



A Study on Impact of Empowerment Process on Rural Women

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ABSTRACT

Employability is the most required dimension to assess the engineering colleges. In this study an assessment has been done on the basis of Lean philosophies using Coefficient of Variation (CV%) statistical method. We choose Jadavpur University, Kolkata and Kharagpur, IIT to assess their employability of undergraduate students. Total 300 Students/Staffs/Faculties from each of the colleges 150 peoples have surveyed. There are 10 questions. A three-point scale has been designed for each question asking 'Yes', 'No comments', 'No'. The overall Coefficient of Variation (CV%) has measured and that identify the Gap between the two colleges. To identify the weak areas, the vital few questions correspond 'No' answer have found.

Keywords : Empowerment, Self Help Group, Process, Rural Women

INTRODUCTION

Women occupy an important place in the evolution of Human society. Women and her life necessarily determine the welfare of the home, family, and society. In India, the position and status of women has been continuously changing in the course time. The restriction on women due to the fear of alien culture, the women's position in the society further deteriorated due to lack of educational facilities to women and practice of early marriage. The degrading position of women in the beginning of the nineteenth century was indeed most deplorable. It was a long tale of suffering and humiliation almost from birth to death. The process of liberation of women which started in nineteenth century was further accelerated during twentieth century of women. Many factors of change such as industrialization, urbanizations, higher education, and new value system have greatly affected women's position.

Definition of Empowerment :

"Empowerment" may be defined as the process which results in a situation where, the powerless or less powerful members of a society gain greater access and control over material and knowledge resources, and challenge or change the ideologies of discrimination which justify this unequal distribution.

"Empowerment" manifests as a changing balance of power in terms of,

- Resource Distribution
- Changes in ideology

Empowerment Means,

- Challenging ideology of subordination,
- Gaining access & Control over resources,
- Transforming institutions, structures & relations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

Statement of the Problem :

Since women are considered to be the most oppressed section of the society, the term empowerment has come to be associated with women's struggle, for social justice and equality. When we take the case of the rural poor women they are relatively powerless, because they do not have control over resources and hence little or no decision making power. The above details pertaining to the status of the rural women, is just an outline of their problems.

OBJECTIVES :

This study has been carried out with the following objectives;

- To understand the perception on empowerment of rural women
- To study the impact of empowerment process on livelihood concerns of rural women.
- To understand the impact of the empowerment process in the political participation of rural women.
- To understand the impact of the empowerment process in decision making and the role transformation.
- To study the problems encountered by the rural women in the process of empowerment

SAMPLING DESIGN:

The Universe of the study consists of Self Help Group rural women members who are belongs to kinathukkadavu block, Coimbatore District. Among 35 panchayats under Kinathukkadavu Block, the researcher selected 6 panchayats where SHGs are functioning effectively. The total Self Help Groups in the 6 panchayats are 65. From 65 Self Help Groups, 845 rural women were member. The researcher wants to draw an overall sample of 120 from 845 SHG members. Hence, he chosen 120 respondents by using proportionate stratified random sampling method which is statistically efficiency and higher.

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION :

i) Interview Schedule :

Data for the study were collected with the help of interview schedule, which was exclusively prepared for this purpose. The schedule consists of question on individual and family characteristics, socio-economic status of the respondents, perception on government, livelihood concerns, women's political participation, decision making and role transformation, problems encountered by rural women.

ANALYSIS OF DATA:

After the collection of data, frequency tables were prepared first cross tabulations were prepared. Most of the analysis was done by using the statistics of percentages and means. To test the significance of independent variables on dependent variable Chi-square was used.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND SUGGESSTIONS:

Salient findings from Socio-Demographic characteristics of the Respondents:

- More than one-third of the respondents(39.17%) belonged to the age group between 30to 39 years.
- Majority of the respondents (64.17%) belonged to the

uneducated groups

- Majority of the respondents (60.84%) belonged to scheduled caste.
- Majority of the respondents (82.51%) belonged to agricultural coolies
- More than half of the respondents (54.84%) belonged to annual income group between Rs.8001 to 12,000

Salient findings related to the Perception on Empowerment of the respondents:

- Less than half of the respondents (42.50%) agreed that rural women get empowerment. It is found that rural women have good perception on women empowerment.
- The good majority of the respondents (94.17%) partially agreed on women are having empowerment today. It is found that women achieved empowerment due to the intervention of self help groups(SHG) and social awakening.
- More than half of the respondents (59.20%) agreed on women gets empowerment through sangham(SHG)
- Half of the respondents(50%) agreed on economic freedom, self-acting situation are essential symptoms for women to get full empowerment. The study shows that women were liberated to get economic freedom and self acting situation due to empowerment.
- Majority of the respondents (60.80%) agreed on women cannot get empowerment if they provide social responsibility without money.
- Perceptions on women empowerment get influence in the variables like age, education, caste, occupation and also there is greater influence in the annual income variable.
- In this study, it is inferred that irrespective of social status, money power plays an important role in women empowerment.

Salient findings from the impact of the empowerment process on livelihood concern of the respondents:

- A good majority of the respondents (72.50%) strongly agreed on proper education makes women become empowered. It is found that education act as a catalyst to attain empowerment.
- Majority of the respondents(62.50%) strongly agreed on empowered women only can manage their family efficiently. In this study we found that the level of empowerment determined the family management capacity of women.
- A good majority of the respondents (75.84%) strongly agreed on empowered women can manage themselves property and maintain environment efficiently. It is inferred that self and environment management ability was determined by the level of empowerment.
- Three-fourth of the respondents (74.20%) strongly agreed on empowered women only can create good future for their children.
- The impact of empowerment process on livelihood concern has got influence in the variable like caste, occupation and also there is greater influence in the annual income variable.
- The study found that empowered women have the ability to guide and make their child to attain bright future.

Salient findings from the Impact of empowerment process in the Political Participation of the respondents:

- A good majority of the respondents (74.20%) opined that, the village people involvement in public welfare and right can be protected through the political participation of women. It is found that active political participation favours women to protect their rights.
- Majority of the respondents (62.50%) opined that empowered women can plan and involve in the rural development activities if they participated regularly in the grama sabha meetings. It is found that empowered women have the ability to plan and involve in the rural development activities due to their regular participation in grama sabha meetings.
- The impact of empowerment process in the political

participation have got influence among the personal variables like caste, occupation and also there is greater influence in the annual income variable. Generally rural women could not participate in politics effectively, because of caste differences, occupational differences and their poor income status.

- More than half of the respondents (59.20%) opined on empowered women can fight against the illegal activities in the society. The study found that empowered women can have courage to fight against the illegal activities because they only know/realized about the strength of solidarity/collective action.

Salient findings from the Impact of the Empowerment Process in Decision Making and Role Transformation of the Respondents:

- Majority of the respondents (62.50%) felt that they gained decision making power and role transformation after the empowerment process.
- The impact of empowerment process in decision making, role transformation have got influence in the variables like, education, annual income and also there is greater influence in the caste variable. Due to knowledge, economic status and involvement in SHG, rural women got decision making power and role transformation in their day to day life.
- A good majority of the respondents (80.84%) opined on gender equality emerged in family environment only after the empowerment process.
- An absolute majority of the respondents (83.34%) stated that women can protest against the injustice only after empowerment process. It is found that women have ability to protest against all injustice in society due to collective action.
- Almost 92.50 percent of the respondents were opined that after empowerment process only women can get economic empowerment. The study inferred that women are having economic liberty in their family because of empowerment.
- This study inferred that empowered women can increase their mental health status through SHG.

Salient findings related to the Problems Encountered by the Respondents in the Empowerment Process:

- Half of the respondents (51.67%) always faced problems in their empowerment process.
- In the empowerment process, problems are encountered by women have got greater influence among the variables like, caste and annual income. But in the variables like age, education, occupation have influenced by problems encountered.
- Half of the respondents(50%) felt sometimes the political parties are hindrance to get an empowerment.
- A good majority of the respondents(73.30%) felt that , empowered role models are inadequate to be identified.
- A good majority of the respondents (73.30%) felt that, women's wrong perception on self esteem is hindrance for them to get an empowerment. It is found that wrong perception towards self esteem is a hindrance to women to get empowerment.

SUGGESTIONS :

- Non-governmental organization should establish association/network with government bodies to provide more number of skills oriented and useful vocational training (e.g., entrepreneurs development programme) for women to become self reliant.
- Social workers should motivate the women to contribute for developmental activities and also to make them to serve part in the political field/scenario..
- Encourage the women to take part in collective action to overcome the bureaucratic problems and bottlenecks in their empowerment process.
- Health education to women to be important to improve their knowledge in health and hygiene, sanitation for better life.
- NGO should impact the negotiating skill to women, which

will help them to deal with public institutions and systems (banks, government departments, etc.,) independently. Women should be awakened to take part in agitation and lobby for changes in laws, schemes and programmes.

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