

**A STUDY OF EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN FROM FOUR PROFESSIONS****Mrs. Malavika Ahlawat***Asst.Prof Pal Rajendra B.Ed College, Mumbai***Abstract**

*Women empowerment has become a buzzword, which has different meanings for different persons. Social upliftment, economic independence and political empowerment of women include a transformation of self, society and community. Empowerment of any society is possible when women are empowered. The present study is an attempt to find out social, economic and political empowerment of professional women. The meaning and definition of women empowerment, and the objectives of the study, the comparison between three domains of empowerment of professional women are presented in the tables. The researcher found that The women from the selected profession are found socially and economically empowered but not much politically and the women from engineering professions are less empowered overall as compared to the women from other three professions.*

**Keywords:** *Empowerment of Women, Social empowerment, Economic Empowerment and Political Empowerment*



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**Introduction**

In India, until the last two decades, women were victims of widespread illiteracy, female infanticide, early marriages, violence and denial of individuality. Due to the efforts of government and non-government organizations and the movements of women, the status of women in the society is considerably improving.

In India, women are becoming increasingly visible and successful in the professional and public sphere. They are proving that they are not just bearers of children and homemakers. They can think, act and have their own choices. They are competent enough to participate in social, economic and political affairs as equals.

**Rationale of the Study**

Women have also started climbing the ladder toward executive positions, but women in top position are still rare. Despite their growing prominence in the workforce, it is very difficult for a large number of women, managing both; the work, as well as, the family responsibilities. Most of the working women, therefore, have to forego promotions as they cannot work for longer hours, travel for business and for familial reasons.

The empowerment in all the three domains is vital. The economic empowerment of women is one of the most important ways to promote gender equality, reduce poverty and improve the well-being of not only women, but their families and therefore the society. Their experiences in traveling the long path of life in reaching the cherished goal, can guide others.

Constitutionally, the women of today enjoy similar opportunities with men. This would result in empowerment of women which further would go towards overall development of society both at micro and macro level. Active Participation of women as agents of change in social, economic and political processes is matters of human rights and conditions for social justice. Therefore, this study focuses on social, economic and political domains of women's empowerment.

### **Meaning and Definition of Women Empowerment**

The term 'empowerment' is used in many ways and in a wide range of contexts. There is a linkage of the word empower to power. Women's empowerment is a complex concept that poses many challenges in conceptualization and measurement. Studies from different disciplines considered various aspects of women's empowerment, as per the researchers' interest, or as one of the factor affecting other development outcomes. The World Bank (2002)<sup>i</sup>, defines empowerment as "the process of increasing the assets and capabilities of individuals or groups to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes." Here action is the centre of the empowerment process, actions which build both; women and collective assets and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational context which govern the use of these assets.

### **Domains of Women's Empowerment:**

Women's **social empowerment** is understood as the development of social capacities such as education, health, freedom and opportunities for realizing one's potentialities. It is the process of developing a sense of autonomy and self-confidence, and acting individually and collectively to change social relationships.

Women's **economic empowerment** is their capacity to participate in, contribute to and benefit from economic activities that recognize the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits.

**Political empowerment** refers to the equitable representation of women in decision making structures, both formal and informal and their voice in the formulation of policies affecting their societies.

### **Professional Women**

Women who belong to or engage in a profession, participating in the workforce and who have generally received some type of specialization or higher education training. In this study four specializations are taken into account. They are engineering, law, medicine and teacher education.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To study the level of empowerment of professional women.
2. to study the social, economic and political empowerment of professional women.
3. To compare the level of empowerment of women of following professions.
  - a. Teacher Education
  - b. Medicine
  - c. Law
  - d. Engineering
4. To compare the following three domains of empowerment of professional women.
  - a. Social empowerment
  - b. Economic empowerment
  - c. Political empowerment

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

On the basis of the objectives of the study, the hypotheses were formulated by the researcher in the null form as follows:

Ho. 1: There is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of women of selected profession.

- a. Teacher Education
- b. Medicine
- c. Law
- d. Engineering

Ho. 2: There is no significant difference in the domains of empowerment of professional women of the selected profession.

- a. Social empowerment
- b. Economic empowerment
- c. Political empowerment

Ho. 3: There is no significant difference in the domains of empowerment of professional women of the four professions; Teacher Education, Medicine, Law, Engineering.

- a. Social empowerment
- b. Economic empowerment
- c. Political empowerment

**Sample:**The sample for the present study comprises of 274 women from the State of Maharashtra from four professions; Engineering, Law, Medicine and Teacher Education.

**Sampling Method:**The researcher employed snowball-sampling technique since the sampling frames for each profession were not available. The chain referral process allowed the researcher to reach populations that are difficult to sample when using other sampling methods.

**Data Collection:** The Women Empowerment Inventory (WEI) was designed to measure the empowerment of professional women at five levels as suggested by World Bank. The researcher gave the scale value from 1 to 5. She converted the developed inventory (WEI) into the Google form and then emailed the link to the selected sample of professional women.

**Data analysis -** Data was analyzed, descriptive and inferential using ANOVA and Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) test.

Descriptive Statistics of WEI Scores for the four professions to study the level of empowerment of professional women.

**Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics of WEI Scores for the four Professions**

Profession	N	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Kurtosis	Skewness
EP	55	156.33	153.00	150.00	10.96	0.21	0.73
LP	58	165.67	164.50	167.00	11.57	0.94	0.59
MP	75	168.80	170.00	180.00	11.95	-0.66	-0.27
TP	86	166.73	165.00	172.00	14.01	-0.23	0.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>164.91</b>	<b>165.00</b>	<b>169.00</b>	<b>13.22</b>	<b>-0.35</b>	<b>0.20</b>

### **Interpretation**

From the above table it can be seen that the mean, median and mode of empowerment scores of MP is highest while those of TP, LP and EP follow in descending order while the SD of the scores of TP is highest and those of MP, LP and EP follow in descending order.

EP, LP, and TP show positive skewness while MP shows negative skewness. Kurtosis of MP and TP is negative while that of the EP and LP is positive. The value of both skewness and kurtosis fall within the range of absolute 2 and so the distribution may be considered normal.

**Ho.1: There is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of women of the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP.**

The one-way ANOVA was used in order to test whether there is any significant difference in the level of empowerment of women of the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP.

The results of one-way ANOVA are tabulated next:

**Table One-way ANOVA of level of empowerment of women of the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP.**

	SS	df	MS	F
<b>Between Groups</b>	5504.20	3	1834.74	
<b>Within</b>	41365.73	270	153.21	11.98**
<b>Total</b>	46869.94	273		

\*\* p < 0.01, \*P < 0.05

A one-way ANOVA showed that the difference in mean scores of empowerment of women from the four professions, EP (N=55, M=156.33, SD=10.96), LP (N=58, M=165.67, SD=11.57), MP (N=75, M=168.80, SD=11.95), and TP (N= 86, M=166.73, SD=14.01) is statistically significant, F (3, 270) =11.98, p < 0.01. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that one or more pairs of four professions differ on level of empowerment of women.

Therefore, Tukey’s HSD test was carried out. And it can be seen that there is significant difference in the level of empowerment of women of EP and all the other three professions LP, MP and TP. But there is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of women of other pairs of professions.

**Ho.2: There is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of professional women for the three domains: SE, EE and PE.**

The one-way ANOVA was used to test the significance of difference in the level of empowerment of women for the three domains: SE, EE and PE.

The results of one-way ANOVA are tabulated next:

**Table One-way ANOVA of level of empowerment of professional women for the three domains: SE, EE and PE.**

	SS	df	MS	F
<b>Between Groups</b>	4677.09	2	2338.55	
<b>Within</b>	26967.11	819	32.93	71.02**
<b>Total</b>	31644.21	821		

\*\* p < 0.01, \*P < 0.05

A one-way ANOVA showed that the difference in mean scores of empowerment of women for the three domains: such as SE (N=274, M=54.80, SD=4.91), EE (N=274, M=54.36,

SD=5.65), and PE (N=274, M=49.51, SD=6.53) was statistically significant,  $F(2, 819)=71.02, p < 0.01$ .

This implies that the level of empowerment of women differs on one or more pairs of domains. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, Tukey's HSD test was carried out to determine which of the 3 pairs exhibit the significant difference. It can be seen that there is no significant difference between the level of empowerment of women for domain SE and EE. But there is significant difference between other two pairs of domains SE and PE, as well as, EE and PE.

**Ho. 3: There is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of women for the three domains of empowerment for the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP.**

**Ho. 3a: There is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of women for the domain: Social empowerment for the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP.**

The one-way ANOVA was used to test the significance of difference in the level of empowerment of women for the three domains: Social empowerment for the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP. The results of one-way ANOVA are tabulated next:

**Table One-way ANOVA of level of Social empowerment or empowerment of women for the domain: Social empowerment for the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP.**

	SS	df	MS	F
<b>Between Groups</b>	820.24	3	273.41	
<b>Within Groups</b>	5771.72	270	21.38	12.79**
<b>Total</b>	6591.95	273		

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \* $P < 0.05$

A one-way ANOVA showed that the difference in mean scores of empowerment of women for the domain: Social empowerment such as EP (N=55, M=51.93, SD=4.22), LP (N=58, M=54.41, SD=2.59), MP (N=75, M=56.97, SD=4.67), and TP (N=86, M=55, SD=5.75) was statistically significant,  $F(3, 270)=12.79, p < 0.01$ .

This implies that one or more pairs of four professions differ on level of empowerment of women for the domain: Social empowerment, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, Tukey's HSD test was carried out to determine which of the 6 pairs exhibit the significant difference. It can be seen that there is significant difference in the level of empowerment for the domain: Social empowerment for the professions of women of EP and all the other three professions LP, MP and TP, and LP and MP, and MP and TP. But there is no significant difference in the level of Social Empowerment of women of LP and TP.

**Ho. 3b: There is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of women for the domain: Economic empowerment for the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP.**

The one-way ANOVA was used to test the significance of difference in the level of empowerment of women for the domain: Economic empowerment for the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP. The results of one-way ANOVA are tabulated next:

**Table One-way ANOVA of the level of empowerment of women for the domain: Economic empowerment for the four professions: EP, LP, MP and TP**

	SS	df	MS	F
<b>Between Groups</b>	160	3	53.24	1.68**
<b>Within Groups</b>	8569	270	31.74	
<b>Total</b>	8729	273		

\*\* p < 0.01, \*P < 0.05

A one-way ANOVA showed that the difference in mean scores of empowerment of women for the domain: Economic empowerment from EP (N=55, M=53.16, SD=6.36), LP (N=58, M=50.59, SD=6.37), MP (N=75, M=55.37 SD=4.25), and TP (N=86, M=54.16, SD=6.03) was statistically non-significant, F (3, 270) =1.68, p < 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis was retained.

**Ho. 3c: There is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of women for the domain: Political empowerment for the four professions; EP, LP, MP and TP.**

The one-way ANOVA was used to test the significance of difference in the level of empowerment of women for the domain: Political empowerment for the four professions; EP, LP, MP and TP. The results of one-way ANOVA are tabulated next:

**Table One-way ANOVA of level of empowerment of women for the domain: Political empowerment for the four professions; EP, LP, MP and TP.**

	SS	Df	MS	F
<b>Between Groups</b>	1203.62	3	401.21	
<b>Within Groups</b>	10442.59	270	38.68	10.37**
<b>Total</b>	11646.20	273		

\*\* p < 0.01, \*P < 0.05

A one-way ANOVA showed that the difference in mean scores of empowerment of women for the domain: Political empowerment for the professions: EP (N=55, M=45.36 SD=5.21), LP (N=58, M=50.59, SD=6.37), MP (N=75, M=50.35, SD=5.16), and TP (N=86, M=50.78, SD=7.43) was statistically significant, F (3, 270)=10.37, p< 0.01.

This implies that one or more pairs of four professions differ on level of empowerment of women. for the domain: Political empowerment, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, Tukey's HSD test was carried out to determine which of the 6 pairs exhibit the significant difference. It can be seen that there is significant difference in the level of empowerment of women for the domain: Political empowerment for the professions: EP and all the other three professions LP, MP and TP. But there is no significant difference in the level of empowerment of women for the domains: Political empowerment for the professions: LP and MP, LP and TP and MP and TP.

**Findings related to Empowerment:**

- The Mean score of empowerment of women from Medicine profession is slightly higher than that of Teacher Education and Law profession. However, the Mean score of empowerment of women from Engineering profession is substantially low.
- There is a significant difference in the mean scores of empowerment of women of Engineering profession and all the other three professions Law, Medicine and Teacher Education.

**Findings related to the domains of Empowerment:**

- The Mean scores of professional women for the domains social and economic are nearly same and more than that of the political domain.
- There is a significant difference between the mean scores of empowerment for two pairs of domains; Social and Political, as well as, Economic and Political but not on Social and Economic.
- The mean score of Social and Economic empowerment of Medical profession is highest than the other three professions.
- The mean scores of Political empowerment of Teacher Education, Law and Medical profession are nearly same.
- The mean scores of Engineering profession are lowest in all the three domains of empowerment.

**Findings related to the sub-domains of Empowerment**

- The mean scores of empowerment of professional women for the sub-domains Home and Out-of-Home are nearly same.
- The mean scores of empowerment for the Home sub-domain of Teacher Education, Law and Medical profession are nearly same.
- The mean scores of empowerment for the Outof-Home sub-domain of Medical profession is highest followed by that of Law and Teacher Education profession having similar values.



- The mean scores of Engineering profession are lowest in both the sub-domains of empowerment.
- There is a significant difference in the level of empowerment of women for Home sub-domain for Engineering profession with Medical and Teacher Education.
- There is a significant difference in the level of empowerment of women for Out-of-Home sub-domain for Engineering profession with all the other three.

**Conclusion:**

To sum up, it can be concluded that the objectives of the present study have been achieved to a great extent. The study has focused on the empowerment of professional women.

The levels of empowerment of professional women from Engineering profession is less compared to other three professions which show nearly same level. The political empowerment of professional women is less than the social and economic empowerment.

**References**

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<sup>i</sup> World Bank PovertyNet. topic Empowerment

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