

Empowerment of Rural Women in Agriculture: A Socio-psychological Analysis

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ABSTRACT Empowerment in woman's development is a way of defining, challenging and overcoming barriers in her life through which she increases her ability to shape her life. The active, multi-dimensional processes enable them to realize full identity and power in all spheres of life. Rural women play a crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields. However without their total intellectual and physical participation in these activities, it is not possible to achieve the goals of rural uplift. In the present study an attempt has been made to analyze the present status of women empowerment in different caste categories in Sultanpur district of Uttar Pradesh by examining pivotal socio-psychological factors of empowerment such as autonomy vs. dependency, self-esteem vs. self-depreciation and reflective vs. repetitive behavior of women. The results showed that majority of the women had medium or low level of empowerment. Further women who were illiterate/less educated were less empowered and generally belong to the scheduled caste category. In overall terms, the researchers would argue that the broad based approach is one of the best approaches to guarantee gender equity and to empower rural women, and that this approach should be considered in the formulation of rural policies and the creation and implementation of agricultural and rural development programmes and projects.