



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

Dr.S.KALA¹ and Dr.N.K.GOVINDARAJU²

1. Assistant Professor of Commerce, Vivekanandha Arts & Science College for Women, Sankagiri.
2. Assistant Professor of Commerce, Sri Moogambigai Arts & Science College (Women), Palacode, Dharmapuri

Abstract:

The education of women is the most powerful tool to change the position of society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. Therefore, the paper aims to analyze the empowerment of women through education in Omalur Town of Salem district. The sample was collected from 110 women's who have the education and to know about the empowerment in the aspect of social, economic, educational and psychological factors. The result of this study revealed that, among 110 women respondents more than 70 percent of them are agreed that they are empowered their life through their education. Through education, women are not only empowered to flourish socio-economically and make better decisions about their health and future, but society in its entirety is bettered by a greater presence of female voices.

Keywords: Education, Discrimination, Women Empowerment, Employment

INTRODUCTION

"If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India empowered".

PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing individual to think, take action and control work in an autonomous way. It is the process by which one can gain control over one's destiny and the circumstances of one's lives. There are always a number of elements in the society which are deprived of their basic rights in every society, state and nation, but these elements lack in the awareness of their rights. Even though everybody is aware of this fact, but nobody is ready to accept this fact. As a result, the importance which used to be given to women is declining in today's society. Empowering women has become the focus of considerable discussion and attention all over the world. Today we enjoy the benefits of being citizens of a free nation, but we really need to think whether each of the citizens of our country is

really free or enjoying freedom, in the true sense of the term. The inequalities between men and women and discrimination against women are an age-old issue all over the world. Thus women quest for equality with man is a universal phenomenon. Women should equal with men in matters of education, employment, inheritance, marriage, and politics etc. Their quest for equality has given birth to the formation of many women's associations and launching of movements. The Constitution of our nation doesn't discriminate between men and women, but our society has deprived women of certain basic rights, which were bestowed upon them by our Constitution. Empowerment allows individuals to reach their full potential, to improve their political and social participation, and to believe in their own capabilities. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the empowerment of women through education in Omalur Town of Salem District.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vaithilingam (2007) examined the levels of female literacy rate, crude birthrate, crude death rate, infant mortality rate and natural growth rate as well as relationship of female literacy rate with each of the abovementioned vital rates among Indian states and union territories. He identified that Kerala, Mizoram, Chandigarh, Goa, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Delhi and Pondicherry as states which have high female literacy rate, low birth rate and low infant mortality rate. On the other hand the BIMARU states Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh except Rajasthan have shown inverse relationship between female literacy and each and every vital rates.²

Digumarti Bhaskara Rao and Digumarti Pushpalatha Rao (2010) in their study, "Women's Education: Challenges and Advancement", give a worldwide statistics on the status of women and highlight the poor plight of the uneducated women in different parts of the world. Their study emphasizes that providing quality and life based education is the best way to empower women in the world of so many challenges and opportunities. Empowering them through education alone will put an end to all forms of discrimination, domestic violence and disparity in the society.³

Ahmad (2012) has identified key links between education and women empowerment and assessed the current size of the gender gap by measuring the extent to which women in India have achieved equality with men in terms of educational attainment and reducing the gender gap at all levels of education would be a focus area.⁴

Sharma (2012) in her study "Are Women Really Empowered: A Case Study of Yamuna Nagar District" have found that educated women are working for up-liftment of their family status hence getting respect from family and husband, can make decisions about their lives and kids' lives and also participate in political decisions.⁵

Kumar (2013) stated that women empowerment can only be achieved through the provision of adequate and functional education to the women folk. The need for women education is also informed by the fact that purposeful occupational achievement and satisfaction is ensured by deep self-awareness and understanding which can only be achieved through the provision of effective and functional education and guidance and counseling.⁶

Ammarah Aftab (2016) in her study of Women Empowerment through Education in Nurpur Shahan of Pakistan, majority of the respondents showed a desire for acquiring education to emancipate them economically. She concluded that literacy was indeed recognized by these women as a valuable tool for their economic empowerment and that they held every desire to participate in education programs provided they get both, moral and financial support from their homes.⁷

Bhajan Chandra Barman (2018) conducted a case study of education in empowering women. From the results of his study showed that educated women are more empowered as compare to uneducated one. Chi-square Test shows the significance difference between educated and uneducated women regarding empowerment. Finally, he concluded that education is very important factor in empowering women.⁸

Mutyalu (2019) studied the role of education in women empowerment. He stated that encourage the education of women at all levels and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, established schools, colleges and universities even exclusively for women in the state. Further, the education develops the idea of participation in government, panchayats, public matters etc. for elimination of gender discrimination.⁹

Srishti Srivastava (2022) described the role of education in women empowerment. He stated that empowering women and making them independent needs to be done for humankind to progress. He also stated that education can be a great instrument in changing the personality of the women through making them sensitized about their strength. Women empowerment is boon for growth and development of women.¹⁰

Elizebath Ligia Fernandez and Kavitha (2023) measured the role of education in women empowerment in Kerala. They stated in their paper, education is the foundation of a woman empowerment because it allows them to face challenges, face their traditional roles and change their lives. The education of women in Kerala is in great need as education is the foundation Women's liberation. They also indicated that education also reduces inequality and jobs as a medium improving their position in the family and developing the concept of sharing.¹¹

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The status and empowerment of women has been an important topic of discussion and debate from the dawn of history. However, women empowerment has been an area of priority for most of the welfare states and popular democracies. Most of the researchers agree that empowerment through education is the best means of women empowerment. Omalur Town, one of the major areas of Salem district has taken a lot of women empowerment measures and education is an important one. In this context, the present study is interested in analyzing the following questions:

1. How the women empowered through their education?
2. Whether the women empowered by socially, economically and politically through their education?

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this study are:-

1. To analyze the socio-economic and political effect of women empowerment through Education.
2. To formulate some suggestions to the Government educational department for the future programs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from educated women through questionnaire. The secondary data were collected from research papers, websites, magazines, journals and dissertation. This study is conducted on judgmental convenient sampling method since the population is unknown. The respondents accessible at time, at right place and ease will be selected. Educated women from Omalur town were considered as sampling unit for the study. A target of 150 respondents was set, but many of them provided incomplete questionnaire therefore only 110 questionnaires were considered for final analysis and interpretation of this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from the respondents in Omalur town were classified, tabulated and presented in simple percentage analysis is as follows:

Table 1- Personal Profiles of the Respondents

Personal Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Age (years)	18-35 years	21	19.10
	36-45 years	57	51.80
	46-55 years	14	12.70
	Above 55 years	18	16.40
Educational Qualification	Upto +2	12	10.90
	Under Graduate	43	39.10
	Post Graduate	25	22.70
	Others	30	27.30
Marital Status	Married	84	76.36
	Unmarried	26	23.64
Employment status	Homemaker	04	3.60
	Salaried	48	43.60
	Business	44	40.0
	Professional	08	7.30
	Others	06	5.50
Monthly income (₹)	Below 20,000	05	4.50
	20,001 to 30,000	45	40.90
	30,001 to 40,000	25	22.70
	Above 40,000	35	31.80
Monthly Savings (₹)	Below 10,000	35	31.81
	10,001 to 20,000	52	47.28
	20,001 to 30,000	16	14.55
	Above 40,000	07	6.36

Age (years) - Among 110 respondents, 21 (19.10%) respondents are belongs to the age between 18-35 years, 57 (51.80%) respondents are belongs to the age between 36 to 45 years, 14 (12.70%) respondents are belongs to the age between 46 to 55 years and the remaining 18 (16.40%) respondents are belongs to the age of above 55 years. It can be conclude that the maximum of 57 respondents are belongs to the age between 36 to 45 years.

Educational Qualification -Among 110 respondents, 12 (10.90%) of them are having +2 qualification, 43 (39.10%) of them are graduates, 25 (22.70%) of them are post graduates and the remaining 30 (27.30%) of them are having other educational qualification like Diploma, ITI, Engineering, Certificate courses etc. Therefore, it clearly showed that the maximum of 43 respondents are having graduation.

Marital status - Marital status of the respondents was showed in table 4.2. Among 110 respondents, 84 (76.36%) of them are married, whereas the remaining 26 (23.64%) respondents are unmarried. Hence, it clearly indicates that the maximum of 84 respondents are married.

Occupation - Among 110 respondents, 4 (3.60%) are homemakers, 48 (43.60%) are salaried, 44 (40.0%) are having business, 8 (7.30%) are professionals and the remaining 6 (5.50%) are others like agriculture. Hence it can be concluded that the maximum of 48 respondents are employees.

Monthly Income - Among 110 respondents, 5 (4.50%) of them are belongs to the income of below Rs.20,000, 45 (40.90%) respondents are belongs to the income between Rs.20,001 – 30,000, 25 (22.70%) of them are belongs to the income between Rs. 30,001 – 40,000 and the remaining 35 (31.80%) of them are belongs to the income of more than Rs. 40,000. It can be concluded that maximum of 45 respondents are belongs to income between Rs. 20,001 – 30,000.

Monthly Savings -Among 110 respondents, 35 (31.81%) of them are having the monthly saving of below Rs.10,000, 52 (47.28%) respondents are belongs to the monthly savings between Rs.10,001 – 20,000, 16 (14.55%) of them are belongs to the monthly savings between Rs. 20,001 – 30,000 and the remaining 07 (6.36%) of them are belongs to monthly savings of more than Rs. 40,000. It can be concluded that maximum of 52 respondents are belongs to the monthly savings between Rs. 10,001 – 20,000.

From the table 3 shows that the level of agreeability towards economic empowerment of women through education was observed over the ten attributes. Based on the perception of educated women, out of 110 respondents, the maximum of 78 respondents are agreed with the statement of “Capable to Making Successful Careers”, 82 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Men Could Share and Involve in Women’s Spending Decisions”, 80 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Handover her Income as it is to her Husband”, 77 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Easy to Access Government Loans, Schemes and Employment Opportunities”, 69 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Enable to Initiate Own Income-Generating Activities”, 79 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Awareness of Consumerism and its Rights are More”, 81 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Create More Saving Consciousness in the Family”, 83 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Independent Access for Bank Transactions Using Cards”, 65 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Interest in Generating Income and Assets”.

TABLE – 2: LEVEL OF AGREEABILITY TOWARDS SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH EDUCATION

S. No	Social Empowerment Variables	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Helps to achieving special status in the society	86	78.18	19	17.27	0	0	2	1.82	3	2.72
2	Respected by spouse family	73	66.36	24	21.82	2	1.82	7	6.64	4	3.64
3	Prevent domestic violence (e.g. beating wives)	76	69.09	23	20.91	1	0.91	4	3.64	6	5.45
4	Enabled to access information and knowledge	92	83.64	16	14.55	0	0	1	0.91	1	0.91
5	Right to participated in the social events	83	75.45	24	21.82	0	0	1	0.91	2	1.82
6	Enabled to manage the family issues	75	68.18	31	28.18	1	0.91	2	1.82	1	0.91
7	Aware of government welfare programs of women and child	82	74.55	22	20	1	0.91	3	2.73	2	1.82
8	Aware of reproductive rights	80	72.73	24	21.82	1	0.91	3	2.73	2	1.82
9	Conscious about nutrition, healthcare and child care	65	59.10	41	37.27	0	0	1	0.91	3	2.73
10	Higher in social concern	69	62.73	35	31.82	1	0.91	3	2.73	2	1.82

Source: Primary Data

From the table 4 shows that the level of agreeability towards educational empowerment of women through education was observed over the ten attributes. Based on the perception of educated women, out of 110 respondents, the maximum of 77 respondents are agreed with the statement of “Enhanced The Outlook Of Women Towards Self Esteem”, 66 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “To Acquired Good Decision Making Capacity”, 85 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Perform As Excellent Leaders At All Levels”, 87 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Think That Intellectually Equal To Higher Educated Men”, 78 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Improving Creative Thinking”, 65 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Autonomy In Decision Making At Home And Work Place”, 69 respondents are agreed with the statement of “Proper Utilisation Of Resources And Opportunities Properly”, 73 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Women Can Bring Content Life”, 63 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Courageous To Protest Against Sexual Abuses”, 67 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Commitment And Competency Are High”.

From the table 5 shows that the level of agreeability towards psychological empowerment of women through education was observed over the ten attributes. Based on the perception of educated women, the maximum of 84 respondents are agreed with the statement of “Upliftment in Our Society”, 73 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Women Need To Go Beyond”, 82 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Motivates Women to Postpone Their Age for Marriage and Gap between Two Children”, 85 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Motivated Women to Balance between Domestic Work and Career Work”, 74 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Reduce Marital Conflicts between the Couple”, 69 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Better In Home than Those without Education”, 76 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Change To Play Multidimensional Role At Home and Society”, 75 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Reduce Female Infanticide”, 74 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Brings Environmental Awareness and Protection Among Women” and 83 respondents are strongly agreed with the statement of “Create More Cautious About Their Health and Beauty”.

TABLE – 3: LEVEL OF AGREEABILITY TOWARDS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH EDUCATION

S. No	Economic Empowerment Variables	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Capable to making successful careers	78	70.90	26	23.63	1	0.90	3	2.72	2	1.81
2	Men could share and involve in women's spending decisions	82	74.54	22	20	1	0.90	2	1.81	3	2.72
3	Economic independent than illiterate women	81	73.63	25	22.72	1	0.90	1	0.90	2	1.81
4	Hand over her income as it is to her husband	80	72.72	27	24.54	0	0	2	1.81	1	0.90
5	Easy to access government loans, schemes and employment	77	70	30	27.27	1	0.90	0	0	2	1.81
6	Enable to initiate own income-generating activities	69	62.72	35	31.81	1	0.90	3	2.72	2	1.81
7	Awareness of consumerism and its rights are more	79	71.81	28	25.45	1	0.90	1	0.90	1	0.90
8	Create more saving consciousness in the family	81	73.63	23	20.90	1	0.90	3	2.72	2	1.81
9	Independent access for bank transactions using cards	83	75.45	19	17.27	2	1.81	3	2.72	3	2.72
10	Interest in generating income and assets	65	59.09	39	35.45	1	0.90	2	1.81	3	2.72

Source: Primary Data

TABLE – 4: LEVEL OF AGREEABILITY TOWARDS EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH EDUCATION

S. No	Educational Empowerment Variables	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Enhanced the outlook of women towards self esteem	77	70.0	24	21.81	1	0.90	3	2.72	5	4.54
2	To acquired good decision making capacity	66	60.0	38	34.54	0	0	3	2.72	3	2.72
3	Perform as excellent leaders at all levels	85	77.27	20	18.18	2	1.81	1	0.90	2	1.81
4	Think that intellectually equal to higher educated men	87	79.09	21	19.09	1	0.90	0	0	1	0.90
5	Improving creative thinking	78	70.90	29	26.36	0	0	1	0.90	2	1.81
6	Autonomy in decision making at home and work place	65	59.09	39	35.45	2	1.81	3	2.72	1	0.90
7	Proper utilisation of resources and opportunities properly	69	62.72	35	31.81	1	0.90	2	1.81	3	2.72
8	Women can bring content life	73	66.36	28	25.45	2	1.81	4	3.63	3	2.72
9	Courageous to protest against sexual abuses	63	57.27	43	39.09	1	0.90	1	0.90	2	1.81
10	Commitment and competency are high	67	60.90	38	34.54	0	0	2	1.81	3	2.72

Source: Primary Data

TABLE – 5: LEVEL OF AGREEABILITY TOWARDS PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH EDUCATION

S. No	Psychological Empowerment Variables	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Upliftment in our society	84	76.36	18	16.36	2	1.81	2	1.81	4	3.63
2	Women need to go beyond	73	66.36	27	24.55	1	0.91	4	3.63	5	4.54
3	Motivates women to postpone their age for marriage and gap between two	82	74.54	22	20	1	0.91	2	1.81	3	2.72
4	Motivated women to balance between domestic work and career work	85	77.27	21	19.09	2	1.81	1	0.90	1	0.90
5	Reduce marital conflicts between the couple	74	67.27	32	29.09	1	0.90	1	0.90	2	1.81
6	Better in home than those without education	69	62.72	31	28.18	3	2.72	4	3.63	3	2.72
7	Change to play multidimensional role at home and society	76	69.09	30	27.27	2	1.81	0	0	2	1.81
8	Reduce female infanticide	75	68.18	26	23.64	3	2.72	2	1.81	4	3.63
9	Brings environmental awareness and protection among women	74	67.27	29	26.36	2	1.81	2	1.81	3	2.72
10	Create more cautious about their health and beauty	83	75.45	23	20.91	1	0.90	1	0.90	2	1.81

Source: Primary Data

SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ The education policy needs to be more inclusive to ensure girls right to education and their right to be free from discrimination within educational institutions.
- ✓ The education policy should target young men and boys to positively change their attitudes towards girls and women.
- ✓ There is a need for strict implementation of statutes that emphasize on women empowerment through education.
- ✓ In order to curb higher dropout rate among girls, there is a need for providing relatively higher financial incentives for girls' education.
- ✓ Developing the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change, to create more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

CONCLUSION

Women play an imperative role in making a nation progressive and guide it towards development. They are essential possessions of a lively humanity required for national improvement, so if we have to see a bright future of women in our country, giving education to them must be a pre-occupation empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power. The education of women is the most powerful tool to change the position of society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. Therefore, the study aims to analyze the empowerment of women through education in Omalur Town of Salem district. The sample was collected from 110 women's who have the education and to know about the empowerment in the aspect of social, economic, educational and psychological factors. The result of this study revealed that, among 110 women respondents more than 70 percent of them are agreed that they are empowered their life through their education. Through education, women are not only empowered to flourish socio-economically and make better decisions about their health and future, but society in its entirety is bettered by a greater presence of female voices. To recover from these hazards we should keep in mind that ***“Women's Education is Women's Empowerment”***.

References:

1. Vaithilingam, Praveen Kumar and Vidhate (2007), “Impact of Female Literacy on Vital Rates among Indian States and Union Territories”, Indian Journal of Population Education, pp.51-60.
2. Rao Digumarti Bhaskara Rao (2010), “Women Challenges and Advancement”, Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi, 2010, pp.278.
3. Jamil Ahmad (2012), Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality to promote Education: A Review, In Imran Saleem and Ashraf Imam (Ed), Education and Social Sector, Regal Publications, pp. 102-116.
4. Eliza Sharma (2012), “Are Women Really Empowered: A Case Study of Yamuna Nagar District”, In Imran Saleem and Ashraf Imam (Ed), Education in Emerging Indian Society, APH Publishing Corporation, pp. 106- 114.
5. Kumar J (2013), Status of Women Education in India, Educationia Confab, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 162-177.
6. AmmarahAftab (2016), Women Empowerment through Education in NurpurShahan, International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR), Volume 5 Issue 1.
7. Bhajan Chandra Barman (2018), “Education in Empowering Women: A Case Study”, The Research Publication, Vol.7, No.1, pp. 16-20.

8. Mutyalu (2019), “Role of Education in Women Empowerment”, Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR),
9. Srishti Srivastava (2022), “Role of Education in Women Empowerment”, International Journal of Research in Humanities & Soc. Sciences”, Vol. 10.
10. Elizebath Ligia Fernandez and Kavitha (2023), “The Role of Education in Women Empowerment in Kerala”, International Journal of Economic Perspectives, Vol.17, No.02, pp.10-16.

