

Is Success an Elusive Phenomenon for Working Women? : An Enquiry
Suruchi Bhatia* and Gopa Bhardwaj**

Abstract

Empowerment is a value-laden, culturally-specific construct, its determinants with regard to women may vary with changes in social, religious, and cultural norms. In view of the nature of this construct, the present study makes a concise and unbiased attempt to identify, understand, analyse and interpret various determinants and trajectories of women empowerment in the Indian scenario. Qualitative data were gathered from primary (i.e. in-depth, semi-structured interviews of working women in positions of decision-making power within organisations; N = 30) and secondary (i.e. autobiographies and biographies of salient Indian women personalities; N = 7) sources which were then analysed and compared using content analysis. The findings of the study showed childhood socialisation, education, personality and motivation, career development, power and politics, and availability of support systems as being poignant themes that shape and explain the popular Indian narrative surrounding women empowerment. The themes so identified only go on to reiterate the critical role of empowerment in determining women's position in contemporary Indian society.

Keywords: women empowerment, personality, career development, power and politics

* Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Psychology, Shyama Prasad Mukherji College, University of Delhi,
Email: suruchibb@gmail.com

** Retired Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Delhi, Email: gopa.bhardwaj@gmail.com