

## Attitude Towards Women Empowerment of Class XII Girl Students of Shillong

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### Abstract:

Women constitute almost 50% of the world's population but India has shown disproportionate sex ratio whereby female's population has been comparatively lower than males. As far as their social status is concerned, they are not treated as equal to men in all the places. The main problems that were faced by women are gender discrimination, female infanticide, financial constraints, family responsibility, etc. It is said that if you educated a girl child or women you will educate the whole family. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to respond to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. The present study focused on adolescence girls on their attitude towards women's empowerment. The study found that majority girls' students have highly favourable attitude towards empowerment of women. Girls belonging to patriarchal society and the girls studying in co-education schools have more favourable attitude towards women empowerment than that of girls' from matrilineal society and that of girls' studying in all girls school in Shillong.

**Key words.:** Women's Empowerment, patriarchal, matrilineal, co-education

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Women are essential part of societies. It said that women constitute about fifty percent of world's population and yet their status has been significantly low as in comparison to men. Women's position in all societies is subordinate till now. In all societies men have occupied more powerful and superior position. Thus, women are placed an inferior role in every sphere. Most of the decisions were taken by the head of the family or the higher authority which was basically done by men. They require empowerment to one at par with men.

India is the seventh largest country by area and second most populous country with over 1.34 billion populations with a total population 652 million of women, known for its cultural heritage, traditions, civilization, religion and geographical features from the ancient time. On the other hand, it is also popular as a male chauvinistic nation. Women are given first priority in India however on the other hand they were badly treated in the family and society. They were limited only for household chores or understand the responsibility of home and family members. They were kept totally unaware of their rights and own development. There is a need to educate the women regarding many fundamental rights and social rights they are born with. There should be respect and dignity towards women, total freedom of their own life and lifestyle inside the home and also outside at their work, they should make their decision by their own choice, they should have a high social respect in society, they should have equal rights in society and other judicial works and not to be discriminated while providing any type of education, no discrimination between woman and men while giving jobs and employment, they should select their own economic and financial choices by their own. All this can only be achieved through empowering the women of the country, who are still not aware of their fundamental rights. Women empowerment is one of the most challenging issues; it is required for the

growth and development of the society, nation and the world. Kofi Annan said "there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women." Adding to this, Swami Vivekananda quoted that, "There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved, and it is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing." Thus we can say that women empowerment is one of the major tools which can be use for development. Women who know the rights, their duty can contribute a lot to the productivity and development to the society, nation as well as to the world.

108<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Bill (also called Women's Reservation Bill) was passed to reserve one-third of the seats for women only in Lok Sabha to make them actively involved in every area. In other fields also the seats for women have been reserved for their active participation without any limitation and competition. Various mass campaigns need to be organised in the backward rural areas to make them aware about the real values of women and all the facilities available by the government for their bright future. They need to be promoted for the survival and proper education of female child to really bring the dream of women empowerment come true.

Some of the other Acts passed by the Parliament are Equal Remuneration Act-1976, Dowry Prohibition Act-1961, Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act-1956, Medical termination of Pregnancy Act-1961, Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act-1987, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 Compulsory Registration of Marriage Act, 2006, Prohibition of Child Marriage Act-2006, Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and prevention, Protection of Misuse) Act-1994, Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Protection) Act-2013 etc in order to empower women with

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legal rights. In order to provide safety to women and reduce crime against women in India, government has passed another act Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Bill 2015 especially after Nirbhaya case when an accused juvenile was realised. This act is the replacement earlier Indian juvenile delinquency law 2000 (Juvenile Justice Care and Protection of Children Act 2000) in order to reduce juvenile age from 18 to 16 years in case of heinous offenses. Women need to change their mindset that they are not just meant to remain within the four walls but to move outside and live their own live, make their own decisions.

Therefore women empowerment can be achieved only when women will understand their own rights, value, laws, when they will able to make decision by their own. Girls and women are the future of any nation.

### I. NEED AND JUSTIFICATION

The north-eastern state of Meghalaya, located at the foothills of the Himalayas. It is home to the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo tribes who follow the matrilineal system, where women have a special position and role in society. Ropmay, (2014) reported that through the years, progressive degeneration of moral values has resulted in an escalation of illegal activities, crimes against women and gender-based violence. Thus there is a need to find the root cause for this. Since victims are generally girls and women even after being educated, girls are needed to be empowered with education, life skills, and techniques to survive and hold a respectable position in the society. Although government and different NGOs are trying their level best to empower girls and women by organizing different programs for marginalized and deprived women to build their confidence, financial capability development, livelihood development, self-respect and uprooting of violence against them., it is the duty of every single citizen to take part in such programs and know more and more about how one can be empowered. Although Meghalaya is a Matrilineal still most of the crimes are done to women. There is a need to educate the young girls about their social, economic, educational rights, so that they can make better decision and move ahead with positive attitude and can contribute their best to the society and the country and as a whole to the world. Women empowerment can change the economy of the country also. Empowering women may easily help to grow each and every member of the family without any extra effort. A woman is considered to be responsible for everything in the family so she can better solve all the problems from her own end. Empowerment of the women would automatically bring empowerment for everyone.

### II. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERMS USED IN THE STUDY

Women empowerment- Women empowerment means emancipation of women from the vicious grips of social, economical, political, caste and gender-based discrimination. It means granting women the freedom to make life choices. Women empowerment does not mean 'deifying women' rather it means replacing patriarchy with parity. Women empowerment doesn't mean to fight to become superior than men rather it means to fight to get equal right and opportunity and walk shoulder to shoulder.

### III. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the attitude of class XII girls' students towards women empowerment
2. To study the difference among in attitude towards Women Empowerment among the girls belonging to Matrilineal and Patriarchal society.
3. To find out the difference in attitude towards Women Empowerment among the girls belonging to the different caste.
4. To study the difference in attitude towards Women Empowerment among the class XII girls belonging to school with co-education and general education system.

### IV. NULL HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference between the girls belonging to Matrilineal and Patriarchal society in their attitude towards women empowerment.
2. There is no significant difference in attitude towards women empowerment between girls' belonging to ST and General.
3. There is a no significant difference in attitude towards women empowerment among the class XII girls belonging to co-education school and All girls' school.

### V. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study has been delimited as follows the present study was conducted only for class XII girl students and also those belonging to ST and general category. The present study was conducted only in Shillong city.

### VI. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is "a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings".

### VII. POPULATION

The population of the present study comprised of the 5256 girls' students of class XII of the Shillong city, Meghalaya of batch 2017-2018. The sample used in the present study is the girls' student from class XII of Shillong city, Meghalaya. A sample of 302 girls' students was selected randomly from a population of 5256 of class XII from different community, caste, types of schools that is co-ed and all girls' schools. For the present study, the sampling technique which was used is Simple Random Sampling.

### VIII. RESEARCH METHOD

For the present study Descriptive method was used. Descriptive studies primarily concerned with finding out "what is".

### IX. TOOL

The tool which was used by the investigator in the present study was Adolescent Girls' Empowerment Scale developed by Devendra Singh Sisodia and Alpana Singh. The details of the tools are given below:

### X. RESULT

#### Attitude of class XII girls’ students towards women empowerment

The analysis and interpretation of this objective has been done using the frequency, distribution of scores and percentages of the attitude of class XII girls’ students towards women empowerment. It has been presented in Table 1:

**Table 1:** Frequency Scores and Percentages in attitude towards women empowerment of class XII girls students.

Range of scores	Frequency	Percentage	Remark
163-245	204	67.55	High
82-162	96	31.79	Medium
49-81	2	0.66	Low

The table 1 shows that 0.66 % of the girls’ students obtained scores of between 49-81 on the Adolescent Girls’ Empowerment Scale thus placing them in negative attitude towards empowerment level. Further, it is seen that 39.71% of the girls’ students obtained scores of between 82- 162 on the empowerment scale. This shows that 39.71% of girls’ student have moderate positive attitude towards women empowerment. It also indicates 67.55% of girls’ obtained scores between 163-245 which put them in the high empowerment level in the empowerment scale and thus majority girls’ students have positive high attitude towards empowerment of women.

#### Difference between the girls belonging to the Matrilineal and Patriarchal society towards women empowerment

In order to find out the difference in the level of empowerment attitude between the girls’ belonging to matrilineal and patriarchal society, a null hypothesis was formulated as follows- Ho- There is no significant difference in attitude of girls’ belonging to matrilineal and the girls’ belonging to patriarchal society.

**Table 2:** Mean, Standard Deviation and t-Value of Mean Scores of girls’ attitude towards women empowerment belonging to Matrilineal and Patriarchal society.

Attitude towards women empowerment	Matrilineal/ Patriarchal	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	Remark
	Matrilineal					
Patriarchal	58	180.40	18.014			

From table 2 it was found out that the mean scores of girls’ belonging to matrilineal society shows a score of 167.28 whereas 180.40 mean score is the mean score of girls’ belonging to patriarchal society. This indicates the difference of mean score of 13.12 which is in favour of girls’ belonging to patriarchal society. The t-value was 4.32. It was found to be significant at 0.01 level with df 300. It was also found that there is a significant difference in the attitude of girls’ belonging to matrilineal and patriarchal society. Thus, the null hypothesis, ‘there is no significant difference in the level in attitude of girls’ belonging to matrilineal and the girls’ belonging to patriarchal society’ was not accepted. This indicates that girls belonging to patriarchal society have more

favourable attitude towards women empowerment than that of girls’ from matrilineal society. This may be because of the changing ideals and changing mind set of the people with time. The media also has a lot of influence for making people aware of the issue and the environment at home. As female are more dominated as compared to male as a result, girls in patriarchal society are sensitive towards the need of empowerment of women. In matrilineal society the women need not publically fight for empowerment as they are culturally empowered.

Difference in attitude towards women empowerment among the girls belonging to the different caste

The sample of students belonging to SC category was less so the difference was found between students belonging only to ST and general. In order to find out the difference in the level of women empowerment between girls’ belonging to ST and General group, a null hypothesis is formulated as follows-H<sub>0</sub>- There is no significant difference in the level of women empowerment between girls’ belonging to ST and General group in Shillong.

**Table 3:** Mean, Standard Deviation and t-Value of Mean Scores of women empowerment between girls’ belonging to ST and General group.

Caste	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	Remark
ST	272	167.55	20.928	5.64	Significant at 0.01 level
General	27	190.78	13.386		

From the above table 3, shows that the mean scores of girls’ from ST group is 167.55, also and the mean scores for girls’ belonging to General is 190.78 respectively. The mean scores indicate that girls’ belonging General has more positive attitude towards women empowerment than that of ST girls’. It also shows that girls’ from general background shows comparatively higher attitude towards women empowerment than that of girls’ belonging to ST. The level of women empowered attitude for General is higher (M=190.78, SD=13.386) as compared to that of girls’ students belonging to ST (M=167.55, SD=20.928), t (300)=5.64, p=0.01. It was found out that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of ST and General girl’ in the level of empowerment. Thus the null hypothesis ‘There is no significant difference in the level of women empowerment between girls’ belonging to ST and General group in Shillong’ is rejected. This shows that the girls’ belonging to the General have better and higher favorable attitude towards women empowerment than that of girls’ representing ST group. The probable reason of girls’ belonging to General have favorable attitude towards women empowerment it may be because the parents realize that in future they their children will have to compete with not only boys but with other children’s’ belonging to other caste as well unlike girls belonging to ST caste have many reservation policy which are implemented by the government.

#### Difference in attitude towards women empowerment of the girls’ studying in all girls school and co-education.

In order to find out the difference in the level of women empowerment between girls’ studying in All girls school and

Co-education school, a null hypothesis is formulated as follows-Ho- ‘There is no significant difference in the level of women empowerment between class XII girls studying in All girls school and Co-education school in Shillong’.

**Table 4:** Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of mean scores of class XII girls’ studying in All girls school and Co-education school in Shillong.

Sl.No	School	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t* value	Remark
1.	All Girls	152	167.25	24.172	2.15	Significant at 0.05 level
2.	Co Education	149	172.52	17.818		

From the above table 4 it was observed that the mean score of girls’ studying in all girls school is 167.25 with SD= 24.172 where as the mean score for girls’ studying in co-education is 172.52 with a SD=17.818 respectively. The mean scores shows higher attitude is possessed by girls’ studying in co-education is higher than that of girls’ studying in all girls’ school. From the above table 10 the computed t value was found out to be 2.15. It also indicates that the level of attitude towards women empowerment in case of class XII girls’ studying in co-education is higher (M=172.52, SD=17.818) as compared to that in the case of class XII girls’ studying in all girls school (M=167.25, SD= 24.172). It was found that there is a significant difference between the girls’ of class XII who are studying in all girls schools and who are studying in co-education school. Hence the Null hypothesis stated as ‘There is no significant difference in the level of women empowerment between class XII girls studying in All girls school and Co-education school in Shillong’ is not accepted. Therefore it was found that girls’ studying in co-education have higher positive attitude towards women empowerment than that of girls’ studying in all girls school in Shillong. This may be because of the fact that girls from co-ed are studying with boys are sensitive towards the need of empowerment. Girls of Co-education schools may be observing daily biasness towards them as a female as compared to boys so they feel the need of empowerment higher. It could be teachers favour and give power related responsibilities to boys majority of times and girls are usually neglected and not included in decision making and giving responsibilities so they feel the need and favour empowerment of women. All girls’ schools may not face the same challenges to prove their abilities and potentialities than that of the co-ed schools. They may also have the same ideals and thoughts as all of them are girls and hence there is no chance of getting any kind of further enlightenment about the rights they have.

**XI. SUGGESTIONS**

“Women Empowerment” is a burning issue all over the world. “Women empowerment” and “women equality with men” is a universal issue. As Malala Yousafzai famously quoted “I raise up my voice not so I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard... we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.”, and that sentiment precisely outlines the basis of new age women empowerment. Discrimination against women is rampant all over the world even in this 21st century. Women are victimized because of

the Patriarchal societies. Even though about 50% of the world’s population consists of women, but unfortunately most of them are denied basic rights education, freedom of speech, voting power and even independent identity. Crimes directed specifically against women are reported from all over the world. There still remain questions about acceptance of women empowerment in the most advanced of countries.

1. One of the key or instrument that brings women empowerment, improve through education. By education each and every girl child women empowerment can take place. By educating women, economy of the country increases. Involvement of educated women in various activities helps the country to move towards economic and social development. Female education also contributes towards health and well-being of the family. By getting education, women also contribute to the national income of the country.
2. Organizing workshop in the schools and locality regarding the burning issues like violence against women, gender disparities for not only girls but for boys too.
3. Arranging awareness talks about their fundamental rights given by constitution, legal rights, human rights, about reservation etc.
4. Organizing counseling programmes for the girls in schools and locality.
5. Providing vocational training for girls in schools, helping them to learn job skills can bring self confidence in them.
6. Providing proper health service like nutrition, sanitation in schools and locality.
7. Teacher should encourage girls to participate in all the decision making process which goes inside the classroom.
8. Encouraging the girl students to open up, to put forward their point of view and be a leader. This can be done by providing congenial environment both at home and school.
9. Providing opportunity for Self employment and encouraging women to develop in their fields they are good at and make a career.
10. Women should be allowed to work and should be provided enough safety and support to work. They should be provided with proper wages and work at par with men so that their status can be elevated in the society.
11. Strict implementation of Programmes and Acts should be there to curb the mal-practices prevalent in the society.

**XII. CONCLUSION**

One cannot change the issue of women empowerment with a blink of an eye. It will take a lot of effort not only from the part of women of the nation but from the men side and society too and as whole from the nation. The first step to make towards women empowerment is to make each and every girl child educated. Providing equal educational opportunity is the first means through which women can come to know about their rights. Every girl has the right to go to school, stay safe from violence, access health services, and fully participate in her community.

However in a patriarchy system of social structure men dominate, suppress and exploit women. The fixed social structure and the indoctrination of the system of patriarchy play a dominant role. But there has been a shift of feminist ideology and woman now is seeking for her freedom of livelihood and she is now struggling against the man's monopoly of civilization. Equipping with changing situations through development of skills of work and management makes this possible. A sustainable development of women has been increased in India through Panchayati Raj system and NGOs have been geared up to protect the Human Rights they are no more stagnant and isolated as they used to be in the past, many skill development programs are introduced to make urban and rural women economical empowered. Women are now emerging as a big force in every walk of life.

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