A STUDY ON THE FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SHGS IN TUTICORIN DISTRICT

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Introduction

The Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development (APCWD) defines, Empowerment as a Process that aims at creating the conditions for the self determination of particular people or group.

The empowerment of women through Self Help Groups would lead to benefits not only to the individual woman and women groups but also for the families and community as a whole through collective action for development Empowerment of women is not just for meeting their economic needs but also to have a more holistic social development.

Empowerment of women is playing a vital role to bring the overall development of our Country. Hence this paper classifies the various types of women empowerment needed to develop our Nation. They are as follows.

Economic Empowerment

Positive economic empowerment is the vital aspect of one's development the Self Help Groups help their members to improve their economic conditions. The improvement in economic conditions is seen through increased savings, value of assets, amount of borrowings and role in decision making in financial matters etc..,

Political Empowerment

Participation of women in political process at the grass root level enhances their social status and it helps to solve the local problems. Political Empowerment include various variables such as, participation in politics, political awareness, knowledge of voting rights etc.., SHG creates political empowerment among the members.

Psychological Empowerment

The Self Help Group provides scope for development of the body and mind of an individual. The mind accelerates the activities of the member. The psychological empowerment Constitutes improving confidence, awareness of self reliance, societal status, Personality development and gaining new ideas and beliefs etc..,

Legal Empowerment

Self Help Group create legal empowerment among the members. Legal Empowerment variables such as, creating awareness of women's legal rights, knowledge about legal rights, and knowledge about women protection law's etc..,

This paper is an attempt to analyse the level of empowerment of members, compared with their Personal Factors like Age, Community, Marital status, Educational status, and Annual income. Kruskal Wallis Test is applied ((or) H value).

Kruskal Wallis Test ((or) H value)

In order to test the significant difference in the perception score of different groups of respondent's based on personal variables, the Kruskal Wallis Test has been used. Where,

$$H = 12/N(N+1) \; R2^2/n + R2^2/n2 + \ldots\ldots\ldots Rk^2/Rn_k \qquad - 3(N+1)$$

n1 n2 …..n_K are the number in each K samples

N=n1 n2…..n_k and $R_1 \; R_2 \ldots\ldots R_k$ are rank sums of each sample

The statistical analysis was done using the statistical package for social science (SPSS)

Statement of the Problem

Integration of women development and their empowerment are inevitable for the development of any country. The role of women in the economic and social activities of a country was emphasized by the world conference on Agrarian Reforms and Rural Development in 1979. The conference focuses on the need for equal opportunities for women in social, economic, and political process of rural development. Empowerment enables women to face any situation and to participate in the developmental activities of the nation. Women are motivated and given necessary power and help to become empowered through Self Help Groups. The empowerment of women by through SHGs may be influenced by many factors. No study has been conducted in tuticorin district on the women empowerment of women through SHGs. Hence, an attempt has been made to examine the level of empowerment of members compared with their personal Factors.

Objectives of the Study
- To know the empowerment level of members in SHGs in the study area.
- To analyze of factors influencing empowerment.

Null Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between various personal factors like Age, community, marital status, Education status, Annual income of members and their level of women empowerment.

Sampling Design

In Tuticorin district, there are 16703 SHGs and 2,43,109 members. For the study purpose the researcher has used proportionate sampling method for selecting the Self Help Group (1%) in each block. From each selected SHG three members have been selected by using the lot method. Totally 170 SHGs and 510 members have been selected to collect the primary data on relationship between age and perception of empowerment of SHGs.

Relationship Between Age and Perception of Empowerment of SHGs

In order to test whether there is any relationship between age and the levels of women empowerment in the study area.

To test the null hypothesis, the kruskal wallis Test has been applied and the result is in Table 1.

Table 1: Relationship between Age and Level of Women Empowerment

Sl. No	Factors	H.Value	Level of Significance	Results
1	Economic empowerment	3.448	0.328	Not significant
2	Social empowerment	8.701	0.340	Not significant
3	Political empowerment	7.814	0.050	Significant
4	Psychological empowerment	11.518	0.009	Significant
5	Legal empowerment	5.612	0.132	Not Significant
Over all perception		9.505	0.023	Significant

Source: Computed Primary Data

It is highlighted from Table 1 that, the level of significance for political empowerment and psychological empowerment are less than P value (0.05), the age factor determines the empowerment levels of women. It is found that as the level of significance for the empowerment levels like economic empowerment is more than p value (0.05). The age factor does not influence these levels of empowerment. It is evident from the Table that, as the level of significance for over all levels of empowerment is less than p value (0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected.

Relationship between Community and Levels of Empowerment of SHGs

In order to test whether there is any relationship between community and levels of women empowerment in the study area.

To test the null hypothesis the kruskal wallis Test has been applied and result is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Relationship between Community and Levels of Women Empowerment

Sl. No	Factors	H.Value	Level of Significance	Results
1	Economic empowerment	9.878	0.020	Significant
2	Social empowerment	17.735	0.000	Significant
3	Political empowerment	15.115	0.002	Significant
4	Psychological empowerment	8.948	0.030	Significant
5	Legal empowerment	13.576	0.004	Significant
	Over all perception	15.916	0.001	Significant

Source: Computed Primary Data

It is revealed from Table 2 that, the level of significance for Economic empowerment, Social empowerment, Political empowerment, Psychological empowerment and legal empowerment are less than p value (0.05). The community of respondents determines of the levels of women empowerment. It portrayed from the Table that, the level of significance for the overall levels of empowerment is less than p value (0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected.

Relationship between Marital Status and Level of Empowerment of SHGs

In order to test whether there is any relationship between marital status of members and the level of women empowerment in the study area.

To test the null hypothesis the kruskal wallis Test has been applied and the result is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between Marital Status and Levels of Women Empowerment

Sl. No	Factors	H.Value	Level of Significance	Results
1	Economic empowerment	22.041	0.000	Significant
2	Social empowerment	27.772	0.000	Significant
3	Political empowerment	23.215	0.000	Significant
4	Psychological empowerment	27.992	0.000	Significant
5	Legal empowerment	19.483	0.000	Significant
	Over all perception	32.053	0.000	Significant

Source: Computed Primary Data

It is reveals from Table 3 that, as the level of significance for the levels of Economic empowerment, Social empowerment, Political empowerment, Psychological empowerment and Legal empowerment are less than p value (0.05) The Marital status of members determines the levels of women empowerment. It is portrayed from Table that, the level of significance for the level of empowerment overall is less than p value (0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected.

Relationship between Education Status and Level of Empowerment of SHGs

In order to test whether there is any relationship between Educational status of members and the level of women empowerment in the study area.

To test the null hypothesis the kruskal wallis Test has been applied and the result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Relationship between Educational Status and Levels of Women Empowerment

Sl. No	Factors	H.Value	Level of Significance	Results
1	Economic empowerment	3.953	0.412	Not significant
2	Social empowerment	2.944	0.567	Not significant
3	Political empowerment	2.663	0.616	Not significant
4	Psychological empowerment	3.001	0.558	Not significant
5	Legal empowerment	3.257	0.516	Not significant
	Over all perception	2.884	0.577	Not Significant

Source: Computed Primary Data

It is revealed from the Table 4 that, the level of significance for the levels of Economic empowerment, Social empowerment, Political empowerment, Psychological empowerment and Legal empowerment are more than p value (0.05).The Educational status of members does not influence on these level of empowerment. It is clear from the Table that, the level of significance for the overall levels of empowerment overall more than p value (0.05). The null hypothesis is accepted.

Relationship between Annual Income and Level of Empowerment of SHGs

In order to test whether there is any relationship between Annual income of members and the level of women empowerment in the study area.

To test the null hypothesis the kruskal wallis Test has been applied and the result is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Relationship between Annual Income and Level of Women Empowerment

Sl. No	Factors	H.Value	Level of Significance	Results
1	Economic empowerment	2.589	0.459	Not Significant
2	Social empowerment	0.153	0.985	Not Significant
3	Political empowerment	3.119	0.374	Not Significant
4	Psychological empowerment	3.199	0.362	Not Significant
5	Legal empowerment	0.546	0.909	Not Significant
	Over all perception	0.964	0.810	Not Significant

Source: Computed Primary Data

It is revealed from the Table 5 that, the level of significance for Economic empowerment, Social empowerment, Political empowerment, Psychological empowerment and Legal empowerment are more than p value (0.05) .The Annual income of members does not influence the level of empowerment. It is clear from the Table that, as the level of significance for the overall levels of empowerment overall more than p value (0.05).The null hypothesis is accepted.

Finding of the Study

- There is a significant difference between the age of respondents and their levels of empowerment in the study area. Age Factor influences levels of women empowerment.
- There is a significant difference between community of respondents and their levels of empowerment in the study area. Community factor influences levels of women empowerment.
- There is a significant difference between marital status of respondents and their levels of empowerment in the study area. Marital status factor influences the levels of women empowerment.
- There is no significant difference between the educational status of respondents and their levels of women empowerment Educational status does not influence the levels of women empowerment.
- There is no significant difference between the Annual income of respondents and their level of women empowerment. Annual income does not influence the levels of women empowerment.

Conclusion

The empowerment level of members is determined by various personal factors. These Factors may have positive and negative influences. The negative factors should be converted into positive one. Personal Factors like Age, Community, Marital status are evidence for significant factors in deciding the positive level of empowerment variables and Education income and Annual income does not have any significant influence on the level of women empowerment.

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