

Social development and women empowerment in urban slum

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Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities. Sociological empowerment often addresses members of groups that social discrimination processes have excluded from decision-making processes, for instance, discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, or gender. Gender empowerment methodologically often associated with women Empowerment. Development is the process of planned institutional change to bring about better adjustment between human needs and aspirations through literacy, awareness, functionality, for instance, from social policies and programs. It is converting economic progress into better living conditions for the people in society through declaring poverty, illiteracy, inequality irrationality and oppression prevalent in the society.

Significant amount of women in slum areas are living in poverty. The prevailing attitudes in the area make them vulnerable to domestic violence, imprisonment at their home, inequality in decision making and economic dependence. As a result, women living in the slums suffer from the symptoms of gender inequality from various channels and institutions of the existing society.

It is emphasized that the social, economic, and political status of *female slum dwellers* in Sri Lanka needs to be addressed through increased access to education, economic and awareness initiatives. Therefore this study aimed to expose a sustainable change on the status of women in slum areas

The study is grounded on structural functionalist perspective. Case studies and the participant observation also extensively used in the study. Followed up interviews, questionnaires and ordinary observations were also used for data collection. For sampling, probability sample method was taken from multistage sampling method.

Research Location - Colombo Municipal Council

Key words: Social development, Women empowerment, Urban slum, Female slum dwellers, Sustainable change

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