



## Perceived Level of Empowerment Amongst Working Women in Mysore City: An Empirical Study

**Dr. R.K.Ramesh Babu**

Principal, Government First Grade College  
Kuduru, Magadi (T)  
Bangalore Rural District

### Abstract

Women empowerment is a global issue which has gained much momentum in recent decades. Women contribution to the sustainable development of any nation is significant. Despite several programs for women empowerment, she is not completely self reliant and self sufficient. Gender inequality in administration, political power, economic liberty, and social well being witnessing much in the present society. Several studies reveal that women are empowered due to various schemes of the government, violence against women are common today.

**Key Words:** Working women, Empowerment, Factors

### 1.1 Introduction

Women constitute half of the total human resource of the nation. Women play a pivotal role in the sustainable development of a country. The wealth of a nation is seriously going to be depleted if the woman is neglected. **Rabindranath Tagore** said “Women is the Builder and Moulder of nation's destiny”. Though delicate and soft as lily, she has a heart, far stronger and bolder than of man... she is supreme inspiration of man's onward march.

Despite the major inroads working women have made in recent times, they are still paid less than men (Business today, October 14,2012 pp136-137). The World Development Report 2012: Gender equality and development notes that globally women in salaried jobs still earn, on an average, only 71 per cent of what men do for the same kind of work. Casual workers are even worse off, averaging only 56 percent of the income of their male counterparts.

### 1.2 Significance of the Study and Statement of the Problem

Women rights and empowerment are not independent of each other. The Women empowerment can be facilitated only if she is able to exercise her right in the socio-economic spheres of decision-making. But the societal outlook demonstrates that Empowerment of woman is still a myth in India (Chirivella Radhika, Hanumantha Rao, May 2011).

With respect to the present study the research questions come to mind are-

- Is a working woman empowered because of her employment income earnings?
- Can working women, decide, with dignity and without any fear, their own goals and have the freedom and ability to attain them?
- Is she able to freely participate in the activities of national development or is there any barrier against her potential?

### 1.3 Review of Literature

Page and Czuba (1999) define empowerment as a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives, a process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities and in their society, by acting on issues they define as important. According to them the core of the concept of empowerment is power. As per the framework of various research studies and authors, women's empowerment needs to occur along the following dimensions: economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political, and psychological. These dimensions are very broad in scope within each of them; there is a range of sub-domains within which women may be empowered. It suggests that - socio-cultural dimension covers a range of empowerment sub domains, from marriage systems to norms regarding women's physical mobility, to non-familial social support systems and networks available to women. Moreover, in order to operationalize these dimensions, one should consider indicators at various levels of social aggregation - the household and the community, as well as regional, national, and even global levels (Abdul Azeez and Javed Akthar.2012)

There are several studies on woman empowerment and exhibit the mixed results. Few studies focus on various schemes such as SHG, Micro-finance, Micro-credit and other schemes of the government and their impact. We reviewed the following relevant literature for our study:

### 1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To determine the important factor of women empowerment.
3. To study the perception of working women about their level of empowerment.
4. To analyze the relationship between income, education and employment sector on the level of empowerment as perceived by the respondents.
5. To offer suggestions based on the data analysis.

### 1.5 Hypotheses

We have developed the following **Hypotheses** on the basis of objectives of the study:

1)  $H_0$  = There is no significant relation between level of income and the level of empowerment.

$H_1$  = There exists significant relationship between the level of income and empowerment.

2)  $H_0$  = There exist no significant relation between level of education and level of empowerment.

$H_1$  = There exist a significant relationship between level of education and empowerment.

3)  $H_0$  = There is no significant relation between employment status and level of empowerment.

$H_1$  = Employment status determine the level of empowerment.

4)  $H_0$  = There is no significant relation between age and empowerment.

$H_1$  = There is significant relation between age and empowerment.

### 1.6 Methodology:

#### 1.6.1 Locale and Period of study:

A survey was conducted in Mysore city between November 2012 and 15th January 2013. The profile of the city is mentioned in the previous sections.

#### 1.6.2 Data:

The data for the study is both primary and secondary. Secondary data include reports, journals, magazines, news papers, articles, books and websites, where as the primary data is collected both by distributing structured questionnaires and conducting interview where in the responses are enumerated in the questionnaires.

**1.6.3 Sample:**

The purposive sampling method is followed in the study. The universe identified is the working women. Questionnaires include questions on general profile of the respondents and 5 point Likert scale on 22 perceptual statements. Sample size is 300. Structured questionnaires, after pilot testing for validity, out of the total 200 questionnaires distributed to working women in the population and sampling unit, i.e. academia and industry, 170 respondents returned the filled in questionnaire and after filtering the incomplete instruments, 150 questionnaires are considered for analysis. Another population; the unorganized working women (working in small canteens, veritable vendors, flower vendors, Ayaas in schools, working in small home industries such as Agarbathi factory, Sales girls in shops) and micro entrepreneurs (labeled as self-employed) we have conducted interview and their responses are recorded in the structured questionnaire. The total such respondents are 80. So, the total sample considered in all is 230 the response rate comes to 77%.

**1.6.4 Data analysis:**

Data collected are edited, codified and used SPSS 16.0 software package for analysis. For the present study, Factor analysis and ANOVA test is conducted to test the hypothesis and obtained the results for inference.

**1.7 Suggestion and Conclusion:**

As working woman faces unwanted hassles before, during and after her working period, whether she feels she is empowered or not is a concern. As woman play a very important role in the economic sustainable development of any nation right from her family to work place and even in the various positions of power hierarchy, gender bias and inequality still exist and shall be removed. In this direction a survey was conducted to find to examine the perceived level of empowerment in Mysore city.

A new model shall be developed by the government and local body with government and NGO partnership to train and improve the overall development of woman can withstand troubles as she faces more problems than men, and contribute to sustainable socio-economic development of the nation.

**References:**

1. Ackerly, Brooke A (1995) "Testing the tools of development: Credit programmes, loan involvement, and women's empowerment." *IDS Bulletin* 26(3):56-58.
2. *Business Today* magazine (2012) October 14pp 136-137.
3. Chirivella Radhika Hanumantharao (2011) Article: Women Empowerment: Myth.
4. Government of India(1974), "Towards equality, Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India," New Delhi: Ministry of Educational and Social Welfare or Reality vol-1, Issue-IV.
5. HDR (2003), Human Development Report, UNDP, Dublin, Ireland.
6. Jeejeeboy. Shireen J (2000), "Women's Autonomy in Rural India: its Dimensions. Determinants and the influence of 'Context. In Women's Empowerment and Demographic Processes": Moving Beyond Cairo. Harriet Presser and Gita Sen. Eds. New York: Oxford University Press.
7. National Commission for Women, Government of India (2011) Project Report.
8. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (1994) "The Women's equality and Empowerment Framework", Available on-line at [www.unicef.org/programme/gpp/policy/empower.html](http://www.unicef.org/programme/gpp/policy/empower.html).
9. World Development Report (2012) World Bank, Washington DC.