

Review of the Effective Factors on the Empowerment of the Women Heading Households by Aid Committee of the City Mirjaveh

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Abstract: Today, all governments consider the citizens the most important factor in order to maintain their stability and meet their goals and empowerment of the citizens is certainly considered as one of the most important responsibilities of the governments. The purpose of this study is review of the effective factors on the empowerment of the women heading households by aid committee of the City Mirjaveh. The method used in this research is a survey method and the data and information have been collected by using the questionnaire. The research data has been collected by using the researcher-made questionnaire and the validity and reliability of the data has been confirmed. In the present research in order to analyze the data, the descriptive and inferential statistics (correlation coefficient, variance analysis, t-test and multivariate regression and so on) are used and all of the executive operations of data analysis and processing have also be done by using the data analysis software in social sciences (SPSS). In this research, among the women heading households covered by Imam Khomeini aid committee, the number of whom is 632 persons have been selected as the statistical population of the research. The volume of the required volume for the present research has been estimated to be consisted of 238 persons given the Cochran's formula. Nonetheless, in order to increase the validity of the research findings, a 240-person sample has been used. The results showed that all hypotheses were confirmed.

Key words: Empowerment, women administrator, committee, effective factors, SPSS

INTRODUCTION

Today, all governments consider the citizens the most important factor in order to maintain their stability and meet their goals and empowerment of the citizens is certainly considered as one of the most important responsibilities of the governments. In various countries of the world, a large part of researches and resources deal with the fact the feature a desirable citizen for the society shall have and how these features and characteristics can be developed in different classes of the society. Empowerment, from economic, social and cultural dimensions is a process including public notification in order to recognize the current situation, eliminating limits and obstacles, monitoring and tracking the resources and capacities available in the society from all dimensions in the respect of effective management for improving the living conditions (Bogler and Somech, 2004; Davis, 2010). In other words, empowerment is a process during which individuals do activities which leads to their domination over their destiny in order to overcome the obstacles on the way of their improvement. Therefore, professional

empowerment and rehabilitation is a complex phenomenon which has various forms in different aspects of their life and it includes the promotion of their abilities and talents in various dimensions including educational, economic, cultural and social dimensions. Women shall be after methods for growing and advancing their spiritual-intellectual values. They can nurture their qualifications in various areas through active participation and they can consolidate their identity in the society. Using fair and equal conditions, opportunities and situations for women and girls is a factor for promoting their status in the society. Generally, empowerment of the women who are heads of the household is defined as a necessary affair for empowering people with less income in order for them to reach their rights through achieving and controlling the natural resources of the available and changed organizations (Almeleh *et al.*, 1993). Also, empowerment is defined as a process in which individuals, groups and organizations take control of the problems and issues that they face (Drucker, 2009; Ismail *et al.*, 2004). Therefore, the objective of empowerment is helping weak individuals so that they would try to overcome their weaknesses,

improve the positive aspects of their lives, increase their skills and abilities for them to have rational control over their lives and do it in practice (Nelson, 1995; Scott and Zhafeh, 2008).

In our country, not only overcoming deprivation has a cultural and historical root but it is also considered as a legal duty today which is done by supporting organizations and it also has scientific and research support. In order to fight poverty and reduce deprivation in our country, numerous entertainment institutions and organizations have been created in the frame of supportive strategies. One of the significant institutions is Imam Khomeini aid committee which has been formed after the victory of the Islamic Revolution with the purpose of recognizing the financial and spiritual deprivations of the member of the society and deprived families and supporting them in order to eliminate poverty through executing the programs of providing financial, health, self-sufficiency and educational services for those in need including women (Poorkiani and Pirmoradi, 2008). One of the most important activities of the aid committee in this regard is execution of the self-sufficiency programs of the women heading households which includes attempts such as lending self-sufficiency loans, preparing and providing raw materials and work devices; providing professional and technical educations, finding works for those seeking help and creating the necessary fields for attracting trained forces in the work market, providing self-sufficiency space (educational and productive workshops). According to the report of the aid committee, the first step and the most basic attempt (in the field of self-sufficiency), creating the self-reliance spirit and self-confidence and the spirit of being interested in work and not relying on others (in practice). According to the presented statistics by the general administration of the clients of the aid committee, out of all of the people covered by the aid committee are 2650862 women 688581 of which are heads of the households.

Despite the importance of these projects and the emphasis on that in the field of eliminating deprivation and poverty of the women heading households, by considering the emphasis on the recent approaches to the elimination of poverty and deprivation, will be truly realized only if it leads to the empowerment of the target individuals. This research is seeking to find the effective factors on the empowerment of the women heading households. And it seeks to find the extent to which the supportive services of the aid committee have been done in the frame of self-sufficiency, self-reliance and empowerment of the women heading households. Have the supportive services of the aid committee lead to the

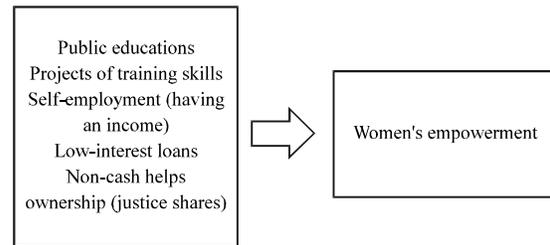


Fig. 1: Conceptual model of the research

revival of the social and economic roles of women as active members of the society? Or have these services, in practice, changed the conditions of the women from inactive and dependent? This research will attempt to answer these questions based on a survey on women heading households covered by the aid committee in Mirjaveh City.

HYPOTHESES

- It seems that public educations lead to the empowerment of women who head households
- It seems that projects of training skills lead to the empowerment of women who head households
- It seems that self-employment (having an income) lead to the empowerment of women who head households
- It seems that low-interest loans lead to the empowerment of women who head households
- It seems that non-cash helps lead to the empowerment of women who head households
- It seems that ownership (justice shares) lead to the empowerment of women who head households (Fig. 1)

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is a survey method and the data and information have been collected by using the questionnaire. The research data has been collected by using the researcher-made questionnaire and the validity and reliability of the data has been confirmed. In the present research, in order to analyze the data, the descriptive and inferential statistics (correlation coefficient, variance analysis, t-test and multivariate regression and so on) are used and all of the executive operations of data analysis and processing have also be done by using the data analysis software in social sciences (SPSS). In this research, among the women heading households covered by Imam Khomeini aid

Table 1: Distribution of empowerment based on public educations (%)

Empowerment	Public educations			Total
	Low	Average	High	
Desirable	49 (20/4)	62 (25/8)	43 (17/9)	86
Undesirable	19 (7/9)	43 (17/9)	24 (10/0)	
Total	68 (28/3)	105 (43/7)	67 (27/9)	240

Pearson correlation = 0/258, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0/000

committee, the number of whom is 632 persons have been selected as the statistical population of the research. The volume of the required volume for the present research has been estimated to be consisted of 238 persons given the Cochran's formula. Nonetheless, in order to increase the validity of the research findings, a 240-person sample has been used.

TESTING THE PRIMARY HYPOTHESES OF THE RESEARCH

It seems that public educations lead to the empowerment of women who head households: This hypothesis has been expressed based on the assumption that there is a significant relationship between women's public educations and empowerment and as women's public education increases their empowerment becomes more desirable and vice versa. As it can be seen in Table 1, distribution of empowerment has been different based on public educations in such a way that 17.9% of the women have had desirable empowerment while this rate has been reported to be 25.8 and 20.4% for women who were average and low levels; whereas only 10% of women with undesirable empowerment have been at high levels of public educations. This rate has been reported to be 17.9 and 7.9%, respectively for women with average and low levels of public educations. These numbers are indicative of this issue that there is a direct relationship between empowerment and public educations. This claim can be confirmed according to the results of Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.258$ and $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$).

It seems that there is a significant relationship between skill-training projects in women and the empowerment of women heading households: This hypothesis has been expressed based on the assumption that there is a significant relationship between women's skill-training projects and empowerment and as women's skill-training projects increases their empowerment becomes more desirable and vice versa. As it can be seen in Table 2, distribution of empowerment has been different based on skill-training projects in such a way that 15.4% of the women have had desirable empowerment while this rate has been reported to be 36.2 and 12% for women who

Table 2: Distribution of empowerment based on skill-training projects (%)

Empowerment	Public educations			Total
	High	Average	Low	
Desirable	37 (15.4)	87 (36.2)	29 (12.0)	87
Undesirable	21 (8.7)	42 (17.5)	24 (10.0)	
Total	58	129	53	240

2-tailed Sig. = 0.000, Pearson correlation = 0.196

Table 3: Distribution of empowerment based on self-employment (having an income) (%)

Empowerment	Self-employment (having an income)			Total
	Low	Average	High	
Desirable	18 (7/5)	37 (15/4)	63 (26/2)	122
Undesirable	40 (16/6)	54 (52/5)	28 (11/6)	
Total	58	91	91	240

Pearson correlation = 0/249, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0/000

were average and low levels; whereas only 8.9% of women with undesirable empowerment have been at high levels of skill-training projects. This rate has been reported to be 17.5 and 10%, respectively for women with average and low levels of skill-training projects. These numbers are indicative of this issue that there is a direct relationship between empowerment and skill-training projects. This claim can be confirmed according to the results of Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.196$ and $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$).

It seems that self-employment (having an income) lead to the empowerment of women who head households: This hypothesis has been expressed based on the assumption that there is a significant relationship between women's self-employment (having an income) and empowerment and as women's self-employment (having an income) increases their empowerment becomes more desirable and vice versa. As it can be seen in Table 3, distribution of empowerment has been different based on self-employment (having an income) in such a way that 26.2% of the women have had desirable empowerment while this rate has been reported to be 15.4 and 7.5% for women who were average and low levels; whereas only 11.6% of women with undesirable empowerment have been at high levels of self-employment (having an income). This rate has been reported to be 22.5 and 16.6%, respectively for women with average and low levels of self-employment (having an income). These numbers are indicative of this issue that there is a direct relationship between empowerment and self-employment (having an income). This claim can be confirmed according to the results of Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.249$ and $\text{Sig.} = 0.000$).

Table 4: Distribution of empowerment based on low-interest loans (%)

Empowerment	Self-employment (having an income)			Total
	Low	Average	High	
Desirable	17 (0/7)	37 (15/4)	63 (26/2)	117
Undesirable	63 (26/2)	42 (17/5)	18 (7/5)	
Total	80	79	81	240

Pearson correlation = 0/769, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0/000

Table 5: Distribution of empowerment based on non-cash helps (%)

Empowerment	Public educations			Total
	High	Average	Low	
Desirable	78 (32/5)	31 (12/9)	12 (0/5)	119
Undesirable	24 (0/10)	44 (18/3)	51 (21/2)	
Total	102	75	63	240

Pearson correlation = -0/266, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0/000

It seems that low-interest loans lead to the empowerment of women who head households: This hypothesis has been expressed based on the assumption that there is a significant relationship between women's low-interest loans and empowerment and as women's low-interest loans increases their empowerment becomes more desirable and vice versa. As it can be seen in Table 4, distribution of empowerment has been different based on low-interest loans in such a way that 26.2% of the women have had desirable empowerment while this rate has been reported to be 15.4 and 7% for women who were average and low levels; whereas only 7.5% of women with undesirable empowerment have been at high levels of low-interest loans. This rate has been reported to be 17.5 and 26.2%, respectively for women with average and low levels of low-interest loans. These numbers are indicative of this issue that there is a direct relationship between empowerment and low-interest loans. This claim can be confirmed according to the results of Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.769$ and $Sig. = 0.000$).

It seems that non-cash helps lead to the empowerment of women who head households: This hypothesis has been expressed based on the assumption that there is a significant relationship between women's skill-training projects non-cash helps and empowerment and as women's non-cash helps increases their empowerment becomes more desirable and vice versa. As it can be seen in Table 5, distribution of empowerment has been different based on non-cash helps in such a way that 32.5% of the women have had desirable empowerment while this rate has been reported to be 12.9 and 5% for women who were average and low levels; whereas only 10% of women with undesirable empowerment have been at high levels of non-cash helps.

Table 6: Distribution of empowerment based on ownership (justice shares) (%)

Empowerment	Public educations			Total
	High	Average	Low	
Desirable	68 (28/3)	49 (20/4)	27 (11/2)	144
Undesirable	24 (0/10)	36 (0/15)	36 (0/15)	
Total	92	85	63	240

Pearson correlation = -0/296, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0/000

This rate has been reported to be 18.3 and 21.3%, respectively for women with average and low levels of non-cash helps. These numbers are indicative of this issue that there is a direct relationship between empowerment and non-cash helps. This claim can be confirmed according to the results of Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.266$ and $Sig. = 0.000$).

It seems that ownership (justice shares) lead to the empowerment of women who head households: This hypothesis has been expressed based on the assumption that there is a significant relationship between women's ownership (justice shares) and empowerment and as women's ownership (justice shares) increases their empowerment becomes more desirable and vice versa. As it can be seen in Table 6, distribution of empowerment has been different based on ownership (justice shares) in such a way that 28.3% of the women have had desirable empowerment while this rate has been reported to be 20.4 and 11.2% for women who were average and low levels; whereas only 10% of women with undesirable empowerment have been at high levels of ownership (justice shares). This rate has been reported to be 15 and 15%, respectively for women with average and low levels of ownership (justice shares). These numbers are indicative of this issue that there is a direct relationship between empowerment ownership (justice shares). This claim can be confirmed according to the results of Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.296$ and $Sig. = 0.000$).

CONCLUSION

The present research has been conducted with the purpose of recognizing the effective factors on women heading households covered by the aid committee of Mirjaveh City. Identifying and reviewing the relationships between some of the independent variables with the rate of empowerment of women heading households is one of the small objectives of the present research including skills-training projects, public educations, self-employment (having an income), low-interest loans, non-cash helps and ownership (justice share). Analytic results of the research have been indicative of the

significant correlation between the independent variables reviewed in the research with the rate of the empowerment of women heading households. This means that there is a direct and significant correlation between skills-training projects, public educations, self-employment (having an income), low-interest loans, non-cash helps and ownership (justice share) with the rate of empowerment of women heading households. The results of the regression analysis has been shown that 36% of the fluctuations in the rate of empowerment of the women heading households can be explained and expressed by the variables skills-training projects, public educations, self-employment (having an income), low-interest loans, non-cash helps and ownership (justice share). And also the most effective independent variables on the empowerment of women heading households are respectively low-interest loans, public educations, self-employment (having an income), non-cash helps and ownership (justice share). In total, the factor which is the most effective one among the independent variables is the loan variable and this shows that the loan has an important role in the empowerment of women heading households because it can be used for self-employment and household jobs. They can develop their business. The research findings are indicative of the issue that the activities of the aid committee of Mirjaveh City have helped the empowerment of women heading households. Women heading households are women who take on an economical role as well as their role as the woman of the house including being a wife, a mother or a housewife due to any reason. In this situation, the important point is their employment status. Generally, economics is mentioned as the most basic problem of the women heading household because many of their problems are solved through economics and money in particular. Thus, presence of money-making projects such as self-employment markets and aid groups can be effective on solving their most important problem which is employment.

SUGGESTIONS

Given the findings of the present research, the practical solutions and strategies are recommended in order to increase the empowerment of women heading households:

- Training and entrepreneurship spaces shall be developed for women heading households
- Sales markets and presentation of the products of women heading households shall be created, developed and advanced
- The access of families with women as the heads of the household to credit and financial facilities and resources shall be facilitated
- The employment of women heading household shall be the priority
- The associated organizations shall provide service notification to these women
- Life skills, job skills, entrepreneurship and household employment shall be taught to women heading households

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