

RESEARCH NOTE :

Relationship of personal, socio-economic and situational characteristics with the empowerment of rural women

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SUMMARY : The present study was conducted in Nagpur district of Vidarbha region, Maharashtra State, with sample size of 120 women respondents from of 12 villages. The data were collected on personal and socio-economic characteristics, empowerment, participation in various activities run by Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal. Out of 10 variables education, caste, land holding, family income were significant in explaining overall empowerment, at 0.01 level of probability. Similarly variable family occupation was also significant in explaining overall empowerment at 0.05 level of probability. All these characteristics were found to be significant in correlation analysis except type of family, size of family, age and extension participation.

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Empowerment, Rural women, Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal

Empowerment is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered concept. Women empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over resources-material, human and intellectual and financial resources and control over decision making in the home community, society, nation and to gain power according to a report of the government of India, empowerment means moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power. In this process, women should be empowered socially, economically, educationally and politically that can help them take self-decision regarding education, mobility, economic independency, political participation, public speaking and

awareness to exercise rights. India has so far passed/ amended several women specific legislation and implemented a plethora of programs and schemes for women's well-being and economic emancipation. Women empowerment concept was introduced at the international women's conference in 1985 at Nairobi. Empowerment of the political dialogue, backed up by access to education.

Women empowerment and their full participation as the basis of equality in all spheres of society are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace. The empowerment process encompasses several mutually reinforcing components but begins with and is supported

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by economic independence which implies access to and control over production resources. According to Karl (1995) empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation to greater decision making and control to trans formative action.

The present study was planned with the following objective to study the relationship of personal, socio-economic and situational characteristics with the empowerment of rural women.

The present study was conducted in Nagpur district of Vidarbha region in Maharashtra State with the help of exploratory research design of social research. The data were collected from 12 villages of Nagpur district, where MAVIM activities were conducted. The list of villages having women self-help groups were obtained from the office of the Nagpur Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal. Thus, the 12 villages were selected purposively where MAVIM based women SHG were established. The data were collected personally by the researcher with the help of structured interview schedule developed for this purpose. The women respondents were contacted at their home or their work place. Total 120 women respondents were interviewed and their responses were recorded in the schedule. For the measurement of empowerment of rural women a scale developed by Tayade and Chole (2007) along with the procedure of scoring was used. The collected data were then analyzed with the help of suitable statistical methods.

Co-efficient of correlation and partial linear regression of independent variables with dependent variable empowerment of rural women is given in Table 1.

From the observation in Table 1, out of 10 variables education, caste, family income, social participation and land holding showed the positive and significant correlation with women empowerment at 0.01 level of probability and variables namely family occupation, showed the positive and significant correlation with women empowerment at 0.05 level of probability. So Null hypothesis for those variables was rejected while accepted for variables age and type of family, they did not establish any positive significant correlation with women empowerment. Remaining variables, size of family and extension participation, had positively non-significant with overall empowerment.

Thus, it can be concluded that education, caste, family income and land holding had positive and

Table 1: Relationship of selected characteristics of respondent with women empowerment

Sr. No.	Variables	Correlation co-efficient 'r' value
1.	Age	-0.108 ^{NS}
2.	Education	0.338**
3.	Caste	0.254**
4.	Type of family	-0.100 ^{NS}
5.	Size of family	0.015 ^{NS}
6.	Family occupation	0.189*
7.	Land holding	0.247**
8.	Family income	0.252**
9.	Social participation	0.235**
10.	Extension participation	0.0171 ^{NS}

* and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively
NS= Non-significant

significant correlation with women empowerment.

It is important to note that education showed the highly significant association with this overall empowerment. This meant that women with higher education had more women empowerment. Income of the family was also significant with over all empowerment, it is because when family income is more women can invest in various income generating activities and achieve a better socio-economic status. Social participation had also positive and significant correlation with empowerment. When social urge of women has been satisfied and their self-confidence will as naturally increased. So, Null hypothesis for those variables rejected while accepted for variables age and type of family as with overall empowerment they did not establish significant correlation with overall empowerment

The present findings are in accordance with the findings reported by Aruna Katole (2001), Gunjkar (2005); Bharathamma *et al.* (2006) and Tayde (2006).

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