

## A Comparative Study of Women Empowerment among Rural and Urban Female Secondary School Teachers in Punjab State

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**Abstract:** *Teacher empowerment means a teacher who has the power of taking decisions, opportunities to get knowledge and professional growth, and also have the recognition and autonomous power. The present research designed to study and compare the women empowerment of female secondary school teachers. The descriptive survey research method was used for the present study. A representative sample of 500 (250 rural and 250 urban) female secondary school teachers selected randomly from twenty (10 rural and 10 urban) randomly selected school from five randomly selected districts of Punjab. A self-constructed tool in the form of scale using Likert method of scale construction for measuring empowerment of female secondary school teacher. Mean, S.D. and t- test were used to draw the conclusions. Finding of the study shows that no significant difference was found between rural and urban female secondary school teachers on women empowerment.*

**Keywords:** women empowerment, rural, urban, female, secondary school, teachers, Punjab

### INTRODUCTION

The term 'empower' means 'to give power or authority'. The key elements in empowerment are 'enabling' and 'providing power' and they strengthen each other. Empowerment refers to increasing the educational, social-political, spiritual, economic or gender strength of individuals and communities. Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social environment in which one can make choice and decisions either individually or collectively for social transformation. "Empowerment means moving from a position of Enforced Powerlessness to one of power". Kabeer (2001) more precisely defined empowerment as an expansion in ability of peoples to make strategic life choice in the context where this ability was earlier denied. She suggested that three interrelated dimensions to attain these choices. The apprehension that the empowerment of women will disempowerment men or it will go against the interest of men is not true. Empowerment of women is against patriarchy and its control and not against men. The aim of greater empowerment of women is the wholesome development of both men and women. Women empowerment is the process of learning by which women recognize their own potential and accordingly they change to perform better in

the society. Empowerment is not given by anyone but it is a process of gaining inside and to use it for the adjustment of life, knowing own feeling and potential, it will give a definite shape to the performance. Teaching is an art and effective teaching is done by an empowered teacher. Teacher empowerment means a teacher who has the power of taking decisions, opportunities to get knowledge and professional growth, and also have the recognition and autonomous power. Teachers enter the field of education in the hope of changing something in the world. They have that desire to make constant efforts to breathe new life into this profession. Empowerment of teacher means providing the teachers the right to participate in setting school goals and policies and the right to exercise professional judgment about the curriculum and means of instruction to be used. Irwin (1991) views about an empowered teacher is that who is aware about her/his ability to take initiatives in the right direction, utilizes his/her skills for the improvement of unfair exercises of community, respects and protects individuals' qualities and characteristics. Empower teachers are the need of present education system because today's education is vast, vivid and full of challenges. Teachers are the central character in the schools. They are known as the maker or builder of society. So it is necessary that teachers should be empowered. Empowered teacher can change and mould the face of school organization. An empowered teacher has those skills and knowledge by which he/she can take any decision in adverse condition and even improve it in a positive way. In the words of Short (1994) "Empowerment individuals believe they have the skills and knowledge to act on a situation and improve it." Teachers with high empowerment are more likely to implement innovative approaches in the classroom practices and adequate teaching methods that encourage students' autonomy and responsibility to manage classroom problems. So, the researcher planned to conduct the present study to know whether there exists a significant difference between teacher empowerment of rural and urban female secondary school teacher or not ?

### **Objective of the Study**

To assess and compare the level of empowerment among rural and urban secondary school teachers.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

There exists no significant difference among female secondary school teachers on women empowerment across locale (rural and urban area).

### **Method of the Study**

As the present problem was concerned with the current status of the phenomena, hence the descriptive survey research method was used for the present study.

### **Sample of the Study**

For present study the researcher used multi-stage random sampling technique. First of all, a list of the all districts of Punjab was obtained then on the basis of three regions of Punjab i.e. Majha, Malwa and Doaba, the researcher made a group of districts in which they fall. From these groups, five districts: Amritsar, Ludhiana, Sri Muktsar Sahib, SAS Nagar and Jalandhar were selected randomly. Further twenty schools from each district, in which 10 from rural and

10 from urban area, were selected on random basis by employing lottery system. As the focus of the study was on the female secondary school teachers of these districts, a representative sample of 500 female secondary school teachers out of which 250 female secondary school teachers working in rural area of the districts and 250 female secondary school teachers working in urban area of the districts were selected through simple random method.

### **Tools of the Study**

A self-constructed tool in the form of scale using Likert method of scale construction for measuring empowerment of female secondary school teacher. The scale was named as 'women teacher empowerment scale.' This scale works on seven areas of teacher empowerment such as: Status, Decision Making, Autonomy and Self-Reliance, Power and Entitlement, Capacity Building, Professional Growth and Social, political and legal awareness. This tool included total 42 items. The reliability of the scale was calculated by using split-half method. Then, Product moment correlation coefficient was calculated between scores of the respondents on odd and even numbered items that was found to be 0.88. As this correlation coefficient was of half of the test/scale So, Spearman Brown prophecy formula was used to measure reliability of the whole test that came out to be 0.97 which is high enough to prove the accuracy of the scale.

### **Statistical Techniques**

Mean, S.D. and t test were calculated to study and compare the teacher empowerment.

### **Findings of the Study**

The present study aimed at determining the level of women empowerment among rural and urban female secondary school teachers. As mentioned earlier the researcher used different relevant statistical techniques for analysis of data and also to test the hypothesis formulated whether to accept or reject it. The results of the analysis have been presented in two sections:

**Section I Descriptive Analysis:** reveals the nature of score distribution of female secondary school teachers on the variables of women empowerment. In order to test the normalcy of distribution of the scores, the frequency distribution and the values of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis were worked out relating to the variables of women empowerment of female secondary school teachers. The values of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis were depicted in tabular form. The frequency distribution and the descriptions of scores (measures of mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis on the variable of women empowerment of rural female secondary school teachers and urban female secondary school teachers were presented in Table1 and Figure 1a and 1b

**Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Scores of female rural and urban secondary school teachers on the variables of women empowerment (N=500)**

Class Interval	Rural Secondary School Teachers			Urban Secondary School Teachers		
	f	%age	Cumulative frequency	f	%age	Cumulative frequency
225-250	20	8.00	250	17	6.80	250
200-225	66	24.00	230	62	24.80	233
175-200	108	43.20	164	102	40.80	171
150-175	21	8.40	56	48	16.00	69
125-150	30	12.00	35	20	8.00	21
100-125	5	2.00	5	1	0.40	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>			<b>250</b>		
Group	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
<b>Rural Secondary School Teachers</b>	188.04	193.00	183.14	27.76	-0.735	0.021
<b>Urban Secondary School Teachers</b>	188.47	192.00	185.64	24.48	-0.455	0.247

Table 1 deals with female rural and urban secondary school teachers shows that the values of mean and median for women empowerment of female rural secondary school teachers are 188.04 and 193.00 respectively. Both these measures of central tendency are in close proximity with each other. Value for standard deviation as a measure of dispersion comes out to be 27.76. The value of skewness is -0.735 and kurtosis is 0.021 respectively. The values of skewness and kurtosis lie in the range of +/- 1.96 (Peat & Barton, 2008) indicating the distribution of overall women empowerment of female rural secondary school teachers was negatively skewed and leptokurtic and both of which fall well within the accepted limits of chance fluctuation.

The values of mean and median for women empowerment of female urban secondary school teachers are 188.47 and 192.00 respectively. Both these measures of central tendency are in close proximity with each other. Value for standard deviation as a measure of dispersion comes out to be 24.48. The value of skewness is -0.455 and kurtosis is 0.247 respectively. The values of skewness and kurtosis lie in the range of +/- 1.96 (Peat & Barton, 2008) indicating the distribution of women empowerment of female urban secondary school teachers was negatively skewed and leptokurtic and both of which fall well within the accepted limits of chance fluctuation.

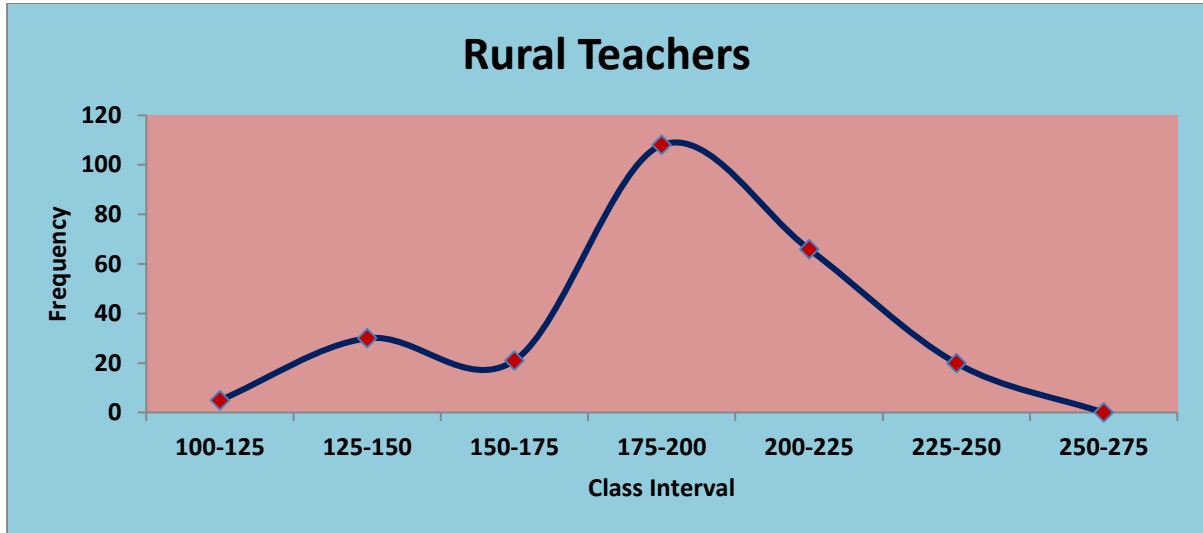


Fig. 1a Frequency Polygon of scores of female rural secondary school teachers on women empowerment (N = 250)

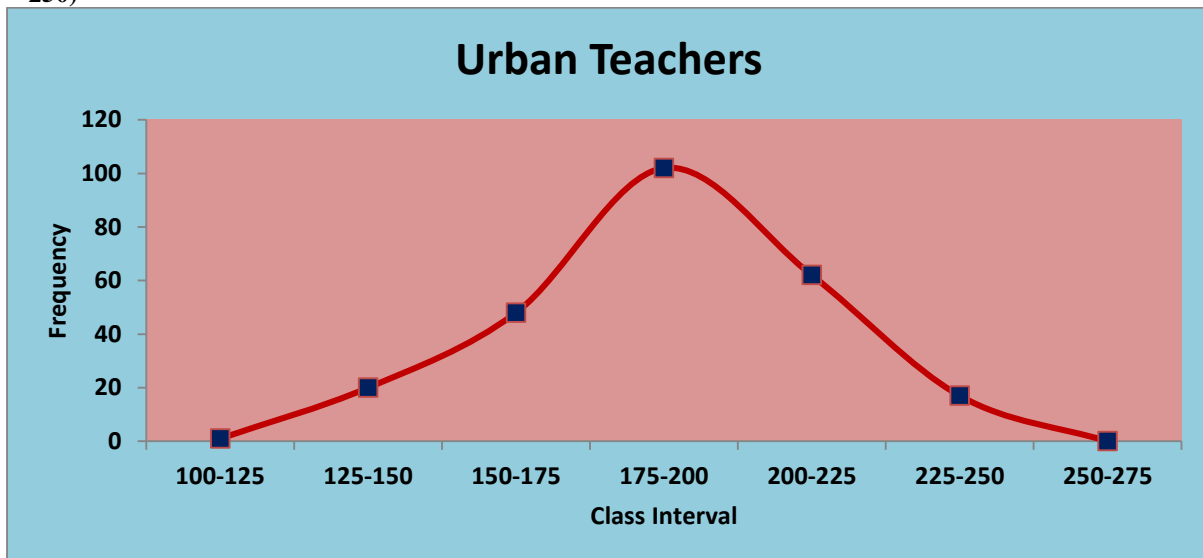


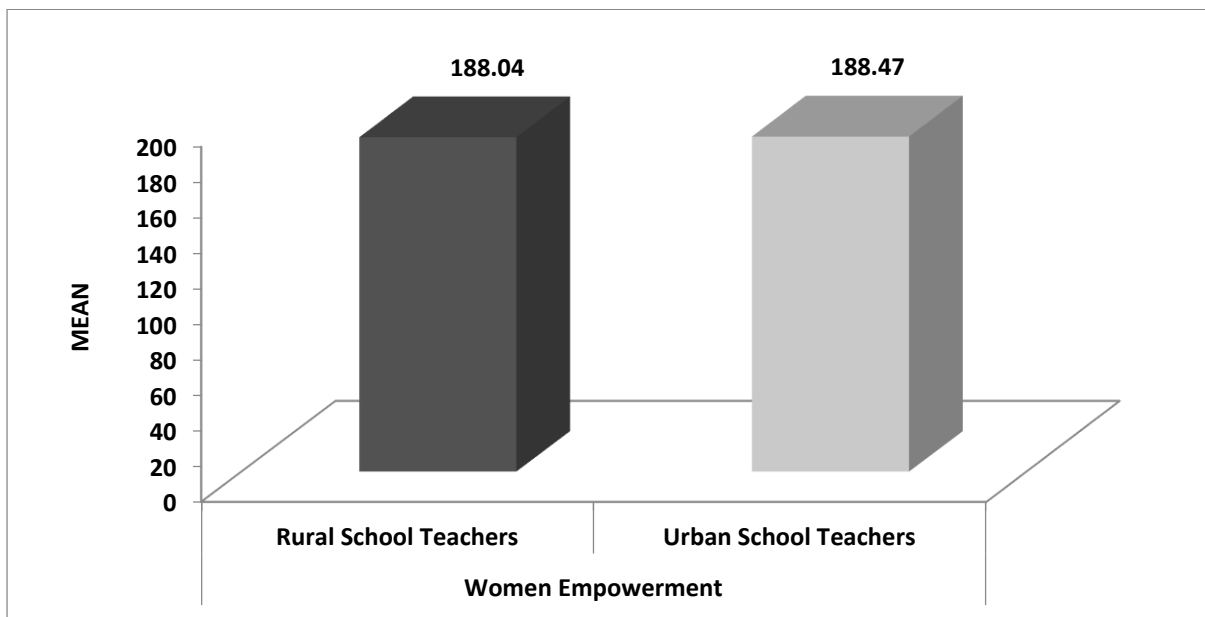
Fig. 1b Frequency Polygon of scores of female urban secondary school teachers on women empowerment (N = 250)

**Section II Differential Analysis:** attempts to locate the differences, if any, in women empowerment of female secondary school teachers with respect to locale (rural and urban). Hypothesis  $H_0$  states, “there exists no significant difference among female secondary school teachers on women empowerment across locale (rural and urban area). To prove this hypothesis, t-test was employed on the scores of women empowerment of female secondary school teachers with respect to locale (rural and urban) which was presented in Table2 and Figure 2

**Table 2 Significance of difference between Mean Scores of Rural and Urban female secondary school teachers on women empowerment (N=250)**

Variable	Group	N	M	S.D	SEM	t-ratio
Women Empowerment	Rural School Teachers	250	188.04	27.76	1.76	0.18
	Urban School Teachers	250	188.47	24.48	1.55	

Table 2 reveals that the mean scores of women empowerment for rural and urban female secondary school teachers were 188.04 and 188.47 respectively. The t-ratio is calculated as 0.18 with  $df = 498$  which is not significant ( $p > .05$ ). This reveals that no significant difference exists in women empowerment of rural and urban female secondary school teachers.



**Fig. 2 Bar Graph showing Mean Scores of female Rural and Urban Secondary School Teachers on the variable of women empowerment (N=500)**

As we have seen that teaching is mostly liked by women as profession as compare to men and the women working in the school feel empowered also. The reasons for no difference on women empowerment are equal opportunities provided in rural and urban areas of Punjab related to women empowerment.

The above results are supported by the studies conducted by Kumari & Devi (2019) and Pramiladevi and Thilagavathy (2019) who found no locale wise significant difference in empowerment.

## CONCLUSION

From the above results it can be concluded that the mean score of the rural and urban female secondary school teachers were not differed significantly. Thus, present study found no significant difference on women empowerment among female secondary school teachers across locale (urban and rural). It implies that locale does not play significant role in determining women empowerment of female secondary school teachers. Hence, there is no need initiate different programmes for different location for enhancing women empowerment. A common programme may be initiated for enhancing women empowerment among female secondary school teachers irrespective rural and urban area as per the findings of the present study.

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