

Self-awareness: An Analysis of Middle Class Educated Indian Women from the Dindigul District in Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT The present study examines the level of self-awareness among middle class educated Indian women from the Dindigul District in Tamil Nadu. A cluster of 40 women was selected from the Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu in the age group of 25-45 years. Percentage analysis through graphical illustrations was espoused to illustrate the significant and non-significant differences. Analysis revealed significant differences between housewives and workingwomen for ignorance and fear, self-analysis, and tolerance and adjustment but non-significant for education, self-protection and self-confidence. The score total means percentage was 51.6 percent and standard deviation 6.8 percent for attitude of women for self-awareness. Specifically, the Self-Help Group (SHG) movement of Tamil Nadu has increased the awareness level among educated urban and rural middle class Indian women economically and made them personally confident. This paper focuses on self-awareness through women's self-analysis from various attitudes. Essentially education leads to self-confidence and social empowerment for women.

INTRODUCTION

In the current scenario, women need to balance personal interests and family responsibilities, and the obligation to live in an extended family. Dynamically, women have been amplifying into various fields. Social empowerment means that the woman should get an important place in her family and society, and should have a right to enable her to make use of available resources. It has resulted in developing self-confidence, self-esteem and self-respect also, and uplifted the living conditions of the poor household women (Saravanan 2016). The SHG helps women in participating in their family affairs as well as in the society (Vinodhini and Vijayanthi 2016). The activities of Self Help Groups (SHGs) have emerged as a sustainable approach to make credit facilities available to the poor at their door step in a simple and manner (Chutia 2015). Na-

tional mission for empowerment of women was introduced and declared by the government of India, on International Women's Day in 2010 with the aim to increasing and improving overall processes that promote all round development of women (Chaudhari and Mhaske 2017). Comprehensiveness and ability make them more sentient and perceptive in most of the moments in their life. Collectively and positively middle class educated Indian women in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu have been avowed strongly the significance of sufficient education, self-protection and self-confidence. Nowadays, women have the opportunity to expose their talents through education and they can get rid of their ignorance and fear through self-analysis with the help of tolerance and adjustment in their life professionally and personally. Women's potentialities and their significant role can be realized through their self-awareness and self-confidence, which emerge from self-analysis of their emotional turmoil.

Objective of the Study

The present research was undertaken to understand the augmentation of self-awareness among housewives and working middle class educated Indian women in Dindigul District,

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Tamil Nadu. The following objectives are focused on in this paper:

- * To study the awareness level on ignorance and fear, education, self-protection, tolerance and adjustment, self-analysis and self-confidence among housewives and workingwomen of middle class educated Indian women in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu.
- * To compare the awareness level among housewives and workingwomen of middle class educated Indian women in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu.
- * To bring out the potentialities of women, SHG enhance the mental stamina that gear towards improving the status of women and they can be economically and personally confident to prove the social empowerment.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Percentage analysis through graphical representations was adopted for present study. The sample consisted of 40 women of 25-45 years of age with equal number of housewives and workingwomen of middle class educated Indian women in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu. Self-awareness was assessed by graphical representation in each attitude, such as, ignorance and fear, education, self-protection, tolerance and adjustment, self-analysis and self-confidence. All the respondents were personally approached and were explained the purpose of the study. The responses that were given by the respondents were scored in all the attitudes of self-awareness. The sums of scores in different attitudes provide measure of overall self-awareness among middle class educated Indian women in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu.

RESULTS

Considerately, there are six bar charts used to analyze and represent the result, on the basis of significant and non-significant differences. The profiles of the sampled housewives versus

workingwomen are given in 6 bar charts. Results reveal that majority of the respondents have strongly agreed with the attitudes of education, self-protection, and self-confidence followed by agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Significant differences were found between two groups regarding ignorance and fear self-analysis, tolerance and adjustment but non-significant differences were found on education, self-protection and self-confidence. The score total means was 51.6 percent and standard deviation 6.8 percent on attitude of women self-awareness.

Table 1 shows the four levels of ignorance and fear among housewives versus workingwomen. In general, forty percent housewives strongly agree that women have ignorance and fear, and forty-five percent workingwomen strongly agree that women have ignorance and fear. Average percentage is 42.5 percent. Then, fifty-five percent housewives agree that women have ignorance and fear, and forty-five percent workingwomen agree that women have ignorance and fear. Average percentage is fifty percent. At last one can see there is only five percent of workingwomen strongly disagree with this attitude and there is a slight variation between agree and disagree on this issue. Workingwomen stated strongly that women have ignorance and fear but comparing with workingwomen, fifty-five percent housewives are agreeing that ignorance and fear are still prevailing among women.

Table 2 explains the four levels of education among housewives versus workingwomen. Overall, sixty percent housewives strongly agree that women must have education. Again sixty percent workingwomen strongly agree that women certainly have education. Average percentage is sixty percent for education. Thirty percent housewives agree with the statement. Forty percent workingwomen agree to have education. Average percentage is thirty-five percent for education. Five percent of housewives disagree with the statement and the average is very low that is 2.5 percent. Then five percent of

Table 1: Ignorance and fear – housewife vs workingwoman vs combined (in percentage)

Category	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Grand total
House wife (20/40 = 50%)	40	55	5	0	20
Working woman (20/40 = 50%)	45	45	5	5	20
House wife + working woman (20+20 =40 = 100%)	42.5	50	5	2.5	40

Table 2: Education – housewife vs workingwoman vs combined (in percentage)

Category	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Grand total
House wife (20/40 = 50%)	60	30	5	5	20
Working woman (20/40 = 50%)	60	40	0	0	20
House wife + working woman (20+20=40=100%)	60	35	2.5	2.5	40

housewives strongly disagree with the statement. So the average is again 2.5 percent. Both housewives and workingwomen have strongly agreed that education is must for all women, which lights their life, family and the society.

Table 3 illustrates the four levels of self-protection among housewives versus workingwomen. Habitually, fifty percent housewives strongly agree that women can protect themselves. Yet again, fifty percent workingwomen strongly agree that women certainly have self-protection. So the average here is equal. Thirty-five percent housewives agree with the statement. Forty-five percent workingwomen agree that women can have self-protection. The average here is forty percent. Ten percent of housewives disagree with the statement and five percent of workingwomen disagreed. The average score is 7.5 percent. Then five percent of housewives strongly disagree with the statement. So the average is again 2.5 percent. Both housewives and workingwomen have strongly agreed that self-protection is natural, potential and indispensable to all women.

Table 4 recites the four levels of tolerance and adjustment among housewives versus workingwomen. Forty-five percent of housewives strongly agree that women ought to have tolerance and adjustment. Forty percent workingwomen

strongly agree that women must have tolerance and adjustment. The average is 42.5 percent. Forty-five percent of housewives have agreed with the statement. Again, forty-five percent workingwomen have agreed to have tolerance and adjustment. So the average is equal. Five percent of housewives disagree with the statement and ten percent workingwomen have disagreed on this statement. Average is 7.5 percent. Ten percent of housewives strongly disagree with the statement. No workingwoman strongly disagreed. So the average is again five percent. At last, there is significant difference between agree and disagree on this issue. Housewives and workingwomen have agreed that tolerance and adjustment are necessary for basic survival to all women in the society. But, there is a slight variation between agree and disagree on this attitude. Nowadays, workingwomen are rather independent, whereas housewives strongly agreed on this attitude, as they are not having economical independence.

Table 5 exemplifies the four levels of self-analysis among housewives versus workingwomen. Forty-five percent of housewives strongly agree that women can come out of their emotional sufferings through self-analysis. Compared with housewives, fifty percent of workingwomen have strongly agreed on self-analysis. So the

Table 3: Self-protection – housewife vs workingwoman vs combined (in percentage)

Category	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Grand total
House wife (20/40 = 50%)	50	35	10	5	20
Working woman (20/40 = 50%)	50	45	5	0	20
House wife + working woman (20+20 =40 = 100%)	50	40	7.5	2.5	40

Table 4: Tolerance and adjustment – housewife vs workingwoman vs combined (in percentage)

Category	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Grand total
House wife (20/40 = 50%)	40	45	5	10	20
Working woman (20/40 = 50%)	45	45	10	0	20
House wife + working woman (20+20 =40 = 100%)	42.5	45	7.5	5	40

average score is 47.5 percent. Forty percent of housewives agree with the statement. Forty percent of workingwomen also have agreed better to have self-analysis. Then the average is equal. Ten percent of housewives have disagreed with the statement and the average is 7.5 percent. Five percent of housewives as well as workingwomen have strongly disagreed with the statement. So the average score is again five percent. There is a significant variation between agree and disagree on this issue. Workingwomen stated strongly than the housewives. Self-analysis is a healthy way for all women to get rid of their emotional sufferings perpetually.

Table 6 articulates the four levels of self-confidence among housewives versus workingwomen. Fifty percent of housewives strongly agree that women ought to have self-confidence. Again fifty percent workingwomen also strongly agree that women can absolutely have self-confidence in them. So the average is fifty percent. Thirty-five percent of housewives have agreed with the statement. Forty-five percent workingwomen have agreed to have self-confidence. Average is forty percent. Five percent of housewives disagree with the statement and five percent of workingwomen have disagreed with this statement. Average is five percent. Ten percent of housewives strongly disagree with the statement. No workingwoman strongly disagreed. So the average is again five percent. Both housewives and workingwomen have strongly agreed that self-confidence is a reliable trait for all women.

On the basis of the above analysis it can be concluded that significant difference exist between housewives and workingwomen regarding ignorance and fear, self-analysis, tolerance and adjustment but non-significant differences were found for education, self-protection and self-confidence. Workingwomen stated strongly than the housewives with ignorance and fear are still prevailing in the Indian society. Though housewives are aware about women's ignorance and fear, they do not have opportunity to emerge their proficiency. Workingwomen stated strongly

than the housewives that self-analysis is a healthy way to all women to get rid of their emotional sufferings in the modern world. Housewives and workingwomen have agreed that tolerance and adjustment are necessary for basic survival of all women in the society. Housewives affirmed strongly than the workingwomen that tolerance and adjustment are incredible quality that every woman must possess to have a happy and peaceful life. SHG offer excellent avenues to promote awareness about social evils, multiple stakeholders including government agencies. Most important consequence of the SHG movement is on the psychological domain. This exposure instilled in these women a new-found confidence. SHGs are basically shaped for the purpose of empowering women by enabling them to take decisions regarding their lives and enhance their status.

Non-significant differences were found for education, self-protection and self-confidence among housewives and workingwomen. Ever since, education places a vital role in changing the women's world. This has been strongly agreed by both the categories. Self-protection has again got an admirable response naturally from both the categories that whether housewives or workingwomen, they all are very strong enough to face psychologically whatever comes in their life. Both housewives as well as workingwomen have strongly agreed that they can have self-awareness, self-reliance and also they are capable of giving confidence to others.

DISCUSSION

This paper intends to analyze the self-awareness level of middle class educated Indian women in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu collectively and positively. It is noted that the significance of sufficient education, self-protection and self-confidence leads to women's empowerment is not just an outcome, but also a process. Social status of women has changed and their economic status has also improved. Economic

Table 6: Self-confidence – housewife vs workingwoman vs combined (in percentage)

Category	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Grand total
House wife (20/40 = 50%)	50	35	5	10	20
Working woman (20/40 = 50%)	50	45	5	0	20
House wife + working woman (20+20 =40 = 100%)	50	40	5	5	40

activities like income, expenditure and savings of SHGs are quite successful (Vinodhini and Vijayanthi 2016). Attitude on education among housewives and workingwomen overall percent is sixty. This shows that housewives strongly agree that women must have education. Again sixty percent workingwomen strongly agree that women certainly have education. This analysis illustrates that education for women is a key to accelerate women empowerment in the society.

The Government of India released INR 11,486 crore under the program, bank credit mobilization is INR 19,017 crore, and total subsidy provided is INR 9,318 crore. The program helped many participants in improving their economic conditions (Saravanan 2016). The impact on their lives is not just an economic one, but gaining more self-confidence is often a more lasting achievement that forms the basis for social and economic improvements. This research articulates the level of self-awareness and confidence among housewives and workingwomen. Fifty percent of housewives strongly agree that women ought to have self-confidence. Again fifty percent workingwomen also strongly agree that women can absolutely have self-confidence whatever comes in their life. So the average is fifty percent. This proves that both categories have self-confidence equally to prolong their personal as well as their educational, economic and public life. In particular, SHG has given more confidence to rural women to tackle their financial conditions.

This analysis exhibits the significant difference existing between housewives and workingwomen regarding ignorance and fear, self-analysis, tolerance and adjustment but non-significant differences were found on education, self-protection and self-confidence. The education of women is the most prevailing tool of change condition in society, and it also brings lower levels of inequalities and improving women status within the family and society, to encourage the education of women everywhere and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, especially women education established school, colleges and university in the state (Chaudhari and Mhaske 2017). However, there was indication of such changes beginning for instance. Women play a great vital role in the overall progress and development of a country, as they represent half the human resources of nations.

Generally, women are as efficient as men and contribute much to the economic development. In particular, Self-help Groups contribute to social and economic development. SHGs are facilitated to achieve independence in the lives of its members. Further, SHGs are formed to improve their mental caliber through proper awareness. Thus, SHGs play a major role in women empowerment to channelize micro-finance through bank linkages in collaboration with NGOs and contribute for the upliftment of the rural economy. SHG phenomenon brings the following qualities of group consciousness among women, sense of belongingness, self-confidence and self-reliance. The progress of any nation is inevitably linked with the social and economic plight of women in a particular country. Participation in SHGs can bring enviable changes and enhancement in the standard of living of women, which could be their empowerment in poor and developing nations Suguna and Suresh Kumar (2017). Women fervently desire to be constantly bold and smart in each condition that relates to their education, self-protection and self-confidence do influence the ways in which women perceive their identity through self-analysis and self-awareness.

In her research paper, Santhi (2017) merely illustrates that education for women creates lots of prospects. With the passage of time and process of development the world went through significant changes and transitions but role of men in controlling the affairs of the family community and state remained significant in many parts of the world. Opportunities for employment is increasing based upon increasing education skills among women. Women have started to enter armed forces, electronics, textiles, medical specialists, banking and financial experts and visibility in professions and blue color occupations is mainly due to improved levels of education. Educated urban and rural middle class Indian women have accelerated their self-awareness and self-confidence through their education and SGHs, which lead to women empowerment and social empowerment.

CONCLUSION

Education for women is an important determinant of their enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence, serving to build an optimistic image, mounting their ability to think critically, fos-

tering better decision-making and help them make more informed choices about healthiness, employment and even the edification of their children. Socioeconomic empowerment has been considered significant for overall development. Women's empowerment is evidently necessary for escalating socioeconomic conditions of women in the society. As SHGs, this paper clutches with the prevailing attitude strongly on education, which provides potency to every women in the society to be confident enough. Yet to go on, SHGs as well as self-awareness among educated middle class women in Dindigul, Tamil Nadu and also in India made noteworthy impact on women empowerment. Education will not only ensure more participation in developmental processes but also enhance awareness of rights and entitlements in the social order, so that women can augment their involvement in society on an equal footing in all areas. This paper would energetically enhance the mental stamina of women and that gear towards improving the status of women. Overall, self-awareness level of middle class educated Indian women has been better at present.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis, it is indicated that education was found to be an important influential factor for self-awareness and SHG is for entrepreneurship. Their education, self-protection and self-confidence do influence the ways in which women recognize their identity. Distinctively, the Self-Help Group (SHG) movement of

Tamil Nadu has created social capital and networks, and increased the awareness level among educated urban and rural middle class Indian Women economically and individually confident. So the government should create awareness of its importance to the women, through programs that insist eradication of ignorance and fear and women can create a healthy, prolific and an empowered nation.

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