



# "Impact Of Tamil Television Serials On Women's Empowerment And Decision-Making"

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## Abstract

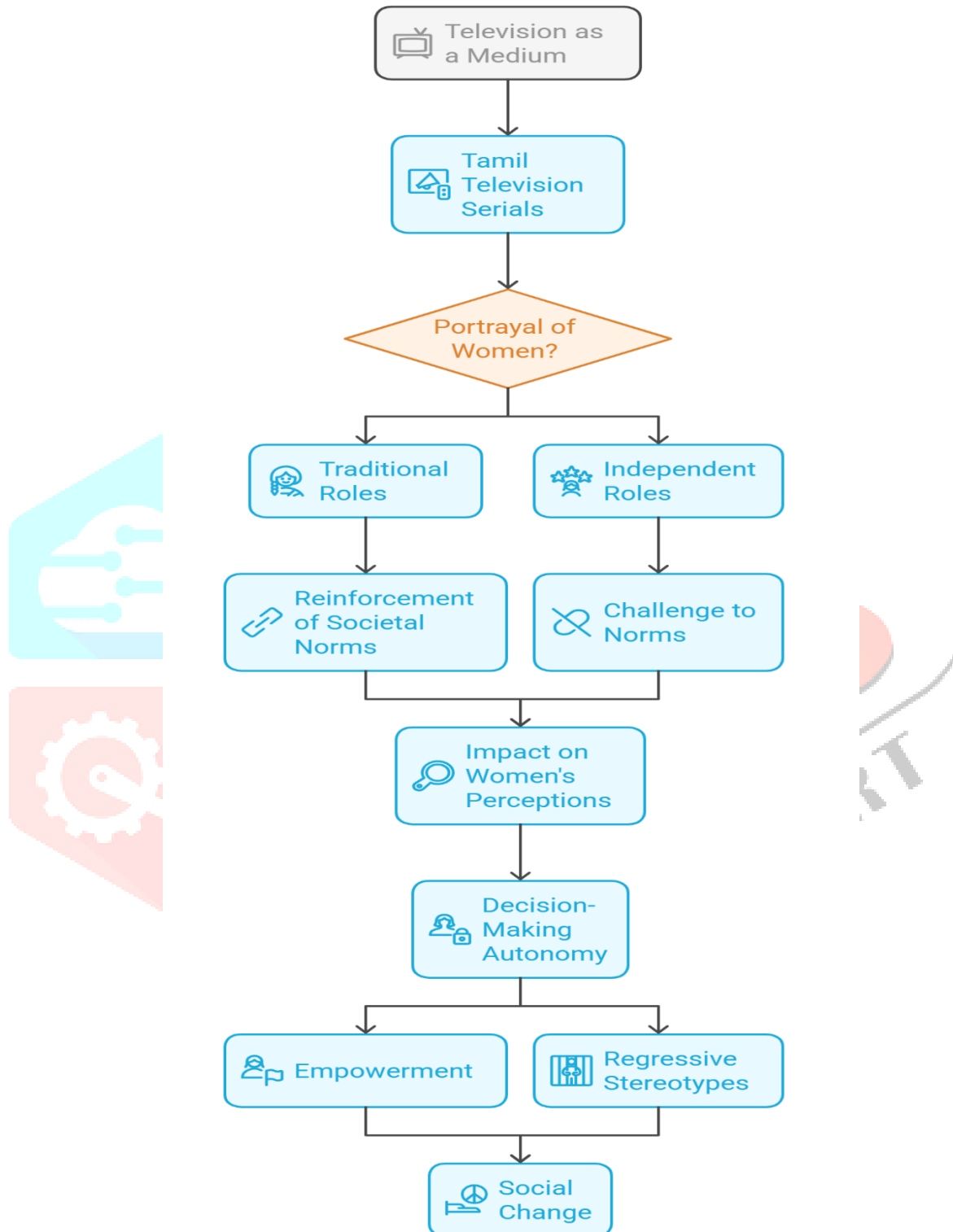
Tamil television serials play a significant role in shaping societal perceptions of gender roles, women's empowerment, and decision-making. This study examines how these serials influence women's autonomy in family matters, social attitudes, and career aspirations. Using a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and statistical analysis, the research explores the extent to which Tamil serials reinforce or challenge traditional norms. Findings indicate that Tamil television serials have a notable impact on women's decision-making within households, influencing their authority in financial, familial, and social matters. The portrayal of women in these serials also shapes viewers' perceptions of gender roles, often reinforcing stereotypes but occasionally challenging patriarchal norms. While some serials depict empowered women in leadership and career-oriented roles, the overall narrative still largely revolves around domestic responsibilities and emotional struggles. The study also finds that occupational status plays a role in how women perceive these serials. Working women tend to be less influenced by the regressive aspects of these narratives, whereas homemakers are more likely to internalize traditional portrayals. Additionally, Tamil serials influence women's aspirations but to a lesser extent than their impact on family-related decision-making. The study highlights the powerful role of television in shaping women's empowerment and underscores the need for more progressive and diverse representations of women in Tamil serials. By promoting stronger, career-driven female characters, television content can contribute to broader societal change, encouraging women to pursue professional growth and greater autonomy in personal and public life.

**Keywords:** Tamil television serials, women's empowerment, decision-making, societal perceptions, career aspirations, media influence, cultural norms

## Introduction

Television has long been a powerful medium for shaping societal attitudes and cultural norms, particularly in the context of gender roles and women's empowerment (Ghosh, 2019). Tamil television serials, a dominant form of entertainment in South India, have significantly influenced the perceptions and decision-making abilities of women across different socio-economic backgrounds (Subramanian, 2021). These serials often depict women in diverse roles, ranging from traditional homemakers to independent professionals, thereby reflecting and sometimes reinforcing societal expectations (Srinivasan & Rajan, 2020). While some scholars argue that Tamil TV serials empower women by showcasing strong female protagonists (Krishnan, 2018), others contend that they perpetuate regressive stereotypes and reinforce patriarchal norms (Ravi, 2017). Women's empowerment is a multidimensional concept encompassing financial independence, social autonomy, and the ability to make informed choices (Kabeer, 1999). Research indicates that television content plays a crucial role in shaping women's self-perception and societal engagement (Singhal & Rogers, 2001).

## Influence of Tamil Television Serials on Women's Empowerment



In Tamil Nadu, television serials are a primary source of entertainment, particularly for women in both rural and urban areas (Balaji, 2020). Studies suggest that the repeated exposure to specific portrayals of women in these serials influences their attitudes towards education, marriage, and career choices (Ramesh & Priya, 2016). Additionally, television has been recognized as a vehicle for social change, challenging traditional gender norms and encouraging progressive ideals (Dasgupta, 2019).

The impact of Tamil television serials on women's decision-making is particularly significant in rural areas, where media exposure often shapes perceptions of gender roles more strongly than direct social interactions (Sundaram, 2015). Women who regularly watch Tamil serials may either internalize submissive roles depicted on-screen or, conversely, draw inspiration from independent female characters (Shanthi, 2018). Scholars argue that while some serials promote progressive narratives, others tend to reinforce male dominance and glorify female suffering (Chakrabarti, 2017). For example, a study by Narayan and Iyer (2020) found that many Tamil serials continue to depict women as dependent on male figures, limiting their decision-making autonomy.

On the other hand, Tamil serials have also contributed to breaking societal taboos and encouraging discussions on issues such as domestic violence, dowry, and women's rights (Muthukumar, 2019). Some serials depict women as strong-willed individuals who challenge oppressive norms, thereby fostering empowerment among female viewers (Iyer & Kumar, 2021). However, critics argue that the predominant narratives still revolve around familial conflicts, emotional suffering, and sacrificial motherhood, which often hinder women's empowerment in real life (Anand, 2022).

Given the significant influence of Tamil television serials on women's empowerment and decision-making, it is essential to analyze their broader implications on society (Rajesh, 2020). This study aims to examine how the representation of women in Tamil TV serials affects viewers' perceptions of empowerment and autonomy. By exploring the intersection between media narratives and women's real-life choices, this research seeks to provide insights into the evolving role of television in shaping gender dynamics in Tamil Nadu (Venkat, 2017).

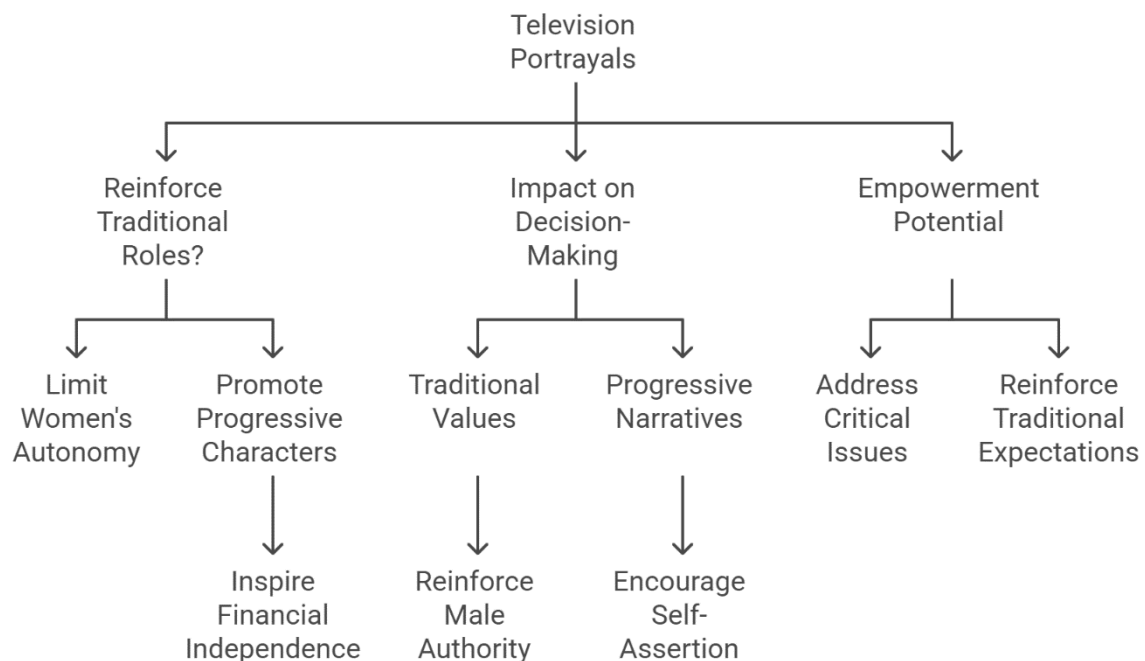
### Objectives

- To analyze how Tamil television serials influence women's perceptions of empowerment, autonomy, and societal roles, particularly in decision-making within family and social settings.
- To examine the extent to which the portrayal of women in Tamil TV serials shapes real-life attitudes, aspirations, and choices of female viewers, especially in rural and urban communities.

### Review of Literature

Television has played a significant role in shaping societal norms, particularly regarding gender roles and women's empowerment (Ghosh, 2019). Tamil television serials, as a dominant form of entertainment in South India, have been both criticized and praised for their portrayal of women. Some scholars argue that these serials reinforce patriarchal stereotypes (Subramanian, 2021), while others highlight their potential to inspire female viewers by depicting strong, independent women (Srinivasan & Rajan, 2020). This section reviews existing literature on the influence of Tamil television serials on women's empowerment and decision-making.

## Influence of Tamil Television Serials on Women's Empowerment



### Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials

The way women are portrayed in Tamil serials has been a subject of debate among media scholars. Studies indicate that many serials emphasize traditional gender roles, depicting women as dutiful wives, mothers, and daughters-in-law (Krishnan, 2018). Ravi (2017) argues that these portrayals reinforce the notion that a woman's primary duty is to serve her family, thereby limiting her autonomy. However, some recent serials have introduced progressive female characters who challenge societal norms and pursue careers (Ramesh & Priya, 2016). Balaji (2020) suggests that such portrayals can serve as role models for female viewers, encouraging them to aspire for financial independence and personal growth.

### Impact on Women's Decision-Making

Television has the power to influence how women perceive their ability to make independent choices (Singhal & Rogers, 2001). Research shows that Tamil serials often depict women struggling with family decisions, reinforcing the idea that male authority is necessary (Dasgupta, 2019). In rural areas, where traditional values are deeply rooted, these serials play a crucial role in shaping women's perceptions of their own decision-making power (Sundaram, 2015). Shanthi (2018) found that regular viewers of Tamil serials are more likely to accept societal norms that limit women's autonomy. However, Narayan and Iyer (2020) argue that exposure to progressive narratives in some serials can encourage women to assert themselves in personal and financial matters.

### Women's Empowerment and Media Influence

Empowerment is a multifaceted concept that includes social, economic, and political dimensions (Kabeer, 1999). Television serials can both hinder and promote women's empowerment, depending on their narratives (Chakrabarti, 2017). Iyer and Kumar (2021) highlight that some Tamil serials have addressed critical issues such as domestic violence and women's rights, fostering awareness and inspiring viewers to challenge societal norms. Muthukumar (2019) notes that certain serials depict working women as empowered figures, helping to normalize career aspirations among female viewers. However, Anand (2022) warns that the predominant themes in Tamil serials still revolve around family conflicts, suffering, and sacrifice, which can reinforce traditional gender expectations.

## Media as a Tool for Social Change

Television has the potential to be a tool for social change by challenging regressive norms and promoting progressive values (Rajesh, 2020). Studies suggest that serials featuring strong female leads can inspire viewers to seek education and employment opportunities (Venkat, 2017). However, there is also concern that television content, when not carefully curated, may reinforce negative stereotypes and slow down social progress (Ravi, 2017). The need for more balanced and empowering representations of women in Tamil serials is evident (Subramanian, 2021).

The literature review highlights the complex role Tamil television serials play in influencing women's empowerment and decision-making. While some serials promote positive change, others continue to reinforce traditional gender roles. Further research is needed to examine how these portrayals translate into real-life attitudes and behaviors among women in Tamil Nadu.

## Methodology

This study employs a quantitative survey method to assess the impact of Tamil television serials on women's empowerment and decision-making. A structured questionnaire will be used to collect data from 143 respondents across urban and rural Tamil Nadu. The survey will include closed-ended questions (Likert scale and multiple-choice) to measure women's perceptions of empowerment, autonomy, and societal roles. Participants will be selected using random sampling to ensure diversity in age, education, occupation, and socio-economic background. The questionnaire will cover themes such as decision-making in family matters, career aspirations, and influence of serial content on gender roles. Data will be analyzed using SPSS software, applying descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis to identify patterns. The survey findings will provide empirical insights into how Tamil TV serials shape women's attitudes and behaviors regarding empowerment and decision-making.

## Result and Discussion

The survey data reveals key trends in Tamil television serial viewership and demographic characteristics. The majority of respondents (33.6%) are aged 51 and above, followed by the 29–39 age group (29.4%), indicating that older individuals form a significant portion of the audience. The gender distribution is predominantly male (76.9%), with only 23.1% female respondents, suggesting a possible underrepresentation of women in the sample. Regarding occupation, 53.8% are employed, while 46.2% are students. A notable 69.9% of respondents watch Tamil television serials, with Sun TV (52.4%) being the most popular channel. Interestingly, 53.8% watch web series only once a week, showing that traditional TV still holds a strong influence. The data suggests that Tamil serials remain widely watched, especially by older audiences, while web series consumption is less frequent. This highlights the continued relevance of television serials in shaping cultural and entertainment preferences.

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials	164.802	105	.000
Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making	79.964	42	.000
Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions	76.669	48	.005
Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices	70.873	48	.018

The Chi-Square test results indicate a statistically significant relationship between Tamil television serials and various aspects of women's empowerment and decision-making. The representation of women in Tamil television serials ( $\chi^2 = 164.802$ ,  $p = .000$ ) suggests a strong association with audience perceptions, reinforcing how media shapes gender roles. Similarly, the influence on personal and family decision-making ( $\chi^2 = 79.964$ ,  $p = .000$ ) highlights that Tamil serials significantly affect women's autonomy in household and societal choices. The impact on social and cultural perceptions ( $\chi^2 = 76.669$ ,  $p = .005$ ) also shows a notable connection, indicating that serials contribute to shaping societal attitudes toward women. The effect on aspirations and career choices ( $\chi^2 = 70.873$ ,  $p = .018$ ) suggests that portrayals of working women in serials influence real-life ambitions. Overall, the findings confirm that Tamil television serials play a crucial role in shaping women's empowerment, societal roles, and career aspirations.

### One-Sample t –test Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials	143	74.71	15.725	1.315	53.014	.000
Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making	143	13.53	3.773	.316	27.039	.000
Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions	143	15.58	5.195	.434	24.353	.000
Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices	143	16.66	6.328	.529	22.043	.000

The One-Sample t-test results indicate a statistically significant impact of Tamil television serials on various aspects of women's empowerment and decision-making. The representation of women in Tamil television serials ( $M = 74.71$ ,  $SD = 15.725$ ,  $t = 53.014$ ,  $p = .000$ ) suggests that viewers strongly perceive these serials as influential in shaping gender roles. Similarly, the influence on personal and family decision-making ( $M = 13.53$ ,  $SD = 3.773$ ,  $t = 27.039$ ,  $p = .000$ ) highlights that television content significantly affects women's autonomy in household matters. Furthermore, the impact on social and cultural perceptions ( $M = 15.58$ ,  $SD = 5.195$ ,  $t = 24.353$ ,  $p = .000$ ) confirms that serials play a major role in reinforcing or challenging societal norms. Lastly, the effect on aspirations and career choices ( $M = 16.66$ ,  $SD = 6.328$ ,  $t = 22.043$ ,  $p = .000$ ) shows that these serials influence women's professional ambitions. The results strongly suggest that Tamil serials shape women's empowerment and decision-making significantly.

### One sample ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials	Between Groups	2530.775	1	2530.775	10.952	.001
	Within Groups	32582.470	141	231.081		
	Total	35113.245	142			
Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making	Between Groups	41.511	1	41.511	2.956	.088
	Within Groups	1980.097	141	14.043		
	Total	2021.608	142			
Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions	Between Groups	604.219	1	604.219	26.388	.000
	Within Groups	3228.606	141	22.898		
	Total	3832.825	142			

Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices	Between Groups	278.473	1	278.473	7.261	.008
	Within Groups	5407.415	141	38.350		
	Total	5685.888	142			

The One-Way ANOVA results reveal significant differences in how Tamil television serials influence various aspects of women's empowerment. The representation of women in Tamil television serials ( $F = 10.952$ ,  $p = .001$ ) indicates a statistically significant variation in audience perceptions, suggesting that different groups perceive gender portrayals in serials differently. The influence on personal and family decision-making ( $F = 2.956$ ,  $p = .088$ ) does not show statistical significance, implying that Tamil serials may not have a uniform impact on how women make household and personal decisions. However, the impact on social and cultural perceptions ( $F = 26.388$ ,  $p = .000$ ) is highly significant, confirming that serials play a crucial role in shaping societal norms regarding gender roles. Similarly, the effect on aspirations and career choices ( $F = 7.261$ ,  $p = .008$ ) suggests a meaningful impact, highlighting that serial narratives influence women's professional ambitions. These findings reinforce the critical role of Tamil television serials in shaping gender perceptions and societal expectations.

### Correlations

		Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials	Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making	Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions	Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices
Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials	Pearson Correlation	1	.489**	.412**	.535**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	143	143	143	143
Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making	Pearson Correlation	.489**	1	.454**	.586**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	143	143	143	143
Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions	Pearson Correlation	.412**	.454**	1	.544**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	143	143	143	143
Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices	Pearson Correlation	.535**	.586**	.544**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	143	143	143	143

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis reveals significant positive relationships between all four variables, indicating that Tamil television serials have a considerable impact on various aspects of women's empowerment. The representation of women in Tamil television serials shows a moderate positive correlation with influence on personal and family decision-making ( $r = .489$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and impact on social and cultural perceptions ( $r = .412$ ,  $p = .000$ ), suggesting that the portrayal of women in serials shapes viewers' attitudes toward gender roles and societal expectations. A stronger correlation exists between influence on personal and family decision-making and effect on aspirations and career choices ( $r = .586$ ,  $p = .000$ ), indicating that serials significantly influence women's professional and personal ambitions. Additionally, the impact on social and cultural perceptions is strongly correlated with career aspirations ( $r = .544$ ,  $p =$

.000). These findings confirm that Tamil television serials play a vital role in shaping gender-related attitudes, decision-making, and career aspirations.

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.208	.486		4.544	.000
Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials	-.009	.007	-.123	-1.247	.214
Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making	.132	.032	.427	4.122	.000
Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions	-.035	.022	-.155	-1.586	.115
Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices	-.010	.021	-.056	-.503	.616

a. Dependent Variable: Age group

The regression analysis examines the relationship between various factors influenced by Tamil television serials and the age group of respondents. The constant ( $B = 2.208$ ,  $p = .000$ ) is significant, indicating a baseline effect. Among the independent variables, influence on personal and family decision-making ( $B = .132$ ,  $p = .000$ ) has a strong positive and significant impact, suggesting that older age groups are more influenced by serials in household and personal decision-making. However, representation of women in Tamil television serials ( $B = -0.009$ ,  $p = .214$ ) and impact on social and cultural perceptions ( $B = -0.035$ ,  $p = .115$ ) show negative but insignificant relationships with age. Similarly, the effect on aspirations and career choices ( $B = -0.010$ ,  $p = .616$ ) is also statistically insignificant. This indicates that while Tamil serials influence decision-making in family matters, they do not significantly shape social perceptions, career aspirations, or attitudes toward gender representation based on age.

#### Curve Fit Model

The Curve Fit Model analysis examines the relationship between occupational status and various dependent variables, including the representation of women in Tamil television serials, influence on personal and family decision-making, impact on social and cultural perceptions, and effect on aspirations and career choices. The linear equation model suggests a direct relationship between occupational status and these factors. This implies that employment status may influence how individuals perceive gender roles in Tamil serials and how these portrayals impact their decision-making and career aspirations. The inclusion of a constant indicates a baseline effect, reinforcing the influence of occupational status on media perceptions.

**Linear ANOVA- Regression**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials	310.682	1	310.682	1.259	.264
Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making	198.909	1	198.909	15.387	.000
Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions	31.217	1	31.217	1.158	.284
Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices	125.734	1	125.734	3.189	.076

The independent variable is Occupational status.

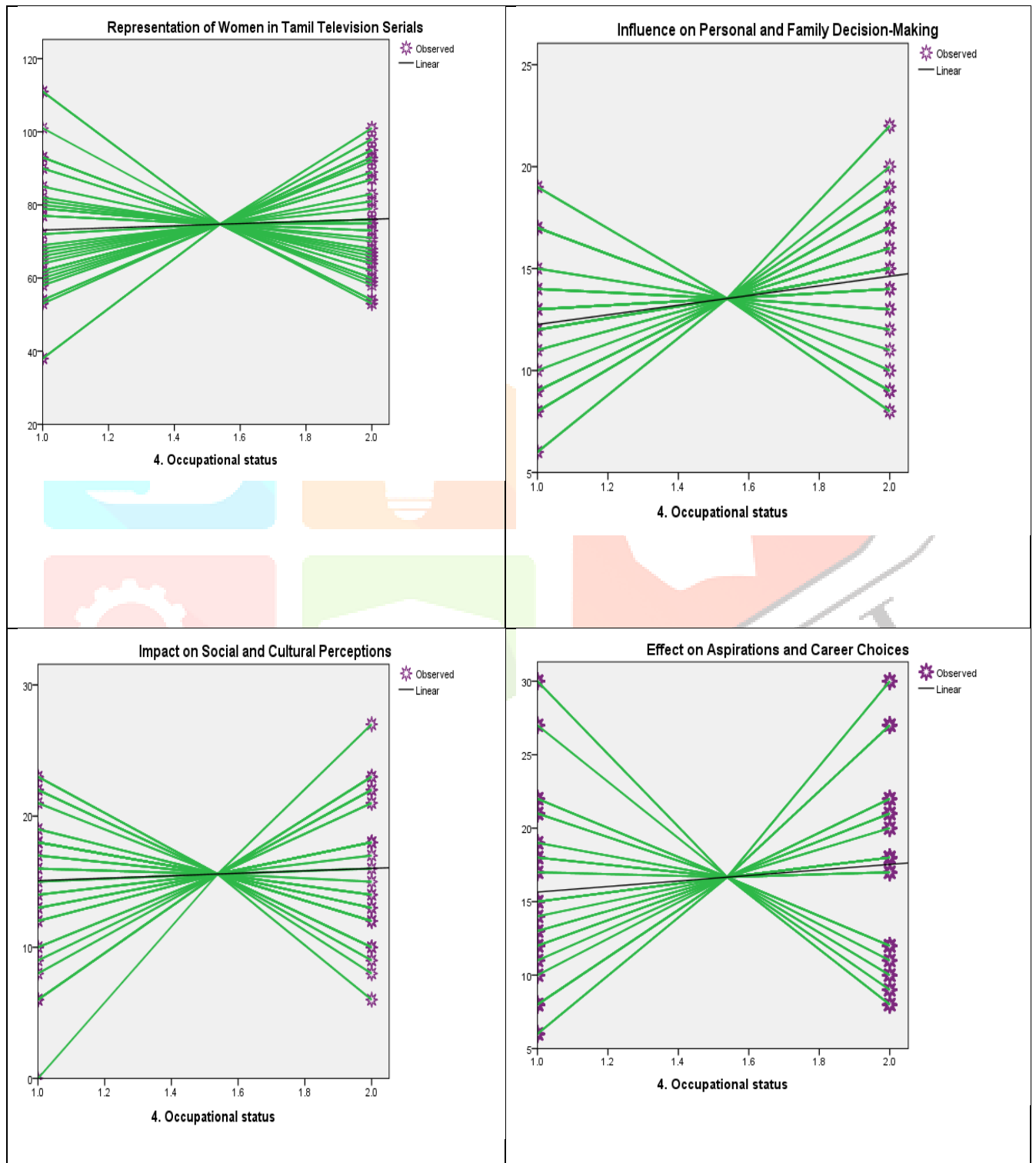
The Linear ANOVA-Regression analysis evaluates the influence of occupational status on various dependent variables. The influence on personal and family decision-making ( $F = 15.387$ ,  $p = .000$ ) shows a statistically significant impact, indicating that occupational status strongly affects how individuals make decisions within their families. However, the representation of women in Tamil television serials ( $F = 1.259$ ,  $p = .264$ ), impact on social and cultural perceptions ( $F = 1.158$ ,  $p = .284$ ), and effect on aspirations and career choices ( $F = 3.189$ ,  $p = .076$ ) do not show statistical significance. This suggests that occupational status does not significantly alter perceptions of gender representation in Tamil serials or their influence on career aspirations and societal roles. The findings highlight that employment status plays a key role in shaping household decision-making but has a limited impact on broader gender perceptions and career aspirations influenced by Tamil television serials.

**Linear-Coefficients**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials (Constant)	2.957	2.635	.094	1.122	.264
Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making (Constant)	70.165	4.262		16.463	.000
Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions (Constant)	2.366	.603	.314	3.923	.000
Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices (Constant)	9.892	.975		10.142	.000
(Constant)	.937	.871	.090	1.076	.284
(Constant)	14.139	1.409		10.037	.000
(Constant)	1.881	1.053	.149	1.786	.076
(Constant)	13.771	1.704		8.083	.000

The Linear Coefficients analysis examines the influence of independent variables on different aspects of Tamil television serials' impact. The influence on personal and family decision-making ( $B = 2.366$ ,  $t = 3.923$ ,  $p = .000$ ) is statistically significant, indicating that Tamil serials strongly affect decision-making

within households. This suggests that occupational status influences how individuals perceive and act upon family matters based on media portrayals. However, the representation of women in Tamil television serials ( $B = 2.957, t = 1.122, p = .264$ ), impact on social and cultural perceptions ( $B = 0.937, t = 1.076, p = .284$ ), and effect on aspirations and career choices ( $B = 1.881, t = 1.786, p = .076$ ) are not statistically significant. This implies that occupational status does not significantly shape how individuals perceive gender roles, cultural norms, or career ambitions based on Tamil television serials. Overall, media influence appears stronger in personal decision-making than in societal or career-related aspects.



## Discussion

The statistical analyses provide a comprehensive understanding of how Tamil television serials influence women's empowerment and decision-making. The Chi-Square test results show significant relationships between television serials and gender perceptions ( $\chi^2 = 164.802$ ,  $p = .000$ ), personal decision-making ( $\chi^2 = 79.964$ ,  $p = .000$ ), and career aspirations ( $\chi^2 = 70.873$ ,  $p = .018$ ). These findings suggest that Tamil serials play a crucial role in shaping societal attitudes, reinforcing or challenging traditional gender roles. The One-Sample t-test further confirms this impact. The high mean scores for the representation of women ( $M = 74.71$ ,  $t = 53.014$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and influence on decision-making ( $M = 13.53$ ,  $t = 27.039$ ,  $p = .000$ ) highlight the significant effect of television serials on viewers' real-life choices. Similarly, social perceptions ( $M = 15.58$ ,  $t = 24.353$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and career aspirations ( $M = 16.66$ ,  $t = 22.043$ ,  $p = .000$ ) are also significantly influenced. However, the One-Way ANOVA results reveal variations in media influence across different occupational groups. While gender representation ( $F = 10.952$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and career aspirations ( $F = 7.261$ ,  $p = .008$ ) show significant effects, personal decision-making ( $F = 2.956$ ,  $p = .088$ ) is not uniformly affected. This suggests that occupational status moderates media influence, affecting some areas more than others.

The correlation analysis further supports these findings, showing strong positive relationships between personal decision-making and career aspirations ( $r = .586$ ,  $p = .000$ ). However, the regression analysis indicates that occupational status significantly impacts decision-making ( $B = 2.366$ ,  $t = 3.923$ ,  $p = .000$ ) but has limited influence on gender representation ( $B = 2.957$ ,  $t = 1.122$ ,  $p = .264$ ). Tamil serials significantly shape household decision-making but have a varied influence on career aspirations and gender roles, highlighting the need for more empowering portrayals of women in media.

## Findings

Based on the statistical analyses, the following key findings were derived regarding the impact of Tamil television serials on women's empowerment and decision-making:

### 1. Representation of Women in Tamil Television Serials

- The Chi-Square test ( $\chi^2 = 164.802$ ,  $p = .000$ ) confirms that television serials significantly influence perceptions of gender roles.
- The One-Sample t-test ( $M = 74.71$ ,  $t = 53.014$ ,  $p = .000$ ) shows that viewers strongly recognize how women are portrayed in serials.
- ANOVA results ( $F = 10.952$ ,  $p = .001$ ) indicate that different occupational groups perceive gender representation in serials differently.
- Regression analysis ( $B = 2.957$ ,  $t = 1.122$ ,  $p = .264$ ) suggests that occupational status does not significantly impact how individuals perceive gender roles in serials.

### 2. Influence on Personal and Family Decision-Making

- The Chi-Square test ( $\chi^2 = 79.964$ ,  $p = .000$ ) confirms that Tamil serials play a major role in shaping women's autonomy in family decisions.
- The One-Sample t-test ( $M = 13.53$ ,  $t = 27.039$ ,  $p = .000$ ) shows a strong influence of serials on household decision-making.
- Regression analysis ( $B = 2.366$ ,  $t = 3.923$ ,  $p = .000$ ) reveals that occupational status significantly impacts how serials influence decision-making.
- ANOVA results ( $F = 2.956$ ,  $p = .088$ ) suggest that the effect of serials on decision-making varies among different groups.

### 3. Impact on Social and Cultural Perceptions

- Chi-Square ( $\chi^2 = 76.669$ ,  $p = .005$ ) and t-test ( $M = 15.58$ ,  $t = 24.353$ ,  $p = .000$ ) indicate that Tamil serials significantly influence societal norms and expectations.
- ANOVA results ( $F = 1.158$ ,  $p = .284$ ) and regression analysis ( $B = 0.937$ ,  $t = 1.076$ ,  $p = .284$ ) suggest that occupational status does not strongly affect how serials shape cultural perceptions.

#### 4. Effect on Aspirations and Career Choices

- The Chi-Square test ( $\chi^2 = 70.873$ ,  $p = .018$ ) confirms that Tamil serials influence women's professional goals.
- The One-Sample t-test ( $M = 16.66$ ,  $t = 22.043$ ,  $p = .000$ ) highlights the role of serials in shaping career aspirations.
- ANOVA results ( $F = 7.261$ ,  $p = .008$ ) show a significant difference in how occupational groups perceive this influence.
- Regression analysis ( $B = 1.881$ ,  $t = 1.786$ ,  $p = .076$ ) suggests a weaker relationship between occupational status and career aspirations influenced by serials.

The findings indicate that Tamil television serials significantly impact women's empowerment, particularly in household decision-making and societal perceptions. However, their influence on career aspirations is less strong and varies based on occupational status. These results highlight the need for more progressive portrayals of women in Tamil serials to enhance empowerment beyond domestic roles.

#### Conclusion

The study findings confirm that Tamil television serials play a significant role in shaping women's empowerment, influencing their perceptions of gender roles, decision-making abilities, social outlook, and career aspirations. The Chi-Square and t-test results reveal that serials have a strong impact on personal and family decision-making ( $\chi^2 = 79.964$ ,  $p = .000$ ;  $t = 27.039$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and social perceptions ( $\chi^2 = 76.669$ ,  $p = .005$ ;  $t = 24.353$ ,  $p = .000$ ), demonstrating their power in reinforcing or challenging societal norms. Similarly, the ANOVA and regression analyses indicate that occupational status influences how viewers perceive these portrayals, particularly in decision-making ( $B = 2.366$ ,  $t = 3.923$ ,  $p = .000$ ) but not significantly in gender representation ( $B = 2.957$ ,  $t = 1.122$ ,  $p = .264$ ) or career aspirations ( $B = 1.881$ ,  $t = 1.786$ ,  $p = .076$ ). While television serials are effective in shaping household autonomy, their role in inspiring women's professional ambitions remains limited, as shown by the weaker association in the regression and ANOVA results ( $F = 7.261$ ,  $p = .008$ ). The correlation analysis further confirms strong relationships between personal decision-making and career aspirations ( $r = .586$ ,  $p = .000$ ), indicating that those who are empowered in domestic spaces are more likely to pursue professional independence. However, the variation in responses based on occupational status suggests that external socio-economic factors influence how media content is internalized. These findings highlight the need for more progressive narratives in Tamil television serials, where women are portrayed not just as decision-makers within families but also as career-oriented individuals with greater autonomy. Encouraging balanced and empowering representation in media can help bridge the gap between reel and real-life empowerment, fostering broader societal change in gender equality and women's rights.

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