

## EMPOWERMENT OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN RELATION TO THEIR LOCALE AND FAMILY TYPE

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Women empowerment has become a buzzword in India. The last decade witnessed very active and multifaceted efforts in various national and international forums for achieving principles of equality, sustainability and empowerment with a special focus on women. In Indian context, the concern for women's empowerment was very visible in the thoughts and writings of social reformers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This legacy was once again reemphasized by our constitutional framers which later on was translated by the government into policies, initiatives, schemes and programs for promoting women empowerment. Nowadays our government is trying to give special attention to the participation of women in society and to their education, socio-economic and political awareness. In spite of these efforts, Indian women are not fully empowered. To conduct the present study, Descriptive Survey method was employed. Adolescent Girl's Empowerment scale by Devendra Singh and Alpana Singh (2011) was used to assess this empowerment and t-value was used as statistical technique. Significant difference was found between the groups on the basis of type of school and locality.*

**Keywords: Women Empowerment, Adolescents, Adolescent girls.**

### **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing an individual to think, behave, take action and work in an autonomous way. Women empowerment is only possible if knowledge is provided at early stage of socialization. Therefore, the present effort is one step towards women empowerment by giving knowledge to the adolescent girls of the society. Women Empowerment refers to the creation of an atmosphere for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society. Following are the characteristics of empowered women:

- Having their life with a sense of self-worth, respect and dignity.

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- Having complete control of their life in and outside of their home including workplace.
- Freedom of their own choices and decisions.
- Having equal rights for social and economic righteousness.
- Having equal social status in the society and equal right of determining fiscal and monetary choices.
- Having equal opportunity of education and employment opportunity.
- Having secure and relaxed working atmosphere.

### **IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

Importance of women empowerment can be explained as under:

1. Equally capable and intelligent:

Women are equally competent. These days, modern women are advanced their socio-economic status.

2. Talented:

In the ancient days women did not have right of education like men but now they can explore their talent in every field of life.

3. Development of society:

Empowerment women in the present day not only help their family, but it also helps in developing the society.

4. Economic reimbursement:

Women empowerment helps women to stand on their own legs by earning not only for their family but also for the growth of economy of their country.

5. Reducing domestic violence:

Uneducated women are victim of domestic violence than an educated women.

6. Removing poverty:

Earning by the empowered women is helpful to come out of the present poverty prevailing in the society.

7. National development:

Women are making the nation proud by their wonderful performances in every walk of life.

### **ASPECTS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

Following are the aspects of women empowerment:

1. Social aspect:

It is meant for promoting gender equality which implies a society in which women and men benefit from the same opportunities and rights.

2. Educational aspect:

It means empowering women by making them aware of their rights and developing a confidence to participate fully in the developmental process.

3. Economical and occupational aspect:

It implies reducing financial dependence on their male counterparts.

4. Legal aspect:

It means reducing the gap between what the law prescribes and what actually occurs.

5. Political aspect:

It implies favourable participation by the women in the governance and political decision-making process.

### **CURRENT SCENARIO ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

After independence, various concrete steps were taken for the women empowerment and many economic, political and social provisions were incorporated in Indian constitution. Women in India were provided equal opportunities to explore their skills in every area by law. In present scenario women can contribute their best in areas like education, sports, politics, media, art and culture, service sector and science and technology. Although there are so many constitutional provisions for the upliftment of women in India but due to the deep-rooted patriarchal attitude in the Indian society, women are still victimised, humiliated, tortured and exploited. They are discriminated in the social, economic and educational field. There are so many challenges before the Indian women in the present scenario.

## Adolescence

The term ‘adolescence’ has a broader meaning including mental, emotional and social maturity. To build a better future for all, we must ensure that energy a girl has, not only the right but also the means to get an education realize her dreams. Adolescence is viewed as a transitional period between childhood and adulthood. It is a period of multiple transitions including education, employment. Adolescence stage is the foundation of women empowerment in any society. During this stage women must be empowered so that they can fight with the challenges of their later life.

## JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Are women really empowered? seems to be the question of the decade as this decade saw the rise of many women and the fight for equality seemed to dim in the face of the new empowered female citizen of our nation. In spite of various steps to uplift the women most of the women are facing so many challenges in the form of different types of violence and atrocities. As far as India is concerned it has one of the fastest growing youth population in the world. Adolescents constitute about 22.8% (232 millions) of India’s population. Adolescent girls constitute close to half (111 millions) of this population group. Adolescence is a significant period for mental, emotional and psychological development. Adolescent represents a window of opportunity to prepare for healthy adult life. The choices and opportunities made available to adolescent girls will shape their lives and those around them. Many of the studies have been conducted on women empowerment and but little work has been done on adolescent girl’s empowerment in relation to their locale and type of family. Keeping into mind the prevailing situation the investigator selected the present study on the empowerment of adolescent girls.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- **Empowerment :** In the present study the empowerment of women refers to their level of empowerment in relation to the seven dimensions: Power and entitlements, Autonomy and self-reliance, Decision making, Participation, Capacity building, Social, Political and legal & social awareness and exposure to information media.

- **Adolescent Girls:** In the present study, it refers to girl students studying in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> class.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Following objectives were framed for the present study:

1. To study the difference in the empowerment of adolescent girls belonging to nuclear and and joint families.
2. To study the difference in the empowerment of adolescent girls belonging to rural and urban areas.

### **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

Following were the hypotheses of present study:

1. There exists no significant difference in the empowerment of adolescent girls belonging to nuclear and joint families.
2. There exists no significant difference in the empowerment of adolescent girls belonging to rural and urban areas.

### **METHOD OF THE STUDY**

Descriptive Survey Method was used by the investigator to conduct the present study.

### **SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

For the present study, out of twenty two districts in Punjab, one district i.e. was selected randomly. Then ten secondary schools (Five from urban and five from rural area) were selected randomly from the selected district. There after, ten girl adolescents were selected randomly from each school. In this way, one hundred girl adolescents were included in the sample.

### **TOOLS USED**

Adolescent Girl's Empowerment scale by Devendra Singh and Alpana singh (2011) was used by the investigator

## STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

Mean, Standard deviation and t-test

## DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study was delimited with respect to the following:

1. The present study was delimited to the adolescent girls of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> class.
2. The study was also delimited to Ludhiana district only.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Hypothesis-I 'There exists no significant difference in the empowerment of adolescent girls belonging to nuclear and joint families'

To verify Hypothesis-I, raw scores obtained by adolescent girls from nuclear and joint families on 'Adolescent Girl's Empowerment Scale' were entered into tables. After the tabulation of the scores Mean and S.D. of adolescent girls from nuclear and joint families was calculated and entered in Table -1. Further 't' value was calculated to test the significance of difference between mean scores of adolescent girls from nuclear and joint families.

**Table-1: Difference in the Empowerment of adolescent girls with respect of family**

Type of Family	N	Mean	S.D	't' Value	Level of Significance
Nuclear Family	50	195.94	16.49	2.84	Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level
Joint Family	50	186.32	17.36		

Table-1 reveals that the mean scores of adolescent girls from nuclear families is 195.94 and S.D. is 16.49 and the mean scores of adolescent girls from joint families is 186.32 and S.D. is 17.36. The 't' value is 2.84 which is greater than the corresponding table value at 0.05 and 0.01 level. From this it is inferred that significant difference exists in the empowerment of adolescent girls from nuclear and joint families. It indicates that adolescent girls from nuclear families are more empowered than the adolescent girls from joint families. Hence, Hypothesis-I is rejected.

### Hypotheses-II

‘There exists no significant difference in the empowerment of adolescent girls belonging to rural and urban areas’

To verify Hypothesis-II, raw scores obtained by rural adolescent girls and urban adolescent girls on ‘Adolescent Girl’s Empowerment Scale’ were entered into tables. After the tabulation of the scores Mean and S.D. of rural adolescent girls and urban adolescent girls were calculated and entered in Table -2. Further ‘t’ value was calculated to test the significance of difference between mean scores of rural adolescent girls and urban adolescent girls.

**Table- 2: Difference in the empowerment of adolescent girls with respect to area**

Locale	N	Mean	S.D	‘t’ Value	Level of Significance
Rural	50	189.64	16.21	3.83	Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level
Urban	50	201.68	15.23		

Table-2 reveals that the mean scores of rural adolescent girls is 189.64 and S.D. is 16.21 and the mean scores of urban adolescent girls is 201.68 and S.D. is 15.23. The ‘t’ value is 3.83 which is greater than the corresponding table value at 0.05 and 0.01 level. From this it is inferred that there is significant difference in the empowerment of rural adolescent girls and urban adolescent girls. It indicates that adolescent girls from urban areas are more empowered than the adolescent girls from rural areas. Hence, Hypothesis-II is rejected.

### MAIN FINDINGS

1. There is significant difference in the empowerment of adolescent girls belonging to nuclear and joint families. Adolescent girls from nuclear families are more empowered than the adolescent girls from joint families.
2. There is also significant difference in the empowerment of rural and urban adolescent girls. Adolescent girls from urban areas are found more empowered than the adolescent girls from rural areas.

## EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Women Empowerment has become the key solution to many social problems. It is empowerment of family and a nation or a country. In fact an empowered women is a nation's strength. Hence there is a great need for upliftment of women socially, economically and politically. Following are some suggestions to empower women.

- The social harmful practices such as restrictions on women's mobility and their rights to education, health, civic participation are required to be modified.
- To raise the status of women in the society there should be Special employment for women.
- Health status of women should be improved by providing them proper nutrition and medical facilities.
- Education of women should be given prime importance women empowerment programme.

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