

Assessing Women's Empowerment Through Decision Making: A Study from Himachal Pradesh

Gayatri Raina* and Akanksha Jaswal**

Abstract

Decision making is an important determinant for measuring women empowerment. Women who are empowered are able to make independent decisions which they consider important in their lives. In the present study an attempt has been made to assess empowerment through decision making among women of Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, India. A sample of 308 married women, in the age group of 25-50 years was selected for collecting the data. Data were collected using a schedule for assessing for empowerment of women comprising of six domains for e.g. involvement in their financial, reproductive, social decision making, women's mobility in public spaces, freedom from family domination and economic security and inheritance rights. The data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The major findings of the investigation were (i) large number of women equally participate with their spouses in decisions to buy daily and household items (ii) An overwhelming majority of them have a say in their reproductive decision making (iii) Another important finding was that they had freedom in choosing their social relations (iv) Respondents scored high on their mobility domain (v) A large women were not dominated by their family members but some have faced hassles for working outdoors (vi) Lastly, a major part of the sample do not own any land or productive assets making them economically insecure.

Key Words: Women empowerment, decision making.

*Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla-171005 (Himachal Pradesh), India.

**Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla-5.