

WOMEN RIGHTS AWARENESS AMONG STUDENT TEACHERS AT SECONDARY LEVEL

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Abstract

Women rights awareness and women rights education are essential to all citizens to reduce violence against women. Most of the women and girl children are not aware of laws on violence against women and their legal rights. To impart this awareness, the student teachers must be aware of these rights. Hence this study is an attempt to find out the awareness of student teachers on women rights. A representative sample of 200 student teachers from various training colleges in Ernakulam District was selected and Women Rights Awareness Scale was employed to find out the awareness of student teachers on women rights. The Study reveals that majority of the student teachers have medium level of awareness on women rights and there is significant difference in the awareness regarding women rights among student teachers in relation to their gender.

Introduction

Today violence against women is increasingly recognized as a threat to democracy, a barrier to lasting peace, a burden on national economies, and an appalling human rights violation.” Seven in ten women is too high a proportion, to call this an issue, a crisis or a global phenomenon. If the root causes are not addressed, whether in terms of “condoned cultural” behavior leading to domestic violence or leaving crimes of sexual violence as a weapon of war unprosecuted, violence against women will continue to spread and scourge generations. It is therefore a **pandemic**, an epidemic of global proportion. The session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women from March 4-15 in 2013, focused on the elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls. To combat this pandemic, this is a unique opportunity to mobilize and join efforts with different groups in putting forward new initiatives! It is a pandemic spreading and affecting both men and women and their respective communities which in need of a clear and strategic set of policies for its prevention, treatment and care

Need and Significance of the Study

Women are treated unequally in respect of men throughout the world; Atrocities against women are increasing day by day. They are forced into early marriage, have children too young and eventually have to sell their bodies in order to survive. Many of them become HIV patients and more numbers suffer from physical problems relating to childbirth or rape.

Fear of violence is an important factor in the lives of most women which is a cause of women’s lack of participation in activities beyond the home as well as inside it. Women and girls may be subjected to

Physical and sexual abuse within the home, as punishment or as culturally justified assaults. These acts shape their attitude to life and their expectation of themselves.

Education for women is highly effective in reducing the violence against women. Many women and girl children are not aware of laws on violence against women and their legal rights. So awareness on women rights is necessary for women in all nations. School should provide awareness about women rights to children. To impart this awareness firstly the student teacher must be aware of these rights. Towards realizing these ends, the need is 'empower the student teachers globally'. So that we can provide this knowledge to the next generation. Hence this study is making an attempt to find out the awareness of student teachers on Women Rights.

Statement of the Problem

Women comprise half of the population of the world but their rights are violated virtually in every society. Freedom is the life breath of human beings. The repercussions of violence against women *reverberate* throughout the family and community. Women who have learned to read and understand their rights are much likely to initiate action for social change than those who are illiterate.

So the investigator who is a teacher educator, has herself decided to conduct the present study which is entitled as 'WOMEN RIGHTS AWARENESS AMONG STUDENT TEACHERS AT SECONDARY LEVEL

Definition of Key terms

Awareness: "State of being aware, conscious of a situation or object, without direct attention to it or definite knowledge of its Nature. (Curt V Good, 1959).

Women Right: 'The effort to secure equal rights for women and to remove gender discrimination from laws, institution and behavioral patterns" (UDHR, 1949)

Student Teachers: Graduate students in education attending training to become a teacher, usually at an institution of higher education.

Objectives

1. To find out the level of awareness on women rights among student teachers at secondary level
2. To compare the awareness regarding women rights among student teachers based on their gender (male/female)

Hypothesis

1. There will be no significant difference in the awareness regarding women rights among student teachers in relation to their gender (male/female).

Methodology

The investigator used the survey method under descriptive method of research in the present study. In this study data regarding the awareness of student teachers was gathered in order to make comparison between male and female trainee's, between type of management and and between science and art stream student teachers. A single group design was followed.

In view of the above, all student teachers in Ernakulam District were constituted the population of the study. It included the male and female student teachers studying in aided and unaided training institutes. There 22 B.Ed training institutes situated in urban and rural areas of this district.

Normative survey method was used for the study as many as 200 student teachers were selected through purposive sampling technique. Women Rights Awareness Scale (WRAS) for student teachers was constructed and standardized by the investigator. A strong rapport was established with the student teachers to get their free and frank views/opinions on various items pertaining to women rights awareness. The items in WRAS were an indicative of women rights awareness of student teachers. Provision was given within the tool itself for marking responses. The validity and reliability of the tool was established by appropriate method.

Since the data from the Awareness Test was available in the form of scores, to find out the significance of difference between the various groups, 't'-test was applied.

Delimitations of the study

1. The study was conducted on Women Rights Awareness among only women student teachers in Ernakulam District.
2. Only 200 student teachers were selected as sample due to experimental duration.
3. The sample was consisted of the student teachers at graduate level under Mahatma Gandhi University Jurisdiction.

Analysis and Interpretation

TABLE 1

Women Rights Awareness among secondary level student teachers for the total sample

Number of student teachers	Descriptive statistics	Scores obtained
200	Arithmetic Mean	159.05
	Median	159
	Mode	163
	SD	13.781

From table 1, it is observed that ,the mean score obtained for the total sample is 159.05.The median obtained for the total sample is 159 and mode obtained for the total sample is 163 respectively with a standard deviation of 13.781.

TABLE 2

Classification of student teachers with respect to their awareness levels

Sl No.	Level of Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
1	High	43	21.5
2	Medium	123	61.5
3	Low	34	17
	Total	200	100

From table 2, it is clear that 21.5% students have high level awareness on women rights and 61.5% have medium and 17% have low level awareness on women rights

Descriptive statistics for awareness scores of secondary level student teachers based on Gender

TABLE 3

Descriptive statistics	Gender (Male/Female)	
	Male(N=80)	Female(N=120)
Arithmetic Mean	158.93	139.97
Median	151	131
Mode	163	130
SD	15.090	12.677

From table 3, it is observed that, the mean score of male student teachers are 158.93 and female student teachers are 139.97. For males the median obtained was 151 and females 131, and mode obtained for males are 163 and females 130. The standard deviation obtained for males are 15.090 and females are 12.677.

TABLE 4

Classification of student teachers with respect to awareness on women rights based on gender

Level of Awareness	GENDER			
	Male		Female	
	No	%	No.	%
High	24	30	17	14
Medium	46	58	78	65
Low	10	12	25	21
Total	80	100	120	100

From table 4, it is clear that 30 percentage of Male student teachers have high level awareness on women rights and only 14 percentage of female teachers have high level of women rights awareness whereas only 12 percentage of male teachers have low level of women rights awareness and 21 percentage of female teachers have low level women rights awareness. 58 male teachers have medium level of awareness on women rights and 65 percentage of female teachers have medium level of women rights awareness. The data shows that majority of the male and female teachers have medium level of awareness on women rights awareness

TABLE 5

Data and result of test of significance difference between male and female students on women rights awareness

Awareness on women rights	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Critical Ratio
	Male	80	158.93	15.090	9.59**
	Female	120	139.97	12.67	

**shows that it is significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level

Table 5 shows that the mean score of the student teachers on women rights awareness was $M_1=158.93$ and the mean score of the female student teachers was $M_2=139.97$. Critical ratio was employed to compare the women rights awareness among male and female student teachers. The critical ratio was $CR=9.59$. The mean scores of awareness on women rights among male teachers are greater than female student teachers. There was significant difference in the mean scores of male and female student teachers.

Major findings of the Study

- Among the total sample, majority of the secondary level student teachers have medium level of awareness on women rights.

The percentage analysis shows that 21.5% of student teachers having high level of women rights awareness and 61.5% of student teachers belongs to medium level of women rights awareness and 17% of student teachers having low level of women rights awareness.

- There is significant difference in the awareness regarding women rights among student teachers in relation to their gender (Male/Female). The mean scores of awareness on women rights among male teachers are greater than female student teachers

Educational Implications of the study

The study helps to understand the need for women rights education in schools and colleges. Teachers have to be specially trained to teach women rights education as a separate subject at all levels of education. Women rights awareness programmes should be conducted in all educational institutions. The study will help the public to pay attention to the issue related to the problems against women and also help the students to develop awareness on rights of women and also to enjoy the privilege of it.

Conclusion

Kerala, the most literate state in India, with low infant and maternal mortality rate has been witnessing an increase in the rate of crime against women over a period of time. Government and voluntary agencies are doing their level best to protect women and wipe out this negative indicator of development but it continues to increase day by day. News papers daily report at least two or three rape cases and child abuse cases apart from other milder crime against women. The state has emergent need for conducting awareness programmes on women rights to help people live in consonance with the true dictates of democracy and rule of law.

When citizens are underprivileged groups, know that the right has to offer them; they can challenge injustices much more forcefully. Here the role of teachers is very crucial in moulding the children who are the future citizens of tomorrow.

Awareness on women rights is not merely securing of knowledge about rights and legal systems; it is also about developing skills, self confidence and determination of goals. The scope of women right awareness is to promote, protect and fulfilment of women rights. When we speak about the enforcement of women rights, it is necessarily signifies the combination of protection, promotion and fulfilment of women rights.

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