



EFFECT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT ON STATUS AND ATTITUDE OF RURAL WOMEN

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Abstract

The position of rural women in society as well in family; becomes directly proportional to the level of education. Secondly, it is seen that education plays an important role in the enhancement of status/position of women. In the light of facts, it may be concluded that the educated working women have higher position in the Indian society in comparison to non working women. The women are doing jobs due to their individual desires, personal attitudes, the curiosity for getting higher position in society, for utilizing the time, to do the economic help of their families, to take benefit of their education etc. The women of all the caste categories are in the favour of the implementation of the social legislations made for the uplift of the women. The status of rural women is enhanced due to the impact of the social provisions and legislations. Today the constitution grants immense power to the women. She has the right or equal status in social, cultural, economic and political fields. The lag was the will at her own part to claim equality with them. It was the world of her own disbelief and ignorance which always kept her as the shadow of her man. As such the first step towards up gradation is to educate her and made her conscious of her position and status.



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Introduction: Mother is a radiant nurse, an angel of mercy, a patient teacher, a watchful guardian and compassionate attorney and a fountainhead of courage. Post independence sociologists paid attention towards the women who are traditionally backward, exploited and taken as second-rate citizens. This is obstruction and hindrance in the progress and prosperity of family, community and country. The complete social structure is affected. For the study of past enables us to grasp the fundamental psychology behind the present problems and attitudes that uphold or reject them due to which it has come to be what it is.

Hette¹ (1980:162) on the basis of her study has stated that process of change in the status and role of rural women in their families; is the result of **awareness*** created by **modernization**** among them. So that they may be intended to break the traditional barriers of Indian rural society. But **Desai² (1957:253)** writes in the same context that rural women

have achieved their status and prestige by familiar adjustments due to educational ability and hidden individual qualities, that is the result of the accomplishment of their familiar and social duties by them. She further stated that being educated and self depend; the Indian rural women are raising up the socio-economic positions of their families new-a-days. But in the same reference **Seth's opinion**³ is that "the feelings of the educational equality, the changing attitudes and ambitions have motivated them to do services. The element of socio-economic freedom of Indian women is also responsible for the various changes in their life." **Banerji Kanika**⁴ has written that with the processes of modernization, urbanization & industrialization; the attitudes and parameters of Indian women have changed. This had lead to break up the joint family system from rural communities. According to the empirical study of **Shamsuddin**⁵ (1995) due to the increase in education; the Indian rural women are performing their familiar duties properly.

Definitions:

"According to 'The Oxford English Dictionary' Awareness is the state of being consciousness of an individual".⁶

"Modernization involves changes not only in the material culture of a society but also in belief system, values and the way of life on the whole. It is a process of transformation of a society from its backward outlook to a forward looking, progressive and prosperous structural build-up. For conceptual clarity; it changes value orientations, attitudes, motivations and norms".⁷

The Objectives of the Study :

- (1) To study the status and role of women as daughter, wife and mother for shaping and development of society.
- (2) To study the changing attitudes of the respondents towards family and marriage institutions.
- (3) To study the changing life style and other new emerging patterns among rural women.
- (4) To study the impact of urbanization, rural development programmes and social legislations on the women respondents.
- (5) To justify and for the fulfillment of the above objectives of the study problem, the following '**hypotheses**' have been formulated regarding the study :

1.The positive changes are being practised in social and family status of rural women due to the impact of urbanization, rural development programmes and social legislations.

- 2.The social and family position of un-employed rural women is found low in comparison to employed rural women.
- 3.The rural women are found desirous and aware to get employment.
- 4.Now-a-days; the rural women are aware towards their rights.
- 5.The behaviour patterns, life style, capacity to take decision and the feelings of family adjustment have changed among the rural women.
- 6.The feelings to become economic-independent have developed in rural women.

Universe of the Study and Sampling :

For this study “Lucknow” district of U.P. is selected as an universe of the study. According to district directory and block records; The researcher has opted ten villages from Lucknow by the lottery method of ‘Random Sampling’ and 30 women have selected from each village by purposive and irregular marking sample method from the voter lists of the concerning villages. Hence, the researcher has selected 300 rural women in all for the purpose as respondents. A combination of Exploratory and Explanatory research designs for the purpose. As we know that exploratory research design is used to find out the causes of social problem concerned and explanatory research design is used to explain the subject matter regarding the problem under the study. To conduct an study through these research designs, a researcher can use available literature, informal interview, and non participant observation to achieve the objectives of the problem.

Table No. 1 : Distribution of respondents against different variables

1	Age-Group	<u>Upto 25 yrs.</u> 108(36.00)	<u>26-44 yrs.</u> 138(46.00)	<u>45 yrs. & above</u> 54(18.00)	--	Total 300(100.00)
2	Education	<u>Illiterate</u> 27(09.00)	<u>Upto Intermediate</u> 30(10.00)	<u>Graduate/PG</u> 210(70.00)	Well educated/ professional (33(11.00)	Total 300(100.00)
3	Caste category	<u>General</u> 162(54.00)	<u>Backward</u> 39(13.00)	<u>Scheduled</u> 99(33.00)	--	Total 300(100.00)
4	Occupation	<u>Domestic</u> 48(16.00)	<u>Labour</u> 72(24.00)	<u>Service</u> 54(18.00)	<u>Others</u> 126(42.00)	Total 300(100.00)
5	Marital Status	<u>Un-married</u> 90(30.00)	<u>Married</u> 192(64.00)	<u>Others</u> 18(06.00)	--	Total 300(100.00)
6	Income (Rs. Monthly)	<u>Below 3000</u> 60(20.00)	<u>3000-6000</u> 81(27.00)	<u>6000-9000</u> 129(43.00)	<u>9000 & above</u> 30(10.00)	Total 300(100.00)

(The figures shown in brackets are percentage)

Table No. 2 : The Awareness among the respondents towards the Social Legislations

		<u>Aware</u>	<u>Un-aware</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>No response</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	On the basis of Caste Categories	132(44.00)	105(35.00)	47(15.67)	16(05.33)	300(100.00)
2	On the basis of Age Groups	156(52.00)	60(20.00)	84(28.00)	--(00.00)	300(100.00)
3	On the basis of Education	138(46.00)	125(41.67)	32(10.67)	05(01.67)	300(100.00)
4	On the basis of Marital Status	127(42.67)	93(31.00)	75(25.00)	05(01.67)	300(100.00)
5	On the basis of Income Groups	130(43.33)	132(44.00)	33(11.00)	05(01.67)	300(100.00)
6	On the basis of Occupations	146(48.67)	110(36.67)	44(14.66)	--(00.00)	300(100.00)

Table No. 3 : The knowledge among the respondents regarding the Pre-Independence

Social legislations affiliated to the women

S. No.	Pre-independence Social legislations affiliated to the women	Knowledge among respondents (frequencies & %)			No response	Total (%)
		Yes	No	Neutral		
1	Sati Pratha Prohibition Act, 1829	30 (10.00)	195 (65.00)	60 (20.00)	15 (05.00)	300 (100.00)
2	Hindu Widow Re-marriage Act, 1856	51 (17.00)	192 (64.00)	39 (13.00)	18 (06.00)	300 (100.00)
3	Special marriage Act, 1872	-- (00.00)	150 (50.00)	150 (50.00)	-- (00.00)	300 (100.00)
4	Hindu Marriage Special Act, 1923	-- (00.00)	93 (31.00)	195 (65.00)	12 (04.00)	300 (100.00)
5	Hindu Women Property Rights Act, 1937	60 (20.00)	153 (51.00)	87 (29.00)	-- (00.00)	300 (100.00)
6	Child Marriage Restraint (Removal) Act, 1929	93 (31.00)	102 (34.00)	100 (33.33)	05 (01.67)	300 (100.00)
7	Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal or Hindu Women's Right to Separate residence & maintenance : 1946	12 (04.00)	129 (43.00)	156 (52.00)	03 (01.00)	300 (100.00)

(Note : The figures shown in parentheses are percentage)

Table No. 4: The family status of married respondents

S. No.	Status of respondents	frequency	percentage	Special regarding family and education	Remark
1	(a) Very Strong	39	13.00%	Working/well-educated	
	(b) Strong	165	55.00%	Educated family	
	(c) Weak	63	21.00%	Farmers/Uneducated	
	(d) Very Weak	27	09.00%	Laborers/illiterates	
	(e) Neglected	06	02.00%	Widows/ divorced	
	Total	300	100%		

2	Opinion is considered for important family affairs as- Family budget, Marriage, Religious works, Rituals/Sanskar,Liking/option/desires etc.			
	(a) Yes	204	68.00%	Working/well-educated
	(b) No	51	17.00%	Uneducated /housewife illiterate/Widows/divorced
	(c) Neutral	45	15.00%	
	Total	300	100%	

Table No. 5: Why do the Rural women want to become economically self-depend?''*

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Responses according to the respondents</i>	<i>Frequencies (amongst 300)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Not to be financially supported by Husband/Parents/Guardians/family members	242	80.66%
2	For the smooth & proper running of family	273	91.00%
3	To be self-depend and better carrier opportunities for children	186	62.00%
4	To take benefit of education/self motivation	105	35.00%

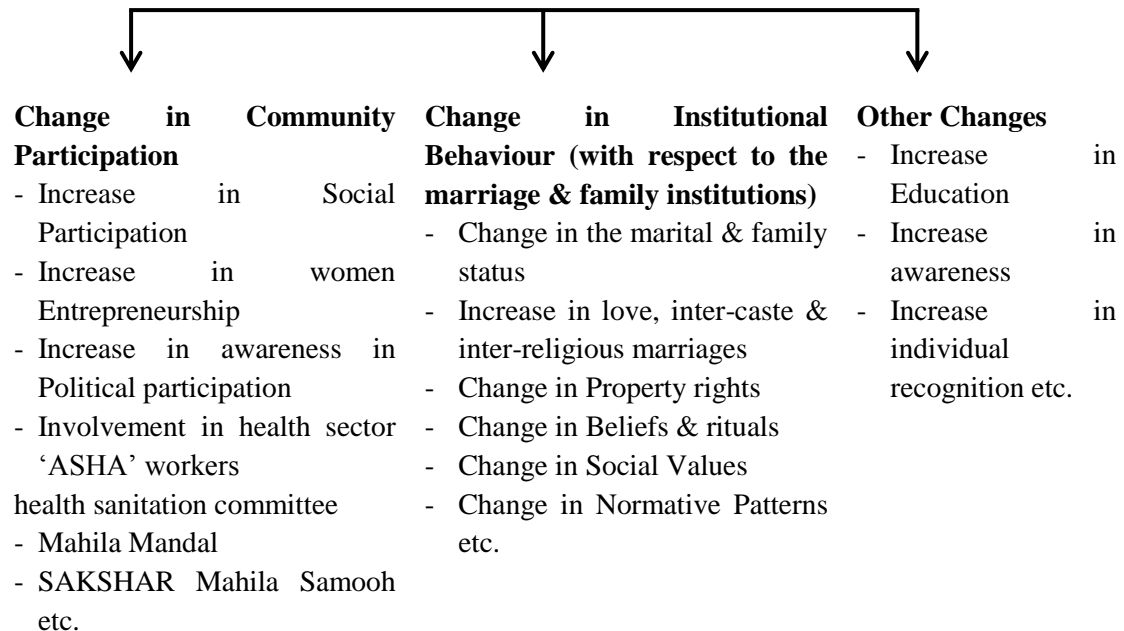
Discussion, conclusions and results:

The above tables depicts that the respondents have no knowledge or lack of knowledge regarding the pre-independence social legislations made for uplift of the women. . The level of knowledge is found less regarding the un-touchability (offences) Act, 1955 i.e. in 40% respondents; The dowry prohibition Act 1961 (Article:10) in 51% & Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 1986 in (61%); The protection of civil right Act, 1976 in (59%); The immoral Traffic Prevention (Amendment) Act, 1986 in 44%; The 73th Constitutional Amendment Act 1993 providing reservation for the women in Panchayat Raj in 42% and the Family violence Act, 2006 in only 36% rural women respondents. It is evident that there is lack of knowledge regarding the social legislations, amendments; Acts, and constitutional provisions made for the uplift of rural women especially. Among 300 respondents 175(58.33%) respondents have represented their attitudes in the favour of the social legislations, 120(40%) respondents in disfavour; while only 5 respondents did not reply in this concern. **As a result, it is clear that the women of all the caste categories are in the favour of the implementation of the social legislations made for the uplift of the women.**

The figures and percentage of the above table reveal that, out of 300 respondents, 243(81%) respondents have accepted that the knowledge of social legislations; is essential to improve the position of women of rural communities; while a few i.e. 57(19%) respondents have replied in negative. **This fact shows that the knowledge of the social legislations is essential to improve/reform the position of the women of rural communities.** The

following table focuses on the reasons responsible for the lack of knowledge towards social legislations among the rural women.

The various changes & responsible factors for changing the position of the rural women may be observed; as given in the following chart:



All the hypotheses formulated regarding the study problem; are found empirically and statistically true and significant; therefore in the light of the facts and findings it may be concluded that :

- (1) The positive changes are being observed in social and family status of rural women due to the impact of urbanization, rural development programs and social legislations.
- (2) The social and family position of un-employed rural women is found low in comparison to employed rural women.
- (3) The rural women are found desirous and aware to get employment.
- (4) The awareness regarding to get education is found among the rural women.
- (5) The attitudes of rural women are changing regarding the utility of education.
- (6) The joint families are disorganizing due to the impact of urbanization and social legislations in rural society.
- (7) The behavior patterns, life style, capacity to take decision and the feelings of family-adjustment have changed among the rural women.
- (8) Now-a-days, tradition and modernity are in transition in rural society.
- (9) Due to the impact of urbanization and untouchability act: 1956, the feelings of un-touchability are abolishing among the ruralists.

- (10) The rate of physical assaults and mental exploitation have decreased on rural women due to the effectiveness of 'The domestic violence act- 2006'.
- (11) The cases of atrocities (abusing, assaults, rape, murder), divorce and dowry-exploitation have increased in rural communities due to urbanization.

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