



## **Educating Family Members: Case Study Analyses**

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### **Abstract**

Empowering is an art of doing something to someone which makes them more strong, confident and assertive to do good deeds by having a control in their own behaviour. It is assimilating one's own actions and reactions in accordance to societal norms. Hence, empowerment is a continuous process of learning and unlearning things, which builds an authority in individuals in finest decision making, building one's own capacity, accelerating improvement, directing the mind to make right choices, adapting to necessary changes, procedure to do activities, without having to seek approval and implement those activities much more rapidly and frequently when a task is assigned. It is a challenge to our mental map in behavioral geography, where a person's perception, understanding, the field in which his vision, prospect, outlook is articulated keeps varying depending upon one's own experiences. Accordingly, one can say how much ever we keep learning, human behaviour is always influenced by cognitive factors, environmental factors, hereditary, personality and growth factors. Life stages keep changing from birth through old-age, thereby human behaviour keeps changing as well, whereby some behaviours are common while others unusual. The spectrum through which we judge (form an opinion or conclusion) and adjudge (to announce a decision) state of affairs is like a kaleidoscope (constantly changing pattern). In this paper let us discuss a narrative story of empowerment of two people (both women) and how they evolved through life by diversified era.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, Mental Map, Kaleidoscope, Women and Life events.

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### **Introduction:**

Every family has an individual who can hold others during time of hardship. But should every individual seek such a warmth on all days? No. At one state it becomes an empowerment since everyone cannot always stay in attention, comfort, and kindness. The word 'Empowerment' comes from empower the Old French prefix 'en'- meaning 'in, into and the root 'power' which comes from the early 1300s, meaning 'ability, strength, might'. In modern usage empower has been used around 1986 in literary works. (Macmillan Dictionary) Personal empowerment is about taking control of your own life, and making positive decisions based on what you want. It is giving yourself permission to succeed. (Mind Tools)

Empowering family members means building power relationships, actively involving in each other's affair by supporting children, adolescent children, younger adults and older adults. Typically, Indian

Family System (joint family or extended family) can see love, trust, faith, honesty, happiness, sadness, fear, anger, cry, laugh, withdrawal from others, sickness, birth, death, anxiety and much more. Emotions and Emotional response teach a lot for the members to learn or sometimes to unlearn depending upon the situation. These situations and responses are critically reviewed and redressed several times so that solutions are brought amicably. But, sometimes there could be hostile situation too, like hate, offensive, violence, bitter and adversarial reactions. Subsequently, members get conditioned. This is one of the powerful experiences one may have if valued properly and critically analyzed.

In this narrative inquiry two such stories will be crucially discussed.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

The reason behind literature review is to gain knowledge about the method the researcher is going to follow and clearly define researcher's perspective and how the ideology created to be represented in scientific way. Personal narrative is at the heart of how human beings share information, represent identity, and convey ideas. Narrative research is a form of qualitative analysis that assists researchers in gaining insight into the lived experiences of the persons they are studying within their unique life circumstances and contexts. (Meraz et al. 2019)

Riessman and Quinney in their book *Narrative in Social Work A Critical Review (Qualitative Social Work 2005)* have discussed how the concept of narrative has entered social work over the past 15 years, with special emphasis on research application.

*Transforming Transcript Into Stories: A Multimethod Approach to Narrative Analysis* study demonstrates the fluidity of narrative analysis and emphasizes that there is no single procedure to be followed in attempting to create stories from interview transcripts. Stories are essential realities from our past and present. The pragmatic narratives found in transcripts represent human experience as it unfolds. (Aishath Nasheeda, Haslinda Binti, Abdullah, Steven Eric Krauss 2019)

Mental map is a person's point-of-view perception of their area of interaction in behavioural geography. Though mental mapping is related to places and its recognition, in many studies it focuses on quality of an environment in terms of feelings such as fear, desire and stress. (Wikipedia)

Kaleidoscope when related to life is something which one should feel while watching it through rotating manner. The second women portrayed in this narrative study had such an experience in her childhood days which could be related through her life on all occasions. The constantly changing colours and pattern represent our feelings and emotion under various tension, pressure, freedom, health, wealth and happiness. The power of observation is immense and it determines the choices we make in life situations. These help us in due course of our life where one will learn to respond instead of reacting. This kind of empowerment can be inculcated since childhood for better future perspectives.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

Learning and Unlearning is a phenomenon where human beings use their natural or inborn mind in handling or controlling livelihood as it happens to be and also fine tuning of themselves under various events in-order to achieve the best or a desired performance. In this research the researchers comprehend how money, education, power and identifying potentials has shaped the life two women from childhood through adulthood and beyond. The researchers apply Narrative Approach (Riessman 2008), and for analysis part of the study, the researcher utilizes Visual and Performance Analysis because in the first case the women foresee in her mind that for a better situation doing one's own duties is very much necessary irrespective what kind fruits and be harvested in the future. Simultaneously she showed the family members how education and job would empower them.

In the second case performance analysis is used since the women performed at various stages of her life like identification, shifting ideas, decision making and going further in life.

Thematic and Structural analysis is not used since it was not about a 'particular time' but the 'whole life'.

The case presentation has taken in the form of how a **Women Headed Household** who strengthened her family and children through education, though the family saw economic crisis, supporting dependent extended family members, living in a rented small home, and meeting education expenses of her own children and expenses spent on extended family members for food and education.

**Case 'A'** is a story of a 55-year-old woman, who got married at the age of 26, well-educated, coming from a culturally and traditionally bound Hindu Family and got Married to a big family with 4 younger brothers (one brother married) to her husband and 1 younger sister. Totally 9 members out of which 2 married had to live in one room in a rented home in a town. As the woman had education, she got a job as a teacher and her husband was working in a private concern. The woman had a one-year-old girl child and left the child with her co sister who also had a son. The woman had to work to support her husband and the big family. After sometime, the husband got a job in a distanced location out of the state since the salary was little higher than the present earning. Though it was hard, the woman had to agree with her husband's decision considering the present situation. Years went on, but they never had the chance to live together. After 3 years the woman had to resign her job and travel to live with her husband. Days went on, and after few years her husband got a better job with better salary and moved to a new place along with other family members. By then the woman had 4 living children and again had a job as a teacher. Since the woman knew the importance of education and money, she supported her extended family with formal education and vocational education to members who were not interested in formal education. Her important aspect was every member should have education and a job, lead an independent life, and support the family. At one stage in her life, she has to pack 13 lunch boxes, for her family members including herself. The days went on, by then got her husbands younger brothers and sister married. Life wouldn't have been easy at all but still she managed the whole lot things. Her in-law family and other relatives are still thankful to her since they all had good job because of the education which she insisted.

**For this case presentation the researcher uses Narrative Inquiry, Visual Analysis and Performance Analysis by Riessman (2008).** The Woman would have visualized in her mind that nothing can be changed in the past, but the present situation can be made effective to live a better future., consequently 'Case A' had empowered her children irrespective of gender, caste, ethnicity and race. Empowerment was in the form of exchanging positive communication giving equal importance in their own self decision making, standing by their thought conclusive of decision making, cognitive functioning and their brain-based skills was always in the winning side of any disagreement. This kind of empowering talk about building Self-Esteem and loving for what they cannot be guided on one single day. Thus, the four children now adults are excelling in their field of choice be in occupation or education, making money, and exhibiting discretionary power in all walks of life. It is not only about her children, but her other family members too. Empowerment was a 'State of Affairs' in family upbringing context. She performed her duties and insisted others too to perform their day today duties irrespective of whatever worst situation they combat.

**Case B, is about a Middle-Aged Women, caught up between emotions and truth. Her health took major changes roller coaster in menopause transition.** But the stress related was a daily affair. If was she, a dominant, empowered, authoritative, entrust others in the family to take up responsibility, would have she suffered lesser? Definitely Yes, many women suffer tolerating the pain without

knowing the way to escape the agony. This is because their upbringing should have been like you are a woman, so your tolerance ability must be established for the sake of family to live in peace. Keep the family happy, please everyone, cooking and serving good food, taking care of everyone at home, mending relationships, accepting everything forgetting their identity. But at some-point in their life they realize what is this enslavement, and start searching new perspectives. This is how Case B evolved, and attained a respectable status within the family. Her mid-life has many other challenges like bringing her children much more advanced than what she had.

In the above case, the woman had identified her potentials comparatively, this is how her mental map arrived at a decision shifting her interest from household responsibilities to career advancement. This must have been an intelligent, brilliant and bright shift for her and the entire family which they felt once she got placed in a better profession. At this stage of life, she discusses her life story which had a spectrum of light (depending upon the sunlight), beautiful like a kaleidoscope. **On applying analysis into this narrative inquiry, the researcher uses performance analysis, since Case B had used different spectrum like identifying potentials, decision making skills to shift from household to career advancement and also more importantly from “Pious Housewife to Public Professional”.**

### **SOCIAL WORK IMPLICATION AND INTERVENTION:**

Evidenced based research and practice in social work shows the true and in-depth knowledge about the subjects so that deeper understanding of what is told and connection between day today happenings, the decision making and applying what is decided. Case study always allows to think critically and act in order to get better understanding of the situation. In the above situations empowerment was discussed and methods applied to empower the individuals and families. Cause, act and effect was elaborated in holistic manner so that readers can validate the concerns mentioned. Narrative approach shows how communication plays a key role in sustaining relationships and friendships through participation in meaningful activities. It also teaches how good deeds pays the family fruitfully. Forming an opinion, conclusion and decision making involves cognitive beliefs, functioning and multitude appraisal between, individual and family in regard with societal norms and expected behaviour. As such the above case which was discussed on wholistic life span approach can also be discussed in a particular stage of life focusing on day today affairs and evolving from the daily happenings through structural and thematic analysis.

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