

This thesis *Agency and Deliberation: Understanding Public Reason and Empowerment* discusses the ethical dimensions of political philosophy. I have started my work with an aim to connect agency and political participation, given that human agency, capacity to undertake action that one desires, has been a central question of philosophy; that has been dealt by diverse areas of philosophy. My research work starts with Christine M. Korsgaard as she focuses on action as a form of self-determination that creates an agent's identity. Korsgaard locates normativity in the self, that is constituted through reason. I have focused heavily in building my research problem on the philosophy of Philip Pettit. Pettit has been a political philosopher who has been able in the literal sense to apply his thought in the real-world political system, as he worked on political reforms in Spain under José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. Pettit's approach of considering free will and political liberty as indistinguishable and terming it as *freedom in the agent* is something that made me focus on his philosophy. He analyses human freedom with the concept of discourse. Pettit further argues for reality of group agency in the sense of an integrated entity. Pettit gives way to Jürgen Habermas as I try to understand discourse and ethics with regard to his ideas of communicative rationality and public sphere. But then there is the larger question of development ethics that forms the backdrop of every social and political community where individuals participate, this brings forth discussion on Public Reason and Empowerment, for which I have based myself on Jay Drydyk primarily. In these contexts, I have supplemented Drydyk's concept of agency for empowerment with Pettit's conception of agency as discursive control to form a concept that can be termed as *agency centric empowerment* and have argued that *agency centric empowerment* can be considered as norm with regard to development ethics.

Keywords: Agency, Discourse, Public Reason, Empowerment, Development Ethics