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Attitude Towards Equality Of Women Among Early And Late Adults Residing In Urban And Rural Tamilnadu.

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Abstract:

The present investigation was an attempt to assess the attitude towards equality of women among early and late adults, residing in urban and rural areas of Tamil Nadu. A random sample of 200 adults belonging to the age group of 20-50 years were selected; out of which 100 were selected from urban areas and 100 were from rural areas, consisting of both males and females. Equality of women attitude scale devised by Dr.Rama Tiwari (1998) was used for the study. Results revealed that rural women showed greater approval for equal status of women with men. Women on the whole, expressed the need for gender equality and eradication of discrimination towards girls and women. Older adults showed more concern towards equality of women and effective implementation of Government Policies relating to empowerment of women.

KEYWORD:

The Attitude Towards Equality Of Women Among Early And Late Adults, women's equality, Values of attitude.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indian Society has always been male dominated, although the Indian society was liberal in the early periods but later on, that laws were made in such a manner that in India also the domination of the males became more strict and stringent. Pratima (1992) mentions that due to the rapid social change and industrialization and also the influence of Westernization, change in the family structure emphasized the role of women in more active and effective manner by which women came out of the security of the four walls of the home and started taking active part in all spheres of social, political and professional activities. The problems related to the status of women in India are vast, complex & dynamic although women have received the constitution guarantees of equal opportunities in every sphere of activity, women have lagged behind because of various constraints. Women must be given more freedom in choosing alternative life patterns. If women are kept out of the process of development, then the gain of economic development would be null and void says Yates, 1995.

Throughout much of the history, deep seated cultural beliefs allowed women only limited roles in society. Many people believed that women's natural roles were as mothers and wives. These people considered women to be better suited for child bearing and home making rather than for involvement in the public life of business or politics. Wide spread beliefs that women were intellectually inferior to men led most societies to limit women's education to learning domestic skills. Well educated, upper-class men controlled most positions of employment and power in society opines schultheiss (2004)

The position and status of women in India has been changing from age to age. While one school call women the highest gift of God to man, the other asserts that the best way to read God is to avoid women says Groner (2000). Gokhale was concerned in women's equality with men in matter of education and in marriage. He was in favour not only for school education but also for higher education without which, he

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thought, they will not be able to attain the status of equality with men.

Trends indicate that women's representation in politics requires special consideration and cannot be left to the forces that presently dominate our parties and Government. Today, even the best of our female parliamentarian feel sidelined and powerless within their respective parties. The few women in leadership position have not been able to encourage the entry of greater member of women in electoral and party politics and are an ineffective minority.

Sharmila Devi, mentions that from the time immemorial women have been unrecognized and unacknowledged contributors to the wealth of nation. They have been and continue to be indispensable to the cultivation of fields. Women have been engaged in skilled and unskilled jobs in the area of providing help, health care or education. Their indirect contribution as home makers, have seldom been realized.

The problems related to the status of women in India are vast, complex and dynamic. Although women have received the constitution guarantees of equal opportunity in every sphere of life, women have lagged behind because of a variety of constraints. Women must be given more freedom in choosing alternative life patterns.

Gender equality is tougher than it sounds. Formal Policy positions on gender are one thing, it is a different matter on the ground where people see measures aimed at gender equality interfering with 'Our' culture. Comfort zones are upset and deep feelings stirred up. However, culture cannot be a refuge for otherwise questionable and unjust behavior. In this sense, culture should be seen as both a conserving force and one that is open to change. People adjust in order to survive in changing environment.

NEED AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

In today's world there are lots of issues that have gained so much of importance and one of them is women's equality. There are number of NGO's who fight for women's freedom and equality. How far has it reached the minds of people and how far have people got the message, is a big question, that lingers in everyone's mind. There are so many issues that being talked about, when it comes to women certain issues are equality, justice, dowry, reservations in the parliament and decision making, beauty, sex and the list goes on endless. But the focus of the present study is on the main issue – 'Equality'. Equality in what and how and why could be the question that is being raised on everyone's mind. Equality in every sphere of life, be it in the family, in the social context and in the world at large. Women claim that they are capable of doing things equal with men and how do men & women agree on this line. Hence an attempt has been made to assess and compare the attitude of early and late adult men and women residing in the urban and rural areas of Tamil Nadu towards woman's equality.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the present study were:-

- to assess the attitude towards equality of women among adult men & women.
- to compare the attitude towards equality of women among urban & rural adults.
- to determine whether age had any influence on the attitude towards equality of women.

METHODOLOGY:

200 adult males and females from urban and rural areas of Tamil Nadu were chosen randomly; and their attitude on equality of women was collected by administering Equality of women attitude scale devised by Dr.Rama Tiwari (1998). The data collected was statistically analysed to interpret the results.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS:

The findings of the study on the attitudes of adult men & women towards women's equality is presented and discussed below in the following tables.

Table I showing the attitude of urban and rural adults of Tamil Nadu towards equality of women.

Locality	Mean	Std.Deviation	't' value	Level of significant
Urban Adults	60.48	7.0	3.73	Significant at 1% level
Rural Adults	67.76	6.7		

The mean values for the attitudes towards equality of women among urban and rural adults were 67.76 and 60.48 respectively. The calculated 't' value (3.73) was higher than the table value (2.56) at 1% level of significance. Hence it can be inferred that the adults living in rural parts of Tamil Nadu approved of equality of women than their urban counterparts. This may be attributed to the fact that rural people feel that even though equality of women is much talked about but when it comes to implementation, urban women enjoy more equal rights than rural women, who are still under the subjugation of men. The present finding is substantiated by the study conducted in rural parts of Zimbabwe where 75% of men want women to have equal rights outside home. It is difficult to believe that advanced and progressive attitude towards equality of women have taken place (Democratic culture: women's right 2000)

Table II – Showing the attitude of adult men and women of Tamil Nadu towards equality of women.

Gender	Mean	Std.Deviation	't' value	Level of significant
Adult Men	61.36	7.5	3.31	Significant at 1% level
Adult Women	67.76	8.5		

The above table revealed the mean values of the attitude towards equality of women among adult men of Tamil Nadu (61.36) was lower than adult women (68.96). The calculated 't' value of attitude towards equality of women (3.31) was greater than table value (1.96) at 1% level of significance. A study conducted by Nippon research centre (2001) corresponds with the present result that women in the age group of 25- 54 years, see that there is inequality in all walks of life, about 40% feel that women do not enjoy equal rights. They also feel that there is a strong discrimination against girls and support for international promotion of women's rights have been backed by majority of young women below 45 years.

Table III – showing the attitude of early and late adults of Tamil Nadu towards equality of women.

Age	Mean	Std.Deviation	't' value	Level of significant
Early Adult	57.62	15.41	4.0	Significant at 1% level
Late Adult	67.16	6.79		

It can be noted that the mean values of attitude towards equality among early adults of Tamil Nadu was 57.62 and late adults was 67.16. The calculated 't' value (4.003) for attitude towards equality of women among early and late adult men was higher than the table value of (2.58) at 1% level of significance. The late adults approve of women's equality more than the early adults, as they would have seen their daughters and other women having unfair treatment in their in law's house. Over the years, they would have witnessed the atrocities inflicted on women and have concluded that men and women are equal partners in any household, they have to respect each other, to have a peaceful family and survival at large.

Pierre (1997) in his research on promoting equality has found that men are no longer silent in women's issues and that men and women should exercise their human rights in full together. It is time for

men to redefine with women and share the tasks and responsibilities at every level of existence, especially at home.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Consolidating the findings of the present study, we can conclude that

1. Locality had an influence on the attitude towards equality of women i.e. rural adults expressed the need for equal rights.
2. There was a significant difference in the attitude towards equality of women among adult women and men i.e. women expressed and favoured the equal rights for women in all walks of life.
3. Effect of age on the attitude towards equality of women was clearly observed in the present study which means that older adults expressed their desire that women be treated on par with men in all walks of life.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The results of the present investigation points out the fact that even though Indian adults are, for the betterment of the status of women, still the change is not very satisfying and evident. Hence an awareness of the rights of women and their equal status with men has to be ingrilled from school years through college years by incorporating these topics in the syllabus. A general awareness should be created through mass media about the equality of women. If only we succeed in bringing the attitudinal change about equality of women among men and women alike, will there be a change in action, behavior and treatment of women in a respectable manner.

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