

Pathways to Liberation: A Study of Demographic Influences on Emancipation of Scheduled Caste Women in West Bengal

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Abstract

The emancipation of women is a multifaceted process encompassing social, economic, political, and cultural transformations aimed at achieving gender equality and empowering women, particularly those belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), across all spheres of life. This study examines the influence of locality, educational qualifications, and occupation as demographic variables on the emancipation of SC women and its various dimensions. Specifically, it focuses on five selected dimensions of emancipation: physical, social, political, economic, and educational. A total of 649 samples were collected using stratified random sampling from the districts of Murshidabad, Medinipur, and South 24 Parganas in West Bengal. A self-developed tool was utilized for data collection, and statistical analyses, including mean, standard deviation, t-tests, and F-tests, were performed. The findings revealed significant differences in attitudes toward the emancipation of SC women across various dimensions, influenced by locality, educational qualifications, and occupation. Specifically, no significant difference was observed between rural and urban respondents in the physical dimension. However, significant differences were found in the social, political, economic, and

educational dimensions. Additionally, notable dimension-wise variations in attitudes were identified based on the educational qualifications and occupations of SC women in West Bengal. In conclusion, the locality, educational qualification, and occupation as a demographic variables significantly influence on the emancipation of SC women and its five dimensions.

Keywords: Emancipation of Women, Scheduled Castes Women, Empowerment, West Bengal.

Introduction

South Asia Countries are more conscious about Gender Equality and Women's Rights. The reason for saying that after reviewing the literature saw that, last ten years most researchers lots worked on Gender Equality and Women's Rights. Now talking about women's equality, many dimensions will come up, but some most important aspects among them are women's Emancipation and Psychological Empowerment. According to IGI Global, "Emancipation is a movement which aims at ensuring freedom of self-fulfillment and self-development for women, as well as equal access to domestic and community resources" (Women Issues and Rights in a Developing Worlds, Chapter 17). Emancipation means Freedom and rights. So, women's Emancipation means freedom from all social, political, cultural, and Economic bondage, which helps to become self-nourishment, and self-independence of women. (Trivedi et. al 1-26). Basically Women's Empowerment and Women's Emancipation are closely the same concepts but slight differences between them that are Empowerment makes you strong, while Emancipation helps you to understand your rights, freedom, priorities, and what you should do & don't (Kahil 1-12). Empowerment helps women to be emancipated (Alkhaled & Berglund 1-3).

To bring gender equality in society, women must first be emancipated, which will make them know about their dignity rights, strengths & weaknesses (Chandrika 302 & Aviv 34). as well as must be psychologically strong so that they can hold one's spine firmly in any situation

(Givens 189 & Khalil 179-180). So, in the present time especially in India, Women's Emancipation is the main and crucial aspect for Gender Equality and Rights in our society towards women. The focused part of this study is the influence of demographic variables on emancipation of women.

Objectives

1. To examine the differences in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation between rural and urban locations among SC women.
2. To examine the differences in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation based on educational qualification among SC women.
3. To examine the differences in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation between working and non working SC women.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no difference in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation between rural and urban locations among SC women.

H₀₂: There is no difference in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation based on educational qualification among SC women.

H₀₃: There is no difference in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation between working and non working SC women.

Methodology Part

Research Design

'Descriptive Survey Method' was used in the Study.

Sample with Sampling technique:

Participated are 583 sample were selected by multistage purposive sampling techniques from three district i.e. Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas and Midnapore district in West Bengal.

Instruments:

Scale of Emancipation of Women: In the study, I used a self-made & standardized questionnaire on the "Emancipation of Women scale". I used content validity and face validity

for check validation & Cronbach alpha (.812) was used for the reliability check of the tool.

Statistical technique:

Mean, median, SD and t test have been used as descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, and Excel and IBM SPSS 25 were used for an analysis of the quantitative data.

Results & Interpretation

H₀₁: There is no difference in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation (WE) between rural and urban locations among SC women.

Dimensions	Location	N	M	SD	t	P
Physical	Rural	325	18.37	3.561	-2.155	.03
	Urban	324	18.97	3.569		
Social	Rural	325	18.72	3.792	-6.574	.000
	Urban	324	20.63	3.630		
Political	Rural	325	18.35	3.677	-3.541	.000
	Urban	324	19.29	3.076		
Economical	Rural	325	15.30	4.842	-3.039	.002
	Urban	324	16.49	5.148		
Educational	Rural	325	18.78	6.774	1.87	.06
	Urban	324	17.80	6.643		

In the physical dimension, the mean score in urban areas (18.97) is slightly higher than in rural areas (18.37), and t is -2.155 and p-value is .03, indicating a significant difference in physical dimension of WE between rural and urban area. In social dimension, urban areas show a significantly higher mean score (20.63) compared to rural areas (18.72). The difference is highly significant, with a t-value is -6.574 and a p-value is .000, revealing a significant difference in social dimension of WE between rural and urban area. In political dimension urban areas have a higher mean score (19.29) than rural areas (18.35). The difference is

statistically significant, with a t-value is -3.541 with p-value is .000, , which means a significant difference in political dimension of WE between rural and urban area. In economic dimension the mean score is higher in urban areas (16.49) than in rural areas (15.30). This difference is statistically significant, with a t is -3.039 with p is .002, , indicating a significant difference in economic dimension of WE between rural and urban area. In educational dimensions, the mean score in rural areas (18.78) is slightly higher than in urban areas (17.80). However, this difference is not statistically significant, with a t-value is 1.87 and a p is .06. overall summary results are in the physical, social, political, and economic dimensions of women's emancipation, urban areas demonstrate significantly higher scores compared to rural areas. However, in the educational dimension, there is no statistically significant difference between rural and urban areas among SC women.

H₀₂: There is no difference in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation based on educational qualification among SC women.

Dimensions	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	SD	F- test	p
Physical	Illiterate	61	16.77	2.918	8.09	.000
	Primary to upper primary	165	18.32	3.432		
	Secondary to higher secondary	266	18.73	3.497		
	Higher Education	157	19.67	3.768		
Social	Illiterate	61	17.79	3.484	7.878	.000
	Primary to upper primary	165	19.22	3.558		
	Secondary to higher secondary	266	19.74	3.910		
	Higher Education	157	20.78	3.777		
Political	Illiterate	61	17.46	2.668	4.634	.001
	Primary to upper primary	165	18.35	2.934		
	Secondary to higher secondary	266	19.25	3.808		
	Higher Education	157	19.10	3.300		

Economical	Illiterate	61	14.98	5.162	5.348	.000
	Primary to upper primary	165	15.28	4.557		
	Secondary to higher secondary	266	15.56	5.037		
	Higher Education	157	17.44	5.165		
Educational	Illiterate	61	13.39	4.674	70.554	.000
	Primary to upper primary	165	15.44	5.324		
	Secondary to higher secondary	266	17.56	5.485		
	Higher Education	157	24.37	6.438		

In physical level, F value is 8.09, which means there is significance difference in the physical, dimension of women's emancipation among illiterate, primary to upper primary, secondary to higher secondary & higher education levels.

In social level, F value is 3.484, which means there is significance difference in the social dimension of women's emancipation among illiterate, primary to upper primary, secondary to higher secondary & higher education levels.

In political level, F value is 2.668, which means there is significance difference in the political dimension of women's emancipation among illiterate, primary to upper primary, secondary to higher secondary & higher education levels.

At an economical level, the F value is 5.162, meaning there is a significant difference in the economic dimension of women's emancipation among illiterate, primary to upper primary, secondary to higher secondary & higher education levels.

In educational level, the F value is 70.554, meaning there is a significant difference in the educational dimension of women's emancipation among illiterate, primary to upper primary, secondary to higher secondary & higher education levels.

Final conclusion is educational qualification has been positive impact on the women emancipation of SC women.

H₀3: There is no difference in physical, social, political, economic, and educational dimensions of women's emancipation between working and non working SC women.

Dimensions	Occupation	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p
Physical	Working	111	19.28	3.220	1.986	.047
	Non- Working	538	18.54	3.633		
Social	Working	111	21.18	3.527	4.62	.000
	Non- Working	538	19.36	3.821		
Political	Working	111	20.11	3.669	4.42	.000
	Non- Working	538	18.55	3.308		
Economical	Working	111	22.23	4.517	17.802	.000
	Non- Working	538	14.58	4.038		
Educational	Working	111	19.48	7.109	2.05	.04
	Non- Working	538	18.04	6.619		

Across all dimensions—physical, social, political, economic, and educational—working individuals consistently show higher mean scores compared to non-working individuals. The differences are statistically significant in all dimensions, highlighting the positive impact of employment women's emancipation among SC women. The most substantial difference is observed in the economic dimension.

Conclusion

The findings revealed significant differences in attitudes toward the emancipation of SC women across various dimensions, influenced by locality, educational qualifications, and occupation. Specifically, no significant difference was observed between rural and urban respondents in the physical dimension. However, significant differences were found in the social, political, economic, and educational dimensions. Additionally, notable dimension-wise variations in attitudes were identified based on the educational qualifications and occupations

of SC women in West Bengal. In conclusion, the locality, educational qualification, and occupation as demographic variables significantly influence the emancipation of SC women and its five dimensions.

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Society Language Culture