

Assessing the Empowerment of Muslim Women in Malawi: A Case Study of the Muslim Women Organization (MWO)

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Abstract : This study critically assesses the empowerment of Muslim women in Malawi, focusing on the role of the Muslim Women Organization (MWO). It evaluates how MWO has influenced gender equality and women's empowerment within Islamic communities. Specifically, the research explores how MWO interprets Islamic women's rights, the stereotypes faced by Muslim women, and the factors that limit their rights in Malawi. Using a qualitative research methodology that includes interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations, the study adopts phenomenological and feminist theoretical frameworks. The findings suggest that MWO, since its inception in 1985, has played a significant role in advocating for gender equality by leveraging Islamic teachings, faith, and policy to justify women's empowerment. This has enabled Muslim women to engage confidently in social change initiatives. However, entrenched cultural traditions, patriarchal structures, and systemic poverty continue to present barriers to empowerment.

Keywords : Islam, women empowerment, Malawi, Islamic feminism

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