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## EDUCATION A STEPPING STONE FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND GENDER EMPOWERMENT

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### ABSTRACT:

Education is the key factor for women empowerment, prosperity, development and welfare. Discrimination of women from womb to tomb is well known. There is continued inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors and women oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be

empowered in all walk of life. In order to fight against the socially constructed gender biases, women have to swim against the system that requires more strength. Such strength comes from the process of empowerment and empowerment will come from the education. And rural development will come from women empowerment. Totally 455 women respondents between 20-50 age group were selected for the study. Findings of the study shows that educational qualification play significant role in women empowerment and it concludes that if women's empowerment is to be effected, it can be carried out only through the medium of education. Hence, it is of foremost importance to raise the level of education amongst women.

**KEYWORDS:** Gender Equality and Gender Empowerment.

### INTRODUCTION :

The role of women's education is illustrated and how it helps to increase women's empowerment. In women's empowerment, women's education is considered as the key factor for the empowerment. Educating a female is a might tool. Empirical researches find a Strong correlation can be observed in regard to factors related to education and empowerment. It is noted that better employment opportunities are provided by

higher level education and it enhances income. In other point of view, for similar reasons, employment is argued to improve women's empowerment. This gives freedom to women to access their own earnings or contributions to family income that in turn increases them to understand about money, it also grants power to contribute in financial assessment and financial freedom. Education has a significant impact on access to on alternative resources, like extra-domestic work and larger financial gain. Like this, educated women have demonstrated a better ability to keep control of their husband's

expenditures and to maintain their own economic independence, to improve household management, and to save money and generally contribute more to the family income pools per Chaudry's view.

Directorate of Census Operations, Tamil Nadu, released Census 2011; it states the population of Madurai is 3,038,252 of which male 1,526,475 and female 1,511,777. As per the census Madurai average literacy rate is

83.45 compared to 77.82 of 2001. In this glance, the gender wise literacy is male 89.72 and female literacy is 77.16.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to V. Palanikumar (2019), despite those women still suffer from discrimination and exploitation and victimization. Women empowerment can influence not only their own lives but also the lives of men and children. Women Empowerment is nothing but recognition of women's basic human rights and creating an environment whereby they are treated as equal to men. Women empowerment is legal, social, political, and economic which requires to be enhanced. Need for empowerment take place due to centuries of supremacy and prejudice done by male folk towards women. Women are the suppressed lot. They are the targets of varied types of violence and discriminatory practices done by men all over the world.

K.V. Sundaram & Nangia (1985) affirm that literacy is the crucial indicator of the development of a nation because it reflects the quality of life and level of awareness of the people. Patel & Dighe (1997) wrote: Education is an instrument to enable women against imbalance and foul play in the public arena. Bhattacharjee (2001), Educate one guy, you train one person, but teach a girl and also you train an entire civilization. Syed Naushad Ahmad and Enayat Bano (2019) cited Swami Vivekananda and said: It is excruciating to consider the welfare of the world without the state of ladies is upgraded. It is troublesome for a fowl to fly on just a single wing.

Mansoor Ahmad and Shugufta Akhter (2019) note: Education is one of the most important indicators of social status of a community. Education makes human beings rational and promotes Social development. The history of formal education is only a few centuries old. But Titumir & Rahman (2011) said dropout of females from the [education] system is a major concern and it creates a gender gap in literacy.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Presumption of the Study

It is accepted that different gender equality indicators empowered Gender equality and leads to socio economic development.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the relationship between respondents' level of opinion towards women education and their family size.
- To study the relationship between the respondents' level of opinion towards women education their family income.
- To study the relationship between respondents' level of opinion towards women education and their age

### Method

The researcher utilizes to research the relationship between gender equality and women education. "A study has been done to study the opinion of women towards gender equality and women education.

### Research Design

The researcher would adopt the descriptive research design using methodology of quantitative study tool.

### POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population for this study includes women in and around Madurai, Tamil Nadu. The sample size is n=500.

The data collected was coded and analyzed using the SPSS Software 16.0 version. The data was subjected to statistical analysis - Frequency, Percentage, to know the opinion of women in gender equality.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Educational Qualification wise Classification**

<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
UG	140	28.0
PG and Above	147	29.4
Professional	102	20.4
Others	111	22.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Out of 500 respondents of the study, 147 (29.4%) respondents' educational qualification is Post Graduate (PG) and above, 140 (28%) of them are pursued under graduate (UG) degrees, 111 (22.2%) of them are pursued other educational degrees and the rest of the respondents i.e. 102 (20.4%) of them are completed professional degrees.

**Table 2: Family Income**

<b>Family Income</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below Rs.20000	186	37.2
Rs. 21000 to Rs. 60000	161	32.2
Rs. 61000 and above	153	30.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

The above table consists of the percentage analysis on the respondents' family income and the results shows that nearly one third of them 186 (37.2%) have the family income below Rs.20000. Out of 500 respondents 161 (32.2%) have family income between Rs. 21000 to Rs. 60000 and remaining of the respondents are i.e. 153 (30.6%) have family income Rs. 61000 and above

**Table 3: Family Size**

<b>Family Size</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below 3	113	22.6
4	243	48.6
Above 5	144	28.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

The above table consists of the percentage analysis on the respondents' family size and the results shows that 113 (22.6%) have below three family members. Out of 500 respondents nearly half of them i.e., 243 (48.62%) have four family members. Nearly one third of the respondents i.e. 144 (28.8%) have 5 to 9 members in their family.

**Table 4: Education and Level of Gender equality**

Gender Equality		Frequency (N)	Mean	Statistical Value	Statistical Results
Educational Qualification	UG	140	138.75	'F' ratio 43.213	P <0.01 (.00) Sig
	PG and above	147	138.45		
	Professionals	102	136.37		
	Others	111	133.36		

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference among UG, PG and above, professionals and other respondents regarding their level of Gender equality.

The above table shows that  $p < 0.01$  and the null hypothesis is rejected at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, there is a significant difference among UG, PG and above, professionals and other respondents regarding their level of Gender equality. It shows that depends on the educational qualification also level of Gender equality differs

**Table 5: Relationship between the Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents and their Level of Education**

		Age	Family Size	Family Income
<b>Women Education</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.206**	.134**	.106*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.003	.018
	N	500	500	500

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table-5 includes the correlation test results on the relationship between socio-demographic profile of the respondents such as age, family size and family monthly income and their level of opinion towards women education.

From the above table it is vivid that there is a strong significant relationship between respondents' level of opinion towards women education and their age at 0.01 level of significance as p value is **.000** and also the relationship between these variables is negatively correlated as  $r = -.206$ . Hence, the respondents' level of opinion towards women education increases when their age decrease and vice versa.

The test result indicates that there is a strong significant relationship between respondents' level of opinion towards women education and their family size at 0.01 level of significance as p value is **.003** and also the relationship between these variables is positively correlated as  $r = .134$ . Hence, the respondents' level of opinion towards women education increases when their family size increases and vice versa. It is inferred that when the respondents have more number of family members their level of opinion towards women education is also increases.

Besides, the respondents' level of opinion towards women education has significant relationship with their family income at 0.05 level of significance as p value is **.018** and also the relationship between these variables is positively correlated as  $r = .106$ . Hence, the respondents' level of opinion towards women education increases when their family income increases and vice versa. It is derived from the correlation test results that respondents' level of opinion towards women education has significant relationship with age, family size and family monthly income.

**CONCLUSION**

This study was conducted in Madurai District, Tamil Nadu state, India, as of the above result, the respondents' level of opinion towards women education increases when their age decrease the respondents' level of opinion towards women education increases when their family size increases. It is

inferred that when the respondents have more number of family members their level of opinion towards women education is also increases. The respondents' level of opinion towards women education increases when their family income increases. It is derived from the correlation test results that respondents' level of opinion towards women education has significant relationship with age, family size and family monthly income.

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