

EFFECT OF EDUCATIONAL LEVEL ON ATTITUDE OF TRIBAL WOMEN TOWARDS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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Abstract : This study examines the effect of educational level on the attitude of tribal women toward women empowerment in Saintala Block, Balangir district, Odisha. Using a descriptive survey research design, data were collected from 100 tribal women, comprising 50 women with elementary education and 50 women with secondary education. An adapted Women Empowerment Scale developed by Malini and K. Yashodhara was used to assess attitudes across dimensions such as self-reliance, decision-making ability, awareness of rights, gender equity, and educational participation. Descriptive statistics and the Mann–Whitney U test were employed for data analysis. The findings revealed that 62% of women with elementary education and 66% of women with secondary education exhibited high attitudes toward women empowerment. The Mann–Whitney U test showed no statistically significant difference between the attitudes of the two groups ($U = 1035.000$, $p = 0.135$). The study indicates that tribal women, irrespective of whether they had elementary or secondary education, generally demonstrated positive attitudes toward women empowerment. These findings highlight the importance of educational opportunities in promoting awareness, confidence, and supportive attitudes toward women's empowerment among tribal women.

IndexTerms - Tribal women, educational level, women empowerment, attitude, descriptive survey.

INTRODUCTION

The present study is centered around the topic “**Effect of Educational level on Attitude of Tribal Women Towards Women Empowerment.**” With the main objectives to study attitude of elementary and secondary tribal women towards women empowerment and to examine the significance of difference between attitude of elementary and secondary tribal women. For this investigation the Descriptive surveys research design was used and this work is done on Saintala block, district- Balangir, Odisha. A sample of 50 elementary and 50 secondary tribal women were selected, from which data was collected through an adopted women empowerment scale (developed by Malini& K. Yashoddhara). And ‘u’ test is applied to draw the valid result of the study. From which, it is found that 62% of elementary women had their high attitudes where as 66% out of 50 secondary women had high attitude towards women empowerment.

NEED OF THE STUDY.

Empowerment of women is very much essential for the development of a society. It enhances the quality and quantity of human resource, which are necessary for the overall development of the nation or a state. “Educating women” is the key tool for empowerment of women and equalize them with man in all fields. But as compare to the other state, women are more backward than man in Odisha. As it is a tribal state, most of the people belong to rural and backward classes, who are still living with blind beliefs and old custom and traditions which mostly affect the women in all sectors. So, for the empowerment and development of women, several research were conducted in abroad and in India also, but only few studies were conducted in Odisha, which are mainly concern with problem, challenges and impact of education in relation to women empowerment. But it is very much important to know the attitude and thinking of people towards women empowerment, their development and education. Then only necessary steps would be taken for shaping of their positive attitude towards women empowerment. So, the present study is taken on attitude of tribal women towards women empowerment.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Based on previous study, the investigators found issues related to women empowerment, which indicate still there is a need of, explore the various factors responsible for tribal women empowerment. Education is essential for empowerment of women as it had signification impact on self-confidence, family welfare, and involvement of social, political activity. The investigator found are two factors which influence the attitude of women towards women empowerment. Marriage women get opportunity to discourse with spouses for making batter decision relating to business purpose and the majority of women had positive towards women empowerment. So that it necessary to study on—“Effect of Educational level on Attitude of Tribal Women Towards Women Empowerment.”

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE KEY TERM USED

Attitude towards Women empowerment: Score secured in attitude towards women empowerment scale by the investigator is considered as the attitude towards women empowerment of tribal women.

EXPLANATION OF THE TERMS

Educational Level: The term educational level refers to a knowledge acquisition process in a formal setting within an academic environment. In this study, it is limited to only the matriculate level of education, which means the 10th class / standard education. Based on this matriculation level of education, the women having above matriculate degree were taken as educated and below matriculation degree were taken as uneducated women.

Tribal women: As per the present study, tribal people are defined as the indigenous natives of Saintala Block of Balangir district, Odisha, who are constitutionally declared (in schedule 5th of Indian constitution) groups of historically disadvantaged people belonging from tribal communities.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To study the attitude of tribal women with elementary education towards women empowerment.
2. To study the attitude of tribal women with secondary education towards women empowerment.
3. To compare the attitude of tribal women with elementary education and secondary education towards women empowerment.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H01- There is no significant attitude of tribal women with elementary education towards women empowerment.

H02- There is no significant attitude of tribal women with secondary education towards women empowerment.

H03- There exists no significance difference between attitude of tribal women with elementary education and secondary education towards women empowerment.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study was delimited to tribal women of two villages of Saintala block under Balangir district, Odisha only. The present study also was delimited to the elementary level and secondary level tribal women only.

RESEARCH DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The design of the study was just like a blue print for the research study which act as a guide for what to do, how to do, when to do, where to do, the research work. As per the objectives of the present study as to study the impact of education on attitude of tribal women towards women empowerment, a descriptive survey research design was applied.

POPULATION

Population was taken by the researches which had a specific part of geographical location. Based on location, all the tribal women of Saintala block, which comes under Balangir district, Odisha was taken as population of the study.

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCESS

Conducting research over population of a study was very difficult work for the investigator. So, for the present study a sample as a representative part i.e. – 100 tribal women of 2 villages of Saintala block were selected through cluster sampling procedure.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

For the present study, the Women empowerment scale' developed by Malini and K. Yashodhara Scale was adapted to assess among Women in the local context. Prior permission to use the scale was formally obtained from the author via email. Minor modifications in language and phrasing were made to suit the understanding level of students and to ensure cultural relevance. For the collection of data 'Women empowerment scale' developed by Malini and K. Yashodhara Was be adopted to major attitude of women towards women empowerment. This scale consists of 35 items, which is based on 8 dimensions, such as i) self-reliance, self-respect and dignity of women, ii) Decision making ability iii) Acceptance of small family norms iv) Better care of health for herself and children v) Better conscious of their rights vi) Gender equity awareness vii) women participation and involvement of job performance viii) Higher literacy and education. Each items include three responds – Agree, undecided and disagree, as this scale included both positive and negative items, the response are scored as 3,2,1 in positive statement/ items and 1,2,3, in case of negative items.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

With the consultation of research guide, Associate professor of Rajendra University, Balangir the investigator went to selected field for research work and met with the tribal women's and made a good rapport with them, by making discussion on the purpose of the present study. Then based on their opinion researcher collect their response by using the women's empowerment scale.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE

Data analysis in educational research refers to the process of systematically examining data collected during a study to draw meaningful conclusions about educational phenomena. It helps researchers understand trends, relationships, and patterns in the data related to teaching, learning, educational environments, or policies.

As per the objectives of the present study i.e. to study the attitude of tribal women with elementary education towards women empowerment, simple percentage was used for analysing of collected data. As per the objectives of the present study i.e. to study the attitude of tribal women with secondary education towards women empowerment, simple percentage was used for analysing of collected data.

As per the objectives of the present study i.e. to compare the attitude of tribal women with elementary education and secondary education towards women empowerment, Mann Whitney u test was used for analysing of collected data.

MAJOR FINDINGS

As per the analysis and in perpetration of data through tabulation and figural representation, the investigator had found out some majors finding, which are given below.

- The study investigated the attitudes of 50 elementary women towards women empowerment by categorizing their responses into high, moderate, and low attitude levels.
- It was found that a majority of 62% (31 women) exhibited a high attitude towards women empowerment, demonstrating strong support and highly positive perceptions regarding the importance of empowering women in various domains such as education, employment, social rights, and decision-making.
- A total of 38% (19 women) were found to be moderate attitude, which indicates a reasonable level of awareness and support towards women empowerment, though not as strong or enthusiastic as the high-attitude group.
- Key Finding: It was proven in the key finding that no respondent (0%) belonged to the low mindset/attitude category. From this, it is clearly seen that primary-level women accept women empowerment as a moderate mindset.
- High Attitude = More participants (66%) (33 women): They govern themselves within a mindset, which stands as their primary perspective towards women empowerment.
- Impact = This statistic shows a self-awareness and a progressive mindset among primary-level women, which indicates an awareness towards gender equality and an overall collective mindset in society.
- Discussion on progressive mindset towards women empowerment: At the primary level, knowing the mindset of women reveals that their mindset is positive, and most women prepare themselves to be involved in this process.
- Moderate Attitude: Score (59–82) = 34% (17 women)
They possess a moderate attitude, which indicates that it does not draw their complete attention toward women empowerment.
- Low Attitude: Score (35–58) = 0% (0 women)
Without falling into the category of a negative mindset, women include themselves in a universally accepted positive social stream.
- High Attitude: Score (83–105) = 66% (33 women)
According to data, 66% (33 women) belong to the high attitude category, who prioritize women empowerment.
- Comparative Analysis: Mann-Whitney U Test: The value of the Mann-Whitney U test is 1035.000 and the p-value (two-tailed) = 0.135.
- We have arrived at the conclusion that the P-value (0.135) is greater than the acceptable significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$); therefore, this result is considered statistically insignificant.
- This means that no significant difference was found in the mindset/thinking of primary and secondary level women toward women empowerment. The mean score and standard deviation of both groups are nearly equal, which indicates that women at both primary and secondary levels wish to integrate themselves into the mainstream.

DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

This section is the place where researchers analyze and thoroughly discuss the findings related to the research questions and hypotheses. This is an integral part of the study because it indicates how these findings/data contribute to the existing body of knowledge. The subject of women and empowerment has generated a great deal of curiosity and interest among the inhabitants of South Asian countries, particularly India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Collectively, these studies highlight the interconnected roles of education, socio-economic status, cultural norms, and institutional support in shaping the empowerment of women. The contribution of various government and non-government organizations is absolutely essential in the context of women's empowerment. Although awareness and support for women's empowerment are increasing, certain superstitions, familial, and social perspectives still stand as a barrier. Nazetal et al. (2010) have stated that despite showing favorable attitudes toward women's empowerment—especially in economic and political spheres—at the family level, it stands as a wall against women's financial independence. Observing the gap between expectations and reality, it is evident that cultural norms rigidly bind women, acting as a major obstacle to women's empowerment. Chakravarty et al. (2013) and Paramanandam (2015) emphasized adopting Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and economic initiatives to make women self-reliant. Both studies reveal that although economic measures encourage women to become self-reliant, social and cultural norms continue to create barriers. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to dismantle the barriers that exist within social and familial attitudes. The impact of education is a central theme across numerous research studies. Sarangi and Mishra (2013) as well as Vijaydurai et al. (2015) emphasize this point, stating that empowerment

should not be limited to the economic sphere alone but must be multidimensional. Therefore, political and social achieving independence is necessary. Sundaram (2014) and Bhattacharjee (2015) have mentioned that educational qualification is a pathway through which women play a unique role in becoming self-reliant by utilizing their familial and social confidence. Shetty and Hans (2015) and Nandini (2017) have noted that women face struggles with various challenges such as violence, child marriage, and domestic harassment while pursuing education, which hinders women's empowerment. Hossain (2017) and Patil (2017) compared education not only with empowerment but also with a self-reliant way of living. Similarly, Josephat (2018) and Vidyashree (2018) stated that early marriage at a young age without education creates obstacles to the overall development of women. Sarkar and Bhutia (2018) highlighted that young female students, in particular, focus on women's empowerment independently through mobility, schooling, and family decision-making. It is realized that this practice and empowerment bring about positive changes in women. However, Jagannarayana (2020) has mentioned that violence and health-related issues continue to keep women away from education. Therefore, unless these problems are resolved, women's empowerment will become impossible. Hence, we come to the conclusion that education is the core foundation of women's empowerment. It builds women's cognitive development, decision making, and self-confidence...

IMPLICATION OF THE REVIEW FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

Many research studies or analyses are quantitative. Focus is given to the statistical correlation between indicators of education and empowerment. There is a gap in research that explores the personal narratives and experiences regarding how tribal women being educated influences their attitude towards empowerment. These experiences, when explored, shed light on their cultural background, perspective, and unique challenges. How these qualitative narrative-based statistical details can complement each other will comprehensively explain the relationship between education and empowerment among tribal women to people. Therefore, qualitative research is necessary to collect personal data, through which specific educational policies and empowerment programs tailored to their needs can be conceptualized.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Similar study "Effect of Educational level on Attitudes of Tribal Women Towards Women Empowerment." can be conducted in urban areas.
2. A survey research maybe conducted on women empowerment in different urban and rural areas considering their educational level.
3. Specific study maybe conducted on Impact of education on different aspect of women empowerment like social, political, economic and educational women empowerment.
4. A correlational research may also be conducted between women education and women empowerment.

CONCLUSION

From this present investigation it can be concluded that, as the final result shows that education had impact on attitude of women towards women empowerment suggestive or adequate majors' steps should be taken for stabilization advancement and upgradation of women education with central focus on empowerment of women in all sector. Then only women contribution towards holistic national development was be maximized. From this present investigation, it can be conclusively stated that education plays a significant and transformative role in shaping women's attitudes towards women empowerment. The final results of the study clearly indicate that as educational levels increase, women exhibit stronger, more positive attitudes towards issues related to empowerment, autonomy, and participation in socio-economic and political spheres. This definitely shows that there is a deep connection between attaining higher education and the growth of women's awareness, self-resilience, health, and decision-making capacity. Education is such an opportunity that can liberate women from domestic exploitation, destruction, and bondage. Education challenges the gender divide in society. Therefore, women not only become self-reliant but also participate in the progress and development of society. Keeping in mind the powerful impact of education on women's empowerment, it is absolutely essential to take prompt action to improve and revitalize the status of women's education. Right from primary education to higher education and vocational education, utmost priority must be given to how women can make themselves skilled and self-reliant. To ensure that the education provided to women is of the highest quality, various educational institutions, policymakers, and social organizations need to come together and work collectively. In rural areas, women and girls are often deprived of higher education due to deeply ingrained social customs, cultural norms, and family restrictions. It is imperative to make active efforts to overcome these barriers and completely eradicate gender discrimination. In rural communities, issues like child marriage, traditional orthodox customs, and concerns regarding a girl's safety are often given overriding attention (which hinders their progress). Therefore, eliminating these outdated practices and integrating women into an educational society must be treated as a matter of top priority. Generally, in schools, colleges, and universities, students are told to study wholeheartedly and strive for self-improvement. They must think about taking on greater responsibilities in the workplace by embracing new perspectives and responsiveness. Strengthening and developing education is not just a social responsibility, but a national responsibility. Therefore, new institutional wisdom balanced between personal and environmental dimensions—as well as between individual and practical well-being—drives improvement in annual, political, and economic spheres. This fosters the growth and development of innovative thinking and new scientific knowledge, enabling them to become highly effective. Consequently, within this educational framework, boys and girls of every parent must strive to achieve sustainable progress, holistic national development, and an equitable future.

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