



**SOCIO-POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT:
CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND PATHWAYS TO EQUALITY**

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ABSTRACT:

The importance of the question of women's empowerment lies in the fact that the movement for women's liberation is gaining ground all the world over. The movement, started in the West in the early sixties, has grown so rapidly that the United Nations declared the years from 1975 to 1985 as a Decade of Women's Emancipation. The U.N. also organized conferences on women. The first conference was held in Mexico City in 1975. This was followed by the 1980 conference in Copenhagen and then in Nairobi in 1985. The biggest Women's Conference in the history of the U.N. was organized in Beijing in September, where some 48,000 women from 180 countries assembled to discuss their rights and the discrimination against them. The main thrust of this conference was poverty and violence against them. Though these conferences failed to achieve

much, they did succeed in heightening the consciousness of women about their rights.

The radicalism of the women's liberation movement has much in common with the other movements of the period such as Black Power, student unrest and the Hippies' rejection of contemporary culture. But the movement for women's liberation has outlasted all the movements. Its organization has emerged and a genuine attempt is being made to develop a theory of "Feminism" to guide its politics... The literature of the movement has also progressed in its claim to universal significance and its demands for a revolutionary transformation of society.¹

Keywords: *empowerment, liberation, movement, emancipation, discrimination, feminism, revolutionary.*