



# Effect of Interventional Programme on Enhancing Empowerment Status through Decision Making Skills of Tribal Working Women in Utnoor Mandal Adilabad District, India

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author NSR data collection, review of literature wrote the draft, performed statistical analysis, author MSD designed the study, read and approved the manuscript. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

Empowerment of tribal women is one of the central issues in the process of development all over the world. Empowerment is the process that allows one to gain the knowledge and attitude needed to cope with the changing world and the circumstances in which one lives [1]. Women empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over material, human and intellectual resources as well as control over decision-making in their home, community, society and nation. Given the need to analyze the empowerment status of tribal women, the present study aimed to enhance the empowerment status through enhancing decision-making skills of tribal working women in India. The specific objective is to study the impact of intervention on enhancing status of empowerment through decision-making skills of tribal working women in Utnoor Mandal Adilabad district. The total sample population for the study was 50 tribal working women, and data was analyzed using a paired t test. Results revealed that at pretest, majority of the women were at

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average level of decision-making skills (78%), 12% were at low level and only 10% were at high level. After the intervention, post test results revealed that 74% of the women were high in decision making skills and remaining 26% were at average level. Interestingly, none of the respondents had low level of life skills. Thus, intervention found to be effective among women respondents to develop and enhance their empowerment status through decision-making skills.

*Keywords: Empowerment; decision-making skills; intervention; tribal women.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Women in tribal societies play a vital role in their social, cultural, economic and religious ways of life and are considered as an economic asset in their society. They share abundant responsibilities and perform multiple duties in running the family. Still, they are lagging far behind in the different walks of life like education, employment, good health economic empowerment and decision-making. There is a basic cultural and psychological tendency on the part of men to dominate the women, which is also seen among the tribal men [2,3]. In this male-dominating society, they are still subjected to discrimination in the social, economic and educational field.

Empowerment of tribal women is one of the central issues in the process of development all over the world. It is a multifaceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered concept. Women empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over material, human and intellectual resources as well as control over decision-making in the home, community, society and nation. Women contribute more than half of the duties and responsibilities of the family, but are hardly empowered to participate in decision-making [4]. Decision-making needs high self-efficacy, knowledge, experience, capability and risk take. Therefore, it is assumed that women are not equal level person with spouse with respect to decision-making in family. Women always obey decision which gradually decrease women's self-esteem. These women feel self-ineffective and inadequate in family decrease both their marital and life satisfaction.

Thus, empowering women is critical since it will help to unlock their potentials, which in turn enable them to improve not only their standard of living and quality of life, but also the welfare of their family. As a result, empowerment of women could lead to an effective strategy to alleviate the problems of poverty. There is need to enhance empowerment status of women, to boost their decision-making power in the social, economic

and political spheres. Hence, the present study was undertaken to enhance the empowerment status of women through decision-making skills.

Anwar et al. [5] analyzed the positive relation between women's autonomy and their role in decision-making at household level of Pakistani married women, from four villages of Tehsil Sambrial, Sialkot. The study found that women are becoming more autonomous due to enhancement in their education, exposure towards media, awareness, higher access to resources, stronger communication with their husbands, freedom from domestic violence and freedom of movement.

Sultana [6] conducted a study to examine women autonomy and decision-making power at the household level and to identify the factors that effect on women autonomy and decision-making power at household level and the study concluded that women educational attainment ( $r=0.47$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), income ( $r = 0.60$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) occupation ( $r = 0.61$ ;  $p<0.01$ ), gender-based awareness has a significant effect on household decision-making.

Acharya et al. [7] conducted a study to explore the links between women's household position and their autonomy in decision making in Nepal, a sample of 8,257 married women were interviewed about their roles in decision-making. The analyzed data based on the 2006 Nepal Demographic Health Survey (NDHS). Results revealed that women autonomy in decision-making is positively associated with their age, employment and number of living children; the study further stated that women's increased education is positively associated with autonomy in own health care decision making ( $p<0.01$ ).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In order to study the impact of interventions on enhancing the empowerment status of tribal working women in Utnood Mandal Adilabad District in India, an experimental research design was conducted. The sample for the study comprised of 50 tribal working women between

the age group of 25 to 45 years. As this study aimed to acquire an in-depth understanding of dynamics of empowerment in the family, only cooperative and willing respondents were considered in the sample.

### 2.1 Tools Used

- Interview schedule was used to know the general profile of the respondents.
- A standardized empowerment scale of Sarada, Devi (2006) was used to assess the empowerment status of respondents. It was divided into six parts, in which three parts were related to self-decision, and others were related to joint decision and decisions taken on personal affairs, children affairs, and household affairs.

The intervention was in the form of a module on life skill education, used to enhance empowerment status through decision-making skills of women. The target of the intervention were tribal working women, who participated in a 7-days training module, consisting of guest lectures, brain storming methods, working in small groups and role play to discuss and practice the skills acquired.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Overall Self-Decision-Making Skills of Tribal Working Women

The table represents the perception of 50 tribal women respondents on overall self-decision making power in pre and post-test, where N is the number of respondents. At pre-test, 78% of the women were at average level self-decision-making skills, 12% were at low level and only 10% were at high level. After the intervention, post-test results revealed that 74% of the women were high in self-decision-making skills and remaining 26% were at average level. It is very interesting to know that none of the respondents acknowledges having low level life skills. Thus, based on the comparative perception on self-decision-making power of the participants before and after the intervention, the intervention was proven effective among respondents to develop and enhance their empowerment status.

### 3.2 Effect of Intervention on Self-Decision Making Skills on Personal Affairs

The table represents the perception of the same 50 tribal women respondents on self-decision-

making skills on personal affairs. The assessed items included: freedom to take decisions on personal savings scheme, purchasing expensive jewelry, and purchasing personal assets like lands, house etc., with reference to resources available and decision-making. At pre-test, 58% of respondents were at low level in taking decisions on personal affairs, 22% were at average level and 20% were at high level. The findings supported by Pradeep et al. [8] authenticated that women still lack freedom in decision-making regarding their personal, household and reproductive issues, revealing gaps that still need to be addressed in terms of women empowerment.

**Table 1. Self-decision-making skills (N=50)**

	Low		Average		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Pre	6	12	39	78	5	10
Post	0	-	13	26	37	74

**Table 2. Self-decision-making skills on personal affairs (N=50)**

	Low		Average		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Pre	29	58	11	22	10	20
Post	4	8	18	36	28	56

**Table 3. Self-decision-making skills on children affairs (N=50)**

	Low		Average		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Pre	24	48	15	30	11	22
Post	5	10	13	26	32	64

**Table 4. Self-decision-making skills on household affairs (N=50)**

	Low		Average		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Pre	18	36	22	44	10	20
Post	8	16	12	24	30	60

The table represents the perception of the same 50 tribal women respondents on self-decision-making skills on personal affairs. The assessed items included: freedom to take decisions on personal savings scheme, purchasing expensive jewelry, and purchasing personal assets like lands, house etc., with reference to resources available and decision-making. At pre-test, 58% of respondents were at low level in taking

decisions on personal affairs, 22% were at average level and 20% were at high level. The findings supported by Pradeep et al. [8] authenticated that women still lack freedom in decision-making regarding their personal, household and reproductive issues, revealing gaps that still need to be addressed in terms of women empowerment.

The post-test results revealed that 56% of the women respondents were at high level of taking personal decisions, followed by 18% at average level and 8% at low level. The intervention on self-awareness and decision-making (the power to take self-decisions) helped the women respondents to know about themselves and to take self-decisions.

### **3.3 Effect of Intervention on Self-Decision-Making Skills on Children Affairs**

The table represents the distribution of women respondents on self-decision-making skills on children's affairs. The data was collected from the respondent women to find out whether they had freedom to pursue their children's affairs (such as buying school requirements for children, purchasing clothes for the children, encouraging the children to pursue their hobbies, etc.). The pre data collected revealed that 48% of respondents were at low level, followed by 30% at average level and 22% at low level. After the intervention, post-test results revealed that 64% of the women perceived themselves at high level on children affairs, 30% at average level and the remaining 10% at low level. Findings supported by Hoque et al. [9] authenticated that with few exceptions, majority of the men take decision alone related to economic aspects rather than consulting with women.

### **3.4 Effect of Intervention on Self-Decision-Making Skills on Household Affairs**

An additional evaluation was performed with reference to household affairs, such as purchasing miscellaneous things for the household and freedom to maintain household according to own choices. The above table represents the perception of the same 50 tribal women respondents on self-decision-making skills on household affairs, with reference to resources available and decision-making. At pre-test 44% of the women were at average level in

taking decisions on household affairs, 36% were at low level, and only 10% perceived themselves at high level. Coinciding with the study by Rashid and Islam [10], family decision-making role indicated that 42.8% of the rural women were found playing medium decision-making role while the 57.2% was equally shared by high and low decision makers.

After the intervention, the post-test results revealed that, 60% of the women respondents were at high level of taking household decisions, followed by 24% at average level and 16% at low level.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Results of the study revealed that at pre-test, majority of the sampled women were at average level of decision-making skills (78%), 12(%) were at low level and only 10(%) were at high level. After the intervention, post test results revealed that majority of the women (74%) were high in decision making skills and remaining (26%) were at average level. It is very interesting to know that none of the respondents had low level of life skills. Thus, intervention found to be effective among women respondents to develop and enhance their empowerment status through decision-making skills.

Employment and education have always empowered women and brought a positive impact on decision making, as stated by Mumtaz and Salway [11]. A curriculum for such programs should be developed with a clear policy framework to reduce differences in education and employment between men and women.

## **COMPETING INTERESTS**

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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