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Abstract: This paper explores the psychological facets of women empowerment. In our country various empowerment programs were carried out but the expected outcomes were seen because the psychological facet was either missing or not much importance was given to it. The specific objective of this paper is to discover the importance of psychological dimension of empowerment with special reference to working women of India. In addition to it, the paper also discusses about the various psychological bottlenecks of women psychological empowerment. In this paper, attempt is being made to throw a light on psychological well-being, role clarity, self esteem, and happiness, which is crucial to psychological empowerment of working women. The paper thus concludes with some suggestions so that proper attention must be paid to the psychological aspect which plays a very critical role in empowering the working women. This paper broadens the conceptual understanding of psychological empowerment.

Keywords: Psychological empowerment, barriers, facets, wellbeing, happiness.

I. INTRODUCTION

“Women empowerment” is a very commonly used phrase in developing countries. Issues related to women are very emergent in India. Women in developing nations are restricted from their land on the sole basis of gender [1]. Empowerment can pound self confidence in women. It improves their status in society and they can touch the level of men. If the woman of a nation is empowered, it increases the overall productivity of nation. Women empowerment can also be called gender empowerment. Women empowerment has five components: women’s sense of self worth; their right to have and determine choices; their right to have opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives both within and outside the house; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally [1].

Empowerment is not giving people power; people already have plenty of power, in the wealth of their knowledge and motivation, to do their job magnificently. Empowerment is defined as letting this power out [2]. The person, who is highly educated, employed and doing well in his/her respective areas is not always belongs to empowered class. The term empower according to Kabeer’s (2001) simple & illustrative definition is “the expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them”. Empowerment has 6 components: Cognitive, Economic, Legal, Psychological, Political, and Social [3]. There are ample of research and studies available that have emphasized on all the five component of empowerment but only handful of studies are at hand on psychological facet of empowerment specially women. In this paper emphasis is being made on psychological component of women empowerment at workplace.
The psychological component would include the "development of feelings that women can act upon to improve their condition. This means formation of the belief that they can succeed in change efforts" [4].

The psychological empowerment is a blend of self esteem, self efficacy, self determination, self confidence, self awareness, positive thinking and it ultimately leads to wellbeing and happiness of women. A woman who is psychologically empowered has a capacity to increase self image and conquer stigma. Empowering women means enabling women to access skill and knowledge and cope with the stress and trauma of present as well as future.

Using the four cognitions of Thomas and Velthouse’s (1990) model, Spreitzer developed and empirically validated a multidimensional measure of psychological empowerment in the workplace [5]. He defines empowerment as intrinsic motivation manifested in four cognitions reflecting an individual’s orientation to his or her work role. The four cognitions are meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. 

**Meaning** refers to a sense of purpose or personal connection to work [6]. Empowered people feel that their work is important to them and they care about what they are doing [7].

**Competence** reflects individuals’ beliefs that they have the necessary skills and abilities to perform their work well [6].

**Self-determination** refers to a sense of freedom about how individuals do their work [6].

**Impact** describes a belief that individuals can influence the system in which they are embedded [6]. Quinn and Spreitzer [7] state that impact is the accomplishment one feels in achieving goals. Employees fear and tend to avoid situations that they believe exceed their skills, whereas they get involved in activities and behave confidently when they judge themselves capable of handling situations that would otherwise be intimidating [6]. The four dimensions of empowerment could help people to feel more in control [5]. Psychological empowerment has been positively correlated with managerial effectiveness, increased levels of job satisfaction and decreased level of job strain [8].

Wang and Zhang [9] in their study among teachers found a statistically significant difference in the level of psychological empowerment based on gender. Women empowerment at workplace is essential for sustainable development and growth.

### II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the need and analyze the importance of psychological empowerment at workplace.
- To study the indicators of psychological empowerment.
- To assess the awareness of psychological empowerment of working women.
- To identify the barriers in Psychological empowerment of working women.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper is descriptive and analytical in nature. In this paper an attempt has been made to analyze the psychological empowerment of women at workplace in India. The secondary sources are used in the paper for study.

**Need and importance of psychological empowerment:**

House [10] suggested that gender issues in empowerment are relevant. Psychological empowerment is the need of an hour in this competitive world. Psychological empowerment is important to consider when dealing with changes at work and improving performance.
Psychological empowerment increases employees’ sense of personal control and motivates them to engage in work, which in turn results in positive managerial and organizational outcomes [7]. There is need to address the component of Psychological empowerment so that women at workplace can take appropriate decisions and increase their self image. Psychological empowerment of women plays a significant role in their overall growth and development. It remarkably effect the organizational variables like job satisfaction, organizational commitment, productivity etc [11]. Psychological empowerment as motivational structure, is an urgent need for autonomy or it is an opinion, or view in their individual effectiveness. Based on the concept of power, it plays an important role in the motivational readiness [12]. Concerning to the pattern of Thomas and Velthouse, Spritzer defined the psychological empowerment as a motivational concept [13]. Fook and his fellow found a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and job motivation [13]. Psychological empowerment theory suggested empowerment is related to but more encompassing than constructs such as self-esteem and competence [14]. Women are at a greater risk for developing dependency on substances if they have a history of trauma/victimization, a partner or family member who abuses/d substances, and/or an affective, emotional, or other psychiatric disorder [15]. The psychological empowerment of women is also significant in the strategy of eradication the poverty. Nelson and Quick [17] hold that empowerment gives a sense of belongingness and job enrichment to employees as well as an ability to take responsibilities over their tasks at work. Thus, empowerment gives employees a degree of control and authority. Psychological empowerment influences both job satisfaction and work effort but not creativity, whereas self-leadership influences work effort and creativity but not job satisfaction [18]. Women workforce that is psychologically empowered is motivated and accelerated to participate in innovative strategies. Career satisfaction is also a product of psychological empowerment at workplace for human resource. Employees who are empowered perceive a sense of purpose in tasks performed and will positively value those experiences and be intrinsically motivated to engage in those tasks [19]. Employees who are psychologically empowered are able to determine work roles, feel capable of accomplishing meaningful work-related tasks, and are able to influence the decision-making process in the workplace [20, 21]. Literature in psychological empowerment reveals that organizations where employees are psychologically empowered shows increase in productivity [22], higher job satisfaction [23, 24, 25], high organizational commitment [26, 27, 28], lower burnout [29], reduced employee turnover intent [30] and reduced strain [31].

**Indicators of psychological empowerment:**
Broadly, psychological empowerment indicators include: Intrapersonal empowerment, Interactional empowerment and Behavioral empowerment.

- Intrapersonal empowerment indicators includes: self, connected, safe and free.
- Interactional empowerment indicators includes: conscious, informed, understanding, solving, exploring.
- Behavioral empowerment indicators include: resist, prepare, engage, limit and pursue.

Specific indicators of psychological empowerment are:

- Supportive and cooperative management
- Emotional stimulation
- Access to resources
Reward system
Performance evaluation
Independency at work
Adequate information
Job satisfaction
Organizational Commitment
Organizational effectiveness

IV. BARRIERS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
There are various psychological barriers that are creating hindrances in women empowerment. The locus of control of such barriers is both internal as well as external. Some of these psychological hindrances are fear, insecurity, risk, lack of self esteem, self confidence, fear of failure etc. In some of the organizations lack of information, lack of autonomy in decision making, lack of autonomy in work performance are the biggest barrier in psychological empowerment of women. Role ambiguity, job related stress is the major contributor as an obstacle in the path of psychological empowerment.

V. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION
The organizations must provide trainings to their workforce that can increase employees’ psychological empowerment. HRD professionals can increase employees’ psychological empowerment by providing training and development to the employees. The women workforce of the organization can be psychological empowered by taking their inputs in the decision making process of the organization. Strong power of recommendations and appreciation by the organization can also empower the minds of the workforce.

On the basis of the literature review it can be concluded that meaning, self determination, self confidence, self efficacy, self esteem are the major contributors in psychological empowerment. Psychological Empowerment of employees also increases their job satisfaction. Work related stress of the employees is not positively related with psychological empowerment which means higher the psychological Empowerment lower the work related stress.

REFERENCES