



## EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN TEACHERS IN RELATION TO THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

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### Abstract

The Kothari Commission rightly referred to teachers as nation builders. The all-round development of the students is influenced by the women teacher. The study has been conducted to investigate the levels of Empowerment and mental health among women Teachers. It also examines the relationship between the Empowerment and Mental health of the women Teachers. The study was conducted on a random sample of 500 women Teachers in Cuddalore District. The tools used in the study include the Empowerment scale constructed and validated by Sridevi, 2005 and Mental health scale developed and validated by Peter Becker. The study reveals the fact that the level of Empowerment and Mental health are at high levels.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, Mental Health and Teachers



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### Introduction

#### Women Empowerment

The status of women in India has witnessed great many changes for the last thousands of years. It was adorable and worship of mother cult was common at the beginning of the Indian civilization. Moreover, there have been lots of ups and downs in their social status. The essence of the Aryan civilization is preserved in the four Vedas namely Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvam and their different branches like Brahmanas and Upanishads. (Mac Donell, 1956). The Rig Veda reveals that during early Vedic or Vedic period woman had an excellent position and they enjoyed full freedom and equality with men. The Vedic culture believed that men and women were created as equals. Rig Vedic women enjoyed economic independence also to a certain extent. For instance, women in ancient India not only had freedom of movement within the country, but also they carried on their activities outside the country. The Early Vedic age or Vedic age which extended from 1500 B.C. and the post-Vedic age from 1000 B.C. to 500 B.C. (Altekar, 1959; Jha, 1981).

#### Mental Health

In the world of today everyone is threatened by increasing population and degraded circumstances. Health is and has been always one of the most important areas where we need

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to focus. Concept of health extends beyond the proper functioning of the body, it includes controlled emotions, a sound and efficient mind. This means that mind and body both are working efficiently and harmoniously (Kaur, 2006-07). The expression “Mental Health” consists of two words- ‘Mental’ and ‘Health’. ‘Health’ generally means sound conditions or well being or freedom from diseases. Mental health, therefore, means a sound mental condition or a state of psychological well being of freedom from mental disease (Singh, 2004). The word ‘mental’ usually implies something more than purely cerebral functioning of a person. It includes one’s emotional affective states. It is the equilibrium in one’s socio cultural context that is reflected by the relationship one establishes with others.

### **Need and importance of the study**

Women play an important role both in the family and society. They play a very strategic role in the development of society in particular and economy in general. They contribute directly or indirectly to the economic development of the country. They can create wonder in the family and society, if they are empowered in a proper manner. This is aptly put it by the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, “you educate a man, you educate an individual, you educate a woman, and you educate an entire family”. In reality, women have not been given the due respect or accorded equal status as accorded to the men down the ages, except pre-Vedic period. Their status has continued the downgrade from later Vedic, Medieval to until the recent past, i.e. even during the British rule in India.

Moreover, women empowerment should not only encompass economical but also socio cultural, political areas etc. It is interesting to note that policies on women's empowerment do exist at the national, state, and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors - health, education, economic opportunities, gender- based violence and political participates. However, there are significant gaps between policy advancements and implementation at the community level (M.D. Pujari, 2012). Therefore, the need to undertake a study for investigating and exploring, the empowerment status of working women, their work related stress, mental health or psycho-social problems and family adjustment of women is long felt especially of women teachers working in school.

This widely prevalent belief is incorrect for this is outsider's perception of the role of women school teachers. Therefore a thorough research was done in order to discover the validity of popular beliefs. The study will provide insights into the factor that lead to empowerment of women teachers’ mental health. By this study the causes can be identified that lead to potential harm to health, emotional wellbeing and relationships to others.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To find out the level of Empowerment of women teachers.
2. To find out the level of Mental health of women teachers.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference among the mean Empowerment and Mental health scores in respect of the following sub- samples
  - a. Locality of the Institutions,
  - b. Medium of Instruction,
  - c. Subject Taught.
4. To find out whether there is any significant relationship between empowerment and mental health of women school teachers of total sample and with regard to sub-samples.

### **Hypotheses of the study**

1. The level of Empowerment of women teachers is high.
2. The level of Mental health of women teachers is high.
3. There is no significant difference among the mean Empowerment and Mental health scores in respect of the following sub- samples
  - a. Locality of the Institutions,
  - b. Medium of Instruction,
  - c. Subject Taught.
4. There is no significant relationship between empowerment and mental health of women school teachers of total sample and with regard to sub-samples.

### **Methodology**

In the present study, the investigator adapted the normative survey method. The normative survey method describes and interprets what exists at present.

### **Location of the study**

The investigator collected data from the women Teachers working in the schools in Cuddalore district. For the data collection of this study as many as 500 women Teacher were selected.

### **Sample**

The present study consists of 500 women Teachers working in the schools in Cuddalore district of Tamilnadu state. The samples were selected by using simple random sampling technique. The sample represents the entire population. Proportionate weightage was given to various sub-samples.

### Tools used

The tools used in the study include the Empowerment scale constructed and validated by Sridevi, 2005 and Mental health scale developed and validated by Peter Becker.

### Statistical Techniques used

For the analysis of the data, the following statistical techniques have been used. Descriptive analysis, Differential analysis and correlation analysis.

### Results

**Table 1 Means and SD of the Entire Sample**

| Variables     | Means | SDs  |
|---------------|-------|------|
| Empowerment   | 21.17 | 1.83 |
| Mental health | 43.49 | 5.73 |

From the Table 1 the calculated mean and S.D of Empowerment of women school teachers are found to be 21.17 and 1.83 respectively. The mean score for the entire sample is 21.17. It is also inferred that the empowerment of women school teachers is high. From the table the calculated mean and S.D of mental health of women school teachers are found to be 43.49 and 5.73 respectively. The mean score for the entire sample is 43.49. It is also inferred that the mental health of women school teachers is high.

**Table 2 Coefficient of correlation between Empowerment and Mental health in Women Teachers**

| Variables                    | N   | r value | Remarks                      |
|------------------------------|-----|---------|------------------------------|
| Empowerment<br>Mental health | 500 | 0.230   | Significant at<br>0.01 level |

It is seen from table – 2 that the correlation coefficient between Empowerment and Mental health of teachers is positive and significant at 0.01 level.

**Table 3 The Mean, Standard Deviation and t- Value of Empowerment and Mental Health Scores of Sub Samples**

| Variables          | Samples               | Sub Sample     | N   | Mean  | S.D  | t value | P- Value  |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----|-------|------|---------|-----------|
| <b>Empowerment</b> | Locality of the study | Rural Teachers | 282 | 20.98 | 1.76 | 2.65    | 0.01 (S)  |
|                    |                       | Urban Teachers | 218 | 21.42 | 1.88 |         |           |
|                    | Medium                | Tamil          | 292 | 21.33 | 1.85 | 2.24    | 0.05 (S)  |
|                    |                       | English        | 208 | 20.96 | 1.78 |         |           |
|                    | Subjects taught       | Arts           | 328 | 21.25 | 1.82 | 1.368   | 0.05 (NS) |

|                      |                       |                |     |       |      |       |           |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----|-------|------|-------|-----------|
| <b>Mental Health</b> | Locality of the study | Science        | 172 | 21.02 | 1.83 | 4.30  | 0.01 (S)  |
|                      |                       | Rural Teachers | 282 | 44.45 | 5.07 |       |           |
|                      | Medium                | Urban Teachers | 218 | 42.26 | 6.28 | 0.067 | 0.05 (NS) |
|                      |                       | Tamil          | 292 | 43.48 | 6.26 |       |           |
|                      | Subjects taught       | English        | 208 | 43.51 | 4.89 | 6.56  | 0.01 (S)  |
|                      |                       | Arts           | 328 | 44.70 | 5.23 |       |           |
|                      |                       | Science        | 172 | 41.19 | 5.93 |       |           |

The details of the calculation are given in the Table the 't' value is found to be 2.65, which is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean empowerment scores of Rural and Urban teachers. Rural teachers have higher empowerment than the Urban school teachers. In respect of medium the 't' value is found to be 2.24, which is significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean empowerment scores of Teachers teaching in Tamil and English medium. In respect of subject taught the 't' value is found to be 1.368, which is not significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean empowerment scores of Arts and Science teachers. Arts group have better empowerment than Science group.

The details of the calculation are given in the Table the 't' value is found to be 4.30, which is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean mental health scores of Rural and Urban teachers. Rural teachers have higher mental health than the Urban school teachers. In respect of subject taught the 't' value is found to be 6.56, which is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean mental health scores of Arts and Science teachers. Arts group have better mental health than Science group. In respect of medium the 't' value is found to be 0.067, which is not significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean mental health scores of Teachers teaching in Tamil and English medium.

## **Conclusion**

Women Teachers role is a vital concept of our education. Their empowerment and mental health is one of the factors which determine their efficiency. Thus a study on their empowerment and mental health of the women Teachers has been undertaken and found the level of these factors to be high, which is a good sign for our education system.

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