CARE's theoretical framework for Women's Empowerment, which outlines three overarching domains of change essential to ensuring meaningful empowerment of women: Individual Agency. Relations, and Structure was also consulted for the formulation of the scale.

In the present Scale Women's empowerment was measured by enabling collectivization and catalyzing collective action the researcher prioritized the inclusion of a set of items to measure structural and cognitive social capital, including membership in and help from community groups, social cohesion and collective efficacy. The researcher also developed new measures where gaps were found including a set of self-efficacy measures that explore how women's confidence to enact health promoting behaviours (e.g. use of family planning) is mediated by gender roles and gendered power dynamics in the household.

The items in the tool were tested and refined through two rounds of cognitive interviewing interviews with women in the final measures were then field tested through interviews with graduate and post graduate women purposively chosen from the five universities i.e. Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu University, Mahendra Sanskrit University, Pokhara University and Puvanchal University of Nepal. Since there are very few studies on the attitudes of women towards empowerment in India or abroad, henceforth, to develop a good measuring tool, the researcher took the statement of the problem as following:

"Development and Validation of Women Empowerment Scale".

There were two major objectives of this study. They are as following:

1. To construct the Women Empowerment Scale for measuring empowerment of women studying in Graduate and Post Graduate levels.
2. To validate the Women Empowerment Scale regarding its validity, reliability and norms. The researcher used method of summated ratings used by Likert (1932) for constructing this tool because of its simple nature and its popularity among psychologists.

The researches took the following step in order to construct Women Empowerment Scale:

1. Preparation of design of Women Empowerment Scale;
2. Collection of expert opinion;
3. Pre Try out;
4. Scoring;
5. Item Analysis;

6. Preparation of final draft

1. **Preparation of design of Women Empowerment Scale** — "The above said scale is a five point scale based on the Summated ratings i.e. Likert Pattern. In the first draft of the Women Empowerment Scale, there were 100 items. The scale has been given to the 5 experts of the field of Education and Psychology for judging the language and the subject matter of test. On the basis of their suggestion 8 items were rejected and 92 items were retained for the next draft of the Women Empowerment Scale".

Five points means there are five options for answering which are (I) Strongly agree (SA) (II) Agree (A); (III) Undecided (UP); (IV) Disagree (DA) and (V) Strongly Disagree (SDA). The scoring pattern is 1,2,3,4 and 5 numeral system. The positive item of the scale was scored as 5,4,3,2 and 1 where as negative item were scored as 1,2,3,4 and 5.

After scoring the researcher went through the process of item analysis. The researcher took following step for the item analysis:

1. Arranged the data into ascending order. The base of arrangement is the total score obtained by a respondent on the above said tool.
2. Calculated the 27 % of the total sample size that is $(500 \times 27) / 100 = 135$.
3. Divided the whole respondents into three groups which are low scorer, high scorer and average.
4. Calculated the Mean and S.D. for the each item on the basis of the score of low scorer group and high scorer group.
5. Since it is a attitude scale and in attitude scale only discriminating power is calculated for item analysis, therefore the researcher calculated 't' value for computing the discriminating power. After calculating the 't' value the researcher found that out of 92 items 7 items were found not significant either on 0.01 level or 0.05 level of significance. So those 7 items are rejected. Rest of the items means 85 items were found significant. Since the number of items are still high so to minimize it the researcher took those items, which 't' value was greater than 6.00. Only

7 items, which has the lesser 't' value than 6.00 were selected for the final draft of tool,

in order to equalize the number of items in each dimension.

Table 1: Description of the items in the final draft of the tool.

Item No.	Mean of HSG	S.D. of HSG	Mean of LSG	S.D. of LSG	t-value	Level of Significance	Items retained
1	4.125	0.33	4.90	0.32	26.86	0.01	Retained
5	4.9851	0.12	4.06	0.83	9.88	0.01	Retained
6	4.896	0.42	4.05	0.75	10.34	0.01	Retained
7	4.0222	0.51	2.54	0.99	12.20	0.01	Retained
8	4.925	0.26	3.61	1.12	8.98	0.01	Retained
9	4.888	0.52	3.75	1.08	8.25	0.01	Retained
10	2.3777	0.92	2.77	0.81	4.40	0.01	Retained
14	4.0814	0.27	4.4	0.70	4.29	0.01	Retained
18	4.029	0.38	2.99	0.66	15.13	0.01	Retained
19	4.8666	0.54	4.51	0.67	5.03	0.01	Retained
20	1.5111	1.28	3.91	1.45	10.99	0.01	Retained
21	4.029	0.45	3.21	0.79	9.31	0.01	Retained
22	4.979	0.17	3.97	0.83	10.64	0.01	Retained
23	4.9333	0.37	4.45	0.90	4.59	0.01	Retained
28	3.3777	1.08	2.48	1.04	6.84	0.01	Retained
31	4.9629	0.18	3.90	1.05	8.00	0.01	Retained
33	5	0	3.10	1.24	11.04	0.01	Retained
34	4.9185	0.30	4.01	1.19	5.67	0.01	Retained
36	4.059	0.23	2.65	1.03	10.99	0.01	Retained
39	4.9703	0.17	3.98	0.79	11.33	0.01	Retained
40	4.948	0.28	3.48	1.17	9.32	0.01	Retained
41	4.888	0.43	3.71	0.73	14.78	0.01	Retained
42	4.118	0.32	3.57	0.80	6.07	0.01	Retained
43	4.970	0.17	4.22	0.58	12.69	0.01	Retained
45	4.881	0.68	3.87	0.84	10.64	0.01	Retained
47	4.851	0.70	3.04	0.90	7.20	0.01	Retained
48	4.881	0.56	3.39	0.81	16.66	0.01	Retained
49	1.666	1.41	2.94	1.13	8.66	0.01	Retained
51	4.918	0.27	3.34	1.16	10.16	0.01	Retained
52	4.1333	0.36	3.58	0.96	4.74	0.01	Retained
53	4.962	0.18	3.51	1.13	9.77	0.01	Retained
54	4.992	0.08	3.65	0.88	13.16	0.01	Retained
55	4.888	0.31	3.02	1.08	13.48	0.01	Retained
57	4.948	0.22	3.89	0.55	19.46	0.01	Retained
58	4.581	0.51	2.70	0.79	24.68	0.01	Retained
59	3.955	0.62	2.90	1.02	8.28	0.01	Retained
60	2.733	1.18	3.31	1.12	3.97	0.01	Retained
61	4.903	0.51	3.74	0.95	10.25	0.01	Retained
62	4.992	0.86	4.09	0.91	8.42	0.01	Retained
63	5	0	3.78	0.79	13.88	0.01	Retained
64	4.970	0.17	4.02	0.83	11.35	0.01	Retained
65	4.911	0.28	3.99	0.75	10.86	0.01	Retained
69	4.933	0.49	3.54	1.19	7.18	0.01	Retained
70	4.637	1.10	2.51	1.11	7.54	0.01	Retained
74	4.725	0.92	3.61	1.13	8.13	0.01	Retained
75	4.792	0.65	2.77	0.85	12.16	0.01	Retained

76	4.066	0.67	2.77	1.09	9.31	0.01	Retained
77	4.659	1.05	3.42	1.28	10.54	0.01	Retained
84	4.922	0.18	3.27	0.98	11.06	0.01	Retained
85	4.940	0.48	3.60	1.30	9.00	0.01	Retained
87	2.111	0.76	4.02	1.96	13.65	0.01	Retained
89	4.933	0.49	3.06	0.91	11.83	0.01	Retained
90	4.866	0.68	3.8	1.07	12.97	0.01	Retained
91	4.985	0.12	3.61	1.04	9.05	0.01	Retained
92	4.940	0.40	3.06	1.06	9.10	0.01	Retained

The tool consists both sorts of items means positive and negative items in each dimension. The dimension wise and nature (positive / negative)

wise distribution of the tool has been given by the researcher in table 2.

Table-2 Dimension wise and nature (positive / negative) wise distribution of the tool.

S.No.	Dimension of Women's Empowerment Attitude Scale	Individual No. of Positive Items	Individual No. of Negative Items	Item Wise Total Components	Total No. of Positive Statements	Total No. of Negative Statements	Total No. of Items
1	Economic	1,6,21,48,75	36,42,53,69,74	1,6,21,36,42,48,53,69,74,75	5	5	10
2	Interpersonal	14,22,51,63,64,90,91	8,18,58,76,84	8,14,18,22,51,58,63,64,76,84,90,91	7	5	12
3	Socio-cultural	49,54,55,62,87,92	7,59,70,85,89	7,49,54,55,59,62,70,85,89,92	6	5	11
4	Legal	19,31,33,34,39,45	9,23,28,40,60	9,19,23,28,31,33,34,39,45,60	6	5	11
5	Political	5,43,52,57,65,77	10,20,41,47,61	5,10,20,41,43,47,52,57,61,65,77	6	5	11
Total					30	25	55

Reliability of Women Empowerment - Attitude Scale was calculated by split half method and test-retest method. For split half method it was found 0.740 and for test-retest method it was found 0.733. So, the tool is satisfactory due to its reliability.

Validity refers that the test measures the same, for which it was developed. For this test face and content validity has been found. For this five experts from the field of education and psychology has been chosen by the researcher. The percentage of agreement between researcher and experts and among experts has been calculated. It ranges from 50% to 100% which is satisfactory. So it is a valid test.

For interpreting the score the researcher established the norm. In the study the data were collected on the Likert type of scale. In such type of scale interpretation can be done in the terms of the favourableness and unfavourableness. For deciding

the group the range of the score of 27% high scorer students will be considered as the range of the favourable group. Similarly the range of the score of the 27% low scorer students will be considered as unfavourable group. Henceforth, three category were made by the researcher for the interpretation. Those are as following:

445-391 Favourable
391-364 Neutral
Below 363 Unfavourable

If the group scores more than 390 it will be considered as favourable group. If it scores less than 364 it will be considered as unfavourable group.

Following instructions were prepared by the researcher for the respondents:

The present scale is prepared to study the Empowerment of graduate and post graduate women in Nepal. This scale contains 55 questions

pertaining to the different dimensions of women empowerment, Every question has five possible answers which are as follows:

1. Strongly agree; (SA)
2. Agree;(A)
3. Undecided;(UD)
4. Disagree; (DA)
5. Strongly Disagree; (SDA)

In front of each items there are square for all the possible answers. Read each items carefully and put a tick mark in appropriate box. The success of the research depends on your answer. So, answer carefully. This scale is prepared for research purpose and the answers and the identity of the respondent will be kept secret. There is no fix time span to complete the questionnaire.

In a nutshell the researcher constructed the Women Empowerment Scale using the summated rating method. The tools comprises of 5 dimensions which consists 55 items in total. The nature of items in the scale is positive as well as negative. The five dimensions of the scale are (i) Economic, (ii) Interpersonal, (iii) Socio-cultural, (iv) Political (v) Legal.

The reliability of the scale is found higher by both split half and test-retest method. So the test is reliable. The test is quite valid also on the criteria of face and content validity by the means of judgement.

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