

Extent of empowerment and variation caused through self-help group women in Junagadh District of Gujarat

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ABSTRACT

In the present study, attempt has been made to know the extent of empowerment and variation caused by independent variable on independent variable. The study was under-taken in Junagadh district of Gujarat state. Total 200 respondents were selected from nine villages. In light of the objectives, the interview schedule was prepared. The data were collected by personal interview of the respondents. The study revealed that majority (66.50 per cent) of the self-help group women had medium level of empowerment about self help group. The R² value (0.63) expressed the ideas that fourteen variables jointly contributed toward 63.97 per cent of the variation in level of empowerment about self-help group of respondents.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) stands to underline the principle "for the people, by the people, and of the people". Empowerment implies on overall positive change in the physical quality of life and this positive change for the better encompasses economic as well as social aspect. Empowerment, a concept that has become popular in recent times to describe an enabling process for socially marginalized persons and groups to gain advantage and opportunities otherwise non-available to them. Serageldin (1991) describe it as follows:

"The empowerment idea manifests itself at all levels of societal interaction. It is found in giving a voice to the disenfranchised, in allowing the weak and the marginalized to have access to the tools and the materials they need to forge their own destinies".

METHODOLOGY

To measure the women empowerment through SHG, the teacher made scale was developed and used. The scale with various parameters related to empowerment measurement was developed. The empowerment scores of self-help group women were calculated as sum of the correct responses and converted into percentage. The respondents were classified into three

categories based on mean and S.D.

Low empowerment group = < mean – S.D.
Medium empowerment group = mean ± S.D.
High empowerment group = > mean + S.D.

Multiple regression analysis was carried out to study the extent of variation towards empowerment of self-help groups women by various independent variables.

The collected data of respondents' empowerment of self-help group are presented in the Table 1 and 2.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present investigation are presented below:

Extent of empowerment of women through self-help groups:

From Table 1 it is quite clear that majority of self-help group women (66.50 per cent) had medium level of empowerment. Then 17.50 and 16.00 per cent of the respondents gained high and low empowerment through self-help group, respectively.

Hence, it can be concluded that majority (66.50 per cent) of the self-help group women possessed medium extent of empowerment of self-help group. Such a high empowerment observed may be due to training received and participation in group activity. Moreover, they

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Table 1: Empowerment of women through self help groups (n = 200)

Sr. No.	Categories	Knowledge score	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	S.D.
1.	Low empowerment	Below 41.32	32.00	16.00		
2.	Medium empowerment	Between 59.71 to 90.10	133.00	66.50	41.30	9.30
3.	High empowerment	Above 90.10	35.00	17.50		
	Total		200	100		

all were found educated, having good contact with NGOs, more confidence talking to group meeting, regular attendance in meeting and maintaining register regularly. These findings are closely confirmed with the findings of Singh *et al.*, (2007).

The extent of variation caused by dependent variables on extent of empowerment in self-help groups:

Two hundred SHG women were selected randomly for multiple regression. Eight, out of fourteen independent variables, had shown significant association with the extent of empowerment regarding self-help group in zero order correlation. The multiple regression analysis indicated the contribution of eight variables namely, age (X₁), education (X₂), family size (X₃), size of land holding (X₆), training undergone (X₁₀), amount saved and deposited (X₁₁), age of self-help group (X₁₂) and number of members in SHG (X₁₃).

The R² value (0.6397) in Table 2, expressed the ideas that ten variables jointly contributed toward 63.97 per cent of the variation in level of empowerment about self-help

groups of respondents.

It can be inferred on the basis of standard regression co-efficient ‘β’ value given in Table 2, that the order of relative importance (ignoring sign) for these eight variables from the highest to lowest was X₂ education, X₆ size of land holding, X₁₀ training undergone, X₁₂ age of self-help group, X₃ family size, X₁₃ number of members in self-help group, X₁₁ amount of saving and X₁ age, member has substantial effect on empowerment level. The calculated ‘t’ values of the partial regression coefficient were significant at 0.05 levels in case of X₂ education, X₆ size of land holding and X₁₀ training undergone were effect level of empowerment.

The calculated ‘t’ values of the partial regression coefficient were significant at 0.05 level in case of age (X₁), family size (X₃), amount of saving (X₁₁), age of self-help groups (X₁₂) and number of member in self-help group (X₁₃).

The variable education explains highest variation (9.208) as shown in (b x r) value. So, it indicates that education plays most important role towards level of empowerment of the self-help group members. The results

Table 2: Multiple regression analysis between the level of empowerment of women and selected independent variables (n= 100)

Sr. No.	Independent variables	Regression co efficient “b” value	Standard error of regression co efficient	“ t” value for partial ‘b’ (df =189)	Standard regression co efficient “ ” value	Rank	R ²
1.	Age	0.017	0.088	2.017*	0.046	VIII	0.6397
2.	Education	5.414	0.588	9.208**	0.001	I	
3.	Family size	-0.151	0.401	2.378*	0.044	V	
4.	Family type	1.297	1.758	0.738	0.462	XIII	
5.	Annual income	4.893	2.726	1.795	0.076	IX	
6.	Size of land holding	0.074	0.416	3.820**	0.024	II	
7.	Marital status	1.351	0.457	0.927	0.356	X	
8.	Occupation	0.516	0.593	0.871	0.38	XI	
9.	Social participation	0.538	0.631	0.853	0.395	XII	
10.	Training undergone	0.942	1.277	2.738**	0.020	III	
11.	Amount saved and deposited	-0.734	0.499	-2.469*	0.014	VII	
12.	Age of self help groups	-2.708	0.992	-2.728*	0.030	IV	
13.	Number of members in SHG	0.200	0.096	-2.330*	0.047	VI	
14.	Market orientation	0.035	0.115	1.383	0.170	XIV	

* and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 (r= 1.980) and P=0.01 (r= 2.620), respectively.

are also in accordance with the findings of Sinha *et al.* (2003).

Conclusion:

For the above discussion, the self-help group women had medium level of empowerment. The calculated “t” vales of the partial regression coefficient were significant at 0.01 levels in case of education (9.208), size of land holding (3.820) and training undergone (2.738). Such a high empowerment has been observed may be due to training received and participation in group activity.

Moreover, they all were found educated, having good contact with NGOs, more confidence talking to group meeting, regular attendance in meeting and maintaining register regularly.

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