



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN RELATION TO EDUCATION: A QUEST FOR A NEW PATH OF INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

An attempt has been made to analyze the impact assessment of education in achieving the level of economic empowerment of women in relation to inclusive development in Purulia district, West Bengal. This study is primarily empirical in nature comprising of 200 households in different strata like educational status, economic status, family status etc. This study used a structured questionnaire for conducting the survey the survey in 2016-17 of Purulia district in West Bengal. The analysis of the present study was formulated by the Students' t-test by taking opinion of 200 woman members of the surveyed households to examine the relationship between education and economic empowerment in purview of inclusive development in the present scenario. Moreover, a binary logit regression model has been fitted to establish the nature and magnitude of association between education and economic empowerment of women through a set of selected indicators. Again, correlation test has been applied to examine the assumed hypothesis whether any interrelationship between education and women's economic empowerment exists or not.

Key Words: Education, Economic empowerment, Inclusive development,, Attitude of women, Family status

Introduction

A significant portion of total population of our country lives in villages. But it is unfortunate to state that there exists a huge gap of development between the urban and rural areas. Gender issue and empowerment play a crucial role in this respect. The qualities of life of the rural people especially of women are not up to the mark. Malnourishment, illiteracy, unemployment, poverty are the common phenomenon of rural women. Indian villages need to grow along with the towns and quality of life of villagers including women have to improve for achieving inclusive growth. So, inclusive development is a right solution for the upliftment of rural people as well as India as a whole. Inclusive development means a development policy which includes all the sections of the society including women. Economic empowerment has closely associated with such kind of development. It refers to measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self-determination in people and in communities in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. It is the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights.

Several studies (Aswathy, 1987; Dash et al, 2010; D Souza, 2003; Gupta, 1994; Jose, 1997; Aysen, 2007) are conducted to assess the role of education on inclusive development through active participation of women in the society. But most of the studies are narrower one i.e., cover any specific aspect. So the present tries to fill in the gap by examining the role of education on inclusive development through economic empowerment of women of households in Purulia district of West Bengal.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are the following:

1. To examine the difference in attitude among the respondents about the impact of education on economic empowerment of women w. r. to educational status (i.e. educated and uneducated);
2. To examine the difference in attitude among the respondents about the impact of education on economic empowerment of women w. r. to economic status of households (i.e., APL and BPL);

3. To examine the difference in attitude among the respondents about the impact of education on economic empowerment of women w. r. to family status of households (i.e., nuclear and large family);
4. To identify the factors which are responsible for inclusive development through economic empowerment of women associated with education.
5. To find out the relationship between education and women's empowerment in the study area.

Hypotheses

Several hypotheses are laid down to illuminate the present analysis:

$^{\circ}H_1$: No significant difference in the level of economic empowerment of women with respect to educational status (i.e. educated and uneducated);

$^{\circ}H_2$: No significant difference in the level of economic empowerment of women with respect to economic status (i.e. APL and BPL);

$^{\circ}H_3$: No significant difference in the level of economic empowerment of women with respect to family status (i.e. Nuclear and large family);

$^{\circ}H_4$: No significant difference in the level of economic empowerment among the respondents in relation to inclusive development corresponding to the factors associated with education with respect to – access to employment, control over income, control over assets, economic contribution to support of family, access to credit and markets.

$^{\circ}H_5$: No significant relationship between education and women's economic empowerment.

Materials and Methods

Materials

The study were undertaken by preparing a self made structured questionnaire and it has been used for the collection of primary data during 2016-17 from 200 households (comprising one women member from each) of different family status, economic status and educational status of Purulia district in West Bengal.

Methods

Methodologies used for the study are the following:

1. Student's t-test: to investigate the difference in opinion among the respondents with respect to family status, economic status and educational status.
2. Binary logit regression analysis: to identify the factors responsible for achievement of economic empowerment of women in relation to inclusive development.
3. Correlation test: to find out the association between education and economic empowerment of women.

The variables selected in the present study are as follows:

Table-1: showing variables influencing Economic empowerment of women of households

Variables	Explanation
Access to employment	This is a proxy variable of economic empowerment.
Control over income	It is a proxy variable of maintaining basic needs and quality of life.
Control over assets	It can be explained as a proxy variable of standards of living and relieving distress of life.
Economic contribution to support of family	It is indicated as a proxy variable to meet up needs of members of households.
Access to credit and markets	It can be attributed as proxy variable of livelihood.

Analysis and Discussion

Analysis and discussion of this study is carried out under the following heads:

1. Education and Women's Economic Empowerment: An Analysis in terms of Student's t-test
2. Education and Women's Economic Empowerment: An Analysis in terms of Binary Logit Regression

3. Education and Women's Economic Empowerment: An Analysis in terms of Correlation test

The mean scores and the other relevant measures of the level of economic empowerment of the respondents belonging to different educational status, economic status and family status are given in table 3.

Table – 2: Mean scores and the other relevant measures of the level of economic empowerment of the women belonging to different educational status

Educational Status	N	Mean	S.D.	SE_D	t-value	Level of significance
Educated	120	11.24	2.82	0.28	27.21	0.01
Uneducated	80	3.62	0.19			

Source: Author's calculation based on field survey, 2016-17

It appears from table 2 that the calculated value of t is greater than the tabulated value at 1 % level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis (i.e., H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. So it can be concluded that there exists significant difference in the level of economic empowerment of women with respect to educational status (i.e. educated and uneducated). It appears from the field study that educated women are too much conscious about economic empowerment through the way of self-sufficiency.

Table – 3: Mean scores and the other relevant measures of the level of economic empowerment of the women belonging to different economic status

Economic Status	N	Mean	S.D.	SE_D	t-value	Level of significance
APL	130	9.43	3.16	0.31	23.03	0.01
BPL	70	2.29	1.32			

Source: Author's calculation based on field survey, 2016-17

It is clear from table 3 that the calculated value of t is greater than the tabulated value at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis (i.e., H_0) is rejected and consequently the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This means that there exists significant difference in the level of economic empowerment of women with respect to economic status (i.e. APL and BPL).

Table – 4: Mean scores and the other relevant measures of the level of economic empowerment of the women belonging to different family status

Family Status	N	Mean	S.D.	SE _D	t-value	Level of significance
Nuclear	140	9.21	3.48	0.29	20.82	0.01
Large	60	3.17	0.35			

Source: Author’s calculation based on field survey, 2016-17

Table 2 indicates that the calculated value of t is greater than the tabulated value at 1 % level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected (i.e., H_0) and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. So it can be concluded that there exists significant difference in the level of economic empowerment of women with respect to family status (i.e. nuclear and large family). During field study it was revealed that members of nuclear or small type of family are more aware about empowerment rather than large family.

Table - 5: Binary Logit Regression Analysis for measuring the level of Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE)

WEE = C*₀ +C*₁ CI + C*₂ AE+ C*₃ CA + C*₄ ECSF +C*₅ ACM				
Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Z-Statistic	P-value
C	12.372614	2.516723	5.916273	0.0000
CI	0.038291	0.009614	3.819201	0.0000*
AE	0.824152	0.681452	5.763150	0.0000*
CA	0.481428	0.017283	0.852417	0.0000*
ECSF	0.914523	0.819273	0.032617	0.0000*
ACM	1.714824	0.718203	3.854021	0.0047**

(i) Total number of observations = 200

(ii) * Significant, ** Indicates insignificant

(iii) Dependent Variable = Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE)

(iv) CI = Control over income; AE = Access to employment; CA = Control over assets; ECSF = Economic contribution to support of family; ACM = Access to credit and markets

(v) Source: Author's calculation based on field survey, 2016-17

Table - 5 shows that the coefficients of control over income, access to employment, control over assets and economic contribution to support of family are positive and highly significant. Although the coefficient of access to credit and markets is positive but it suffers the problem of insignificance. The higher level of economic empowerment of women happens due to the higher employment opportunities of the members in the households through the upliftment of education. Therefore, education contributes to promote economic empowerment.

Table- 6: Interrelationship between education and Economic Empowerment

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	r-value	t _r	Level of significance
Education	200	7.39	3.12	83.26	20.86	0.01
Economic Empowerment	200	96.20	25.42			

Source: Author's calculation based on field survey, 2016-17

Table 6 evident that the r-value is 0.93 and this value is tested against the null hypothesis. The corresponding t-value is calculated to be 66.89 which is significant at .01 level. So, the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis is retained. This implies that there exists strong interrelationship between education and economic empowerment of women in the study area.

Concluding Remarks:

This paper explains the role of education on economic empowerment of women in relation to inclusive development in Purulia district in West Bengal. The findings indicated a significant relationship between education and economic empowerment of women. All most all the factors associated with the level of economic empowerment of women showed positive and significant relationship. There exists significant variation in the level of economic empowerment of the respondents w. r. to educational status, economic status and family status of the households.

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