

“Empowerment of woman through Economic Independence in Slums of Lucknow City”

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Abstract

Empowering women is a crucial strategy for improving their socioeconomic circumstances. The first step towards women's empowerment should be their involvement in all aspects of society. One important factor in determining this is education. To become empowered, in today's world, women must be informed about their rights and benefits. Education has the power to make people more conscious of their social standing. Unfair treatment and distinction inflicted upon them. In selected slums of Lucknow city women plays important role in economic development and in political, social, religious aspects etc. The present study is tries to analyze the importance of women in decision making in regard to freedom of movement, purchasing home items, family planning, family matters etc. This study examines the characteristics (particularly the independent variables) that might affect women's decision-making power at the household level in slums. In the present work both primary and secondary data have been used. The study highlights that status of women is very poor, as they are dependent on men's income and their occupational status is not equal to men. Therefore, they cannot take decision in the economic matters at family level.

KEYWORDS: *empowerment, socio-economic condition, decision making, freedom, and family planning.*

Introduction

Empowerment of women is a difficult yet achievable belief it encompasses economic, physical, social, and political aspects. The strengthening of women as equal partners in all spheres of life has gained international attention, especially in the wake of the United Nations' proclamation of 1976–1985 as the decade for women. Women empowerment means giving powers to women. The word 'women empowerment' essentially means that the women have the power to regulate their day to day lives in the social, political, and economic terms, a power which enables them to take decision relevant to their daily life. The present study highlights the status of women in slums in terms of the ability to take decision in personal and family matters.

The frequent Prevalence of violence by husband against his wife shows women's status at the household level (Kishor & Johnson, 2004). Studies have shown that in places where violence rates were high, women's status was found to be low (Goetz & Gupta, 1996). Women in the age group less than 25 years did not have freedom of decision making and had less freedom of movement in the slum community (Donta et al., 2016).

Women are empowered when they make decisions for themselves about their own education, engagement, mobility, economic independence, public speaking, understanding and exercising their rights, political involvement, and a host of other issues. Women's empowerment, to put it briefly, is the removal of personal barriers.

Kishor and Johnson's (2004) multi-country data analysis of the Demographic Health Survey (DHS) showed that there is a consistent correlation between husbands' controlling behaviors and the likelihood of violence across all countries, and that the likelihood of violence rises quickly as the husband's controlling behaviors increase. Research findings also indicated that women's employment level and husbands' alcohol use were risk variables linked to domestic violence (Eswaran & Malhotra, 2011; Kimuna, Djamba, Ciciurkaite, & Cherukuri, 2013; Kishor & Johnson, 2004; Krishnan et al., 2010). With a few exceptions, the majority of these research point to the significance that empowerment plays in shielding women from experiencing violence. To suggest directions of relationship, this has to be explored further. In light of this, the paper aims to analyze the socioeconomic factors affecting women's standing in a slum neighborhood and evaluates the relationship between spouse abuse and women's empowerment within that community.

Economic growth and women's empowerment are intimately related. Social inequality can be reduced via development, but gender inequality can only be reduced by guaranteeing women's involvement. For women to maintain their rights, take charge of their lives, and carve out a position for themselves in society, they must actively participate in the economy. Ensuring the participation of women can lead to an inclusive development. Amartya Sen created the phrase "missing women" to describe the prejudice and inequality against women in this setting, and it perfectly captures our culture. The persistence of gender inequality in societies is the main topic of this phrase. According to a World Bank report (2011), six million women go missing every year; of these twenty-three percent are

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never born, ten percent go missing in early childhood, twenty-one percent in the reproductive years, and thirty-eight percent above the age of 60.

Objectives

- To study status of women in in selected slums of Lucknow city.
- To examine the involvement of women in decision making through economic independency in selected slums of Lucknow city.

Methodology

Sources of data

In the present work both primary and secondary data has been used. The source of primary data is questionnaire schedule distributed among sampled respondents and through field observations. While the secondary information was gathered from different sources like books, records, journals, National and International reports, reviews, websites and Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Report of the Committee on Slum Statistics/Census of Lucknow city.

Sampling and collection of data

Lucknow city is divided into 6 Zones out of which 4 Zones has been selected for data collection. From Zone 2 Mawaiyya have been selected which have population of around 4200 slum dwellers. From Zone 3 Madiyaon which have population of 6000 slum dwellers, from Zone 4 Chinhat Bazar – which have population of 7800 slum dwellers and from zone 5 Amausi which have population of around 7800 slum dwellers. From these selected 125 women have been interviewed from each slum.

Method and techniques of analysis

Based on the objectives and problems of the study, the data are processed and analyzed through Microsoft excel 7. The collected data is further analyzed and interpreted with the help of statistical tools like percentages & average.

Study area

Lucknow city, the capital of Uttar Pradesh lies in the vicinity of Gomti River. It is located between 26°30' to 27°10' North latitude and between 80°30' to 81°13' East Longitude and has a mean elevation of 123m above the mean sea level. Lucknow city is surrounded by Barabanki in the east, by Unnao in the West, Raebareli in the South, and Sitapur & Hardoi in the North.

Lucknow is also the administrative headquarters of its nearby District and Division. It is India's tenth most populous urban agglomeration and eleventh most populated city. Lucknow has long been regarded as a cosmopolitan metropolis that thrived as the artistic and cultural centre of North India as well as the residence of the Nawabs throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. It still has significant importance as a hub for politics, business, education, technology, design, aerospace, finance, pharmaceuticals, culture, tourism, music, and poetry.

Lucknow is a land locked city. Lucknow have extreme type of continental climate and have prevalence of continental air because of its distance from the sea. In Lucknow, the winters are very cold, and the summers are scorching. In summers, the temperature may rise up to about 46 degrees Celsius, though the average temperature is around 38-39 degree Celsius. In winters the temperature may fall to 3-4 degree.

Lucknow city is having a total of 609 slums in its municipal jurisdiction area. Out of which 502 are notified slums and 107 are non-notified slums (NBO, 2011) The total slum population in the city is 7,72, 807 which constitutes about 27% of city population. The total number of slum households in the city is 1,48, 117 which constitutes about 31% of total city households. This increasing number of slums population is putting lots of pressure on the infrastructure, employment and maintenance of sanitation and hygiene.

Observation and discussion

The profile of women respondents by age, religion, social caste group, education, occupation & violence against women is shown in Table-1. Below table shows that out of total respondents 20.6 % are in below 30 age group, 43.0% are in the age group of 30-40, 17.6% are in the age group of 40-50 and 18.8% group of 50 years and above. Religion wise distribution of respondents in the slum shows majority of them are Hindu 66.2% followed by 19% Muslim, 12.0% Sikh and 2.8% Christian. In social caste group wise 36.5% respondents belong to General, 36.0% belongs to other backward class (OBC), 24.8% Schedule Caste (SC) and 2.7% are Schedule Tribes (ST). According to education 55.3% women of selected slums are found to be illiterate, only 07.6% of respondents said that they have received education up to primary level, 14.0% can write their names and 23.1% respondents can count numbers (due to some NGO & ASHA workers). According to occupational status of respondents about 43.2% are unemployed group and are mainly housewives ,27.6% are rag pickers, 13.2% are house maid the other 16.0% are involved in others activity like sill batta, pan shop, beggars etc. There have been more frequent occurrence of violence against women in slums our study shows that violence is faced by respondents 44.6% among the verbal violence, 28.9% among the physical violence, 2.7% are sexual violence and 23.8% respondents have faced all of these violence.

Table1: Profile of the Respondents

S. No.	Respondents	Percent
1.	AGE GROUP	
	Below 30	20.6
	30 - 40	43.0
	40 – 50	17.6
	Above 50	18.8
	Total	100.0
2.	Religion	
	Hindu	66.2
	Muslim	19.0
	Sikh	12.0
	Chritian	02.8
	Total	100
3.	Social Caste Group	
	General	36.5
	OBC	36.0
	SC	24.8
	ST	02.7
	Total	100.0
4.	Education	
	Illiterate	55.3
	Primary	07.6
	Can write their names	14.0
	Can count numbers	23.1
	Total	100
5.	Occupation	
	Unemployed	43.2
	Rag pickers	27.6
	House maid	13.2
	Others	16.0
	Total	100.0
6.	Violence Against Women	
	Verbal	44.6
	Physical	28.9
	Sexual	02.7
	All of These	23.8
	Total	100.0

Source: Based on Personal Survey,2023

Empowering women is giving legitimate power to perform the tasks. If women are empowered at the ground level also, they would be able to participate in the planning and decision-making task within family and contribute to the development activities individually (Mahapatra, 2006).

The present study analyses the relation between empowerment of women and decision-making power of women. The table below shows the decision-making power of slum woman which includes issues such as decision making about health care, daily household purchases, and visiting family and relatives.

Table 2. Decision making power of the Respondents in selected slums.

A	Freedom of Movement	Always	Sometimes	Often	Never	Total
	Mawaiyya	24	15	53	6	98
	Madiyaon	21	32	57	22	132
	Chinhat	23	15	37	12	87
	Amausi	64	28	66	25	183
	Total	132	90	213	65	500
B	Family Matters					
	Mawaiyya	4	36	41	17	98
	Madiyaon	3	49	53	27	132
	Chinhat	0	39	17	31	87
	Amausi	11	76	63	33	183
	Total	18	200	174	108	500
C	To Purchase Home Items					
	Mawaiyya	9	50	39	0	98
	Madiyaon	16	51	61	4	132
	Chinhat	22	24	41	0	87
	Amausi	14	67	99	3	183
	Total	61	192	240	7	500
D	Family Planning					
	Mawaiyya	13	25	28	7	73
	Madiyaon	17	32	43	6	98
	Chinhat	15	9	32	4	60
	Amausi	19	26	71	11	127
	Total	64	92	175	28	500

Source: Based on Personal Survey,2023

The decision-making power of the women of slums is found to be related to core periphery model, women of the slums which are in the core of the city are more aware of themselves to take decision as it is shown in Table 2. In Table 2 – A it shows that 6 respondents of mawaiyya never took any decision regarding freedom of movement for occupation or even to visit relatives. 90 respondents sometimes take decision regarding freedom of movement. Table A shows that 213 respondents often take decision of freedom of movement. 64 respondents of amausi shown the majority they always take decision on their own regarding freedom of movement. Mawaiyya and Amausi being developed region with multiple work opportunities available for slums women.

Table 2 – B shows that only 18 respondents always take decision in their family matters, whereas 108 respondents never took any decision in their family matters they simply followed the decision taken by their in laws and husband.200 respondents sometimes take decisions and 174 respondents often take decision in their family matters, in which 63 respondents from Amausi often take decisions on their own for this major role played by local NGO worker who often visit these slums and motivate them to speak for themselves and what is right for them.

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Table 2 – C shows that mere total of 61 respondents always take decision with their family to purchase item. 192 respondents sometimes take decision in purchasing home items like LPG, cots etc. 240 respondents often take decision in purchasing items among these 99 respondents are from Amausi. 7 respondents never took any decision in purchasing items from these 4 respondents from Madiyaon never took any decision regarding purchasing home items.

Table 2 – D shows that 19 respondents of Amausi always took decision in family planning matters which is highest of total 64 respondents. The respondents that are actively participating in family matters is because they are made aware about the need of family planning by local NGO workers, ANM & ASHA workers who visit these slums more often. It shows that 92 respondents sometimes take decision in family planning. Whereas 175 respondents often decision in family planning. 28 respondents never took decision in family planning.

Conclusion

To understand the relation between decision making power and status of women is quite complex. The present study showed that women in the slum community had restricted movements and were indirectly controlled by their husband. Younger women were restricted in decision making and had less freedom of movement in the community.

It may be concluded that,

1. Nearly 13% of respondents never took any decision in terms of freedom of movement, whereas 26.4 % respondents always took decision of movement. It shows hopeful and positive trends in slums.
2. About 21.6 % of respondents never took decision in family matters whereas only 3.6% of respondents always took decision in family matters. There is need of more involvement of women in decision in family matters.
3. Only 1.4% of respondents never took decision in terms of purchasing house items, whereas 12.2 % respondents always took decision in purchasing items.

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