



## HOME SCIENCE EDUCATION: A HARBINGER OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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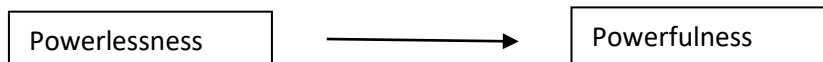
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Empowerment is referred to as a process that aims at creating conditions for the self determination of a particular person or group(1). Empowerment is the process as well as the result of the process whereby the powerless or less powerful members of the society gain greater access and control over material and knowledge resources and challenge the ideologies of discrimination and subordination, which justify its unequal distribution. Women's powerlessness arises from their illiteracy, lack of awareness, lack of information and knowledge, lack of skills, overall lack of self esteem and self confidence, lack of money and lack of job opportunities. Home Science education paves way towards becoming powerful.

### EMPOWERMENT



Empowerment is a multifaceted phenomenon. There are four levels of empowerment:

- ❖ Empowerment within the person
- ❖ Empowerment in family or close relationships
- ❖ Empowerment in organisation or institution
- ❖ Empowerment in the society

### EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT:

Education is an important factor leading to empowerment of women. Empowerment will occur only if education is used creatively by active participation in the economy and society (2). Data from around the world show that increased education is associated with the empowerment of women. Educated women are more effective in improving their own well-being and that of their family. They are better



equipped to extract the most benefit from existing services and opportunities and to generate alternative opportunities, roles and support structures(3).

Education of women, therefore, occupies top priority amongst various measures taken to improve the status of women in India. In recent years, the focus of women has shifted from equipping themselves to perform the traditional roles of home makers and mothers to recognising their worth as producers, making a major contribution to family and national income. Economic independence of women leads to their empowerment (4). Economic empowerment helps women to depend on themselves and also to claim their legal rights especially to land and other properties. Economic empowerment will definitely lead to political and social empowerment. Indian Government has also taken a lot of initiatives for the economic empowerment of women. Reservation in education and jobs, special incentives for women,

maternity leave facilities, special concessions for women entrepreneurs, women self help groups, income tax relief for women are some of the important welfare measures.

Empowerment of women enhances the following capabilities in them:

- ❖ Decision-making power
- ❖ Access to information and resources for taking proper decision
- ❖ Having a range of options from which to make choices
- ❖ Ability to exercise assertiveness in collective decision making
- ❖ Confidence on the ability to bring about change
- ❖ Ability to change the perception of others by democratic means
- ❖ Involving in the growth process and changes
- ❖ Increasing one's positive self image and overcoming stigma (5).

### **WOMEN AND HOME SCIENCE EDUCATION:**

The Home Science program in India has completed 105 years in 2018. Home Science was first introduced in secondary



schools in the princely state of Baroda in 1913. Lady Irwin College in Delhi was the first college to offer Home Science in 1932.

Home Science education is not developed to educate the girls merely to obtain the degree which is a passport to matrimony, but it is designed to attain the fullest development in all respects, personally, socially and economically(6). Today the Home Science syllabus includes government schemes to aid the role of women in national development. No other discipline has reinvented itself as much as Home Science. The students of today are interested in Food Technology, Fashion Technology, Interior Designing and Early Childhood Care and Development.

### **CHANGES THROUGH HOME SCIENCE EDUCATION:**

Home Science education makes women have greater control over their lives. The changes brought about through Home Science education are (i) at

individual level and (ii) at social level.

Changes at individual level:

1. Competence : Home Science education imparts competence to manage the resources skilfully, excel in child care, household work and job.

2. Development of skills: Skills related to food processing, preservation, meal planning, diet counselling, designing and dress making, interior decoration, preschool teaching, CAD and the like make the Home Scientists fit various job roles.

3. Awareness generation and enhancement of health: Knowledge on the nutritional value of food items, nutritional requirements of children, adolescents, adults, elderly and for various disease conditions, enhances the health status of not only the Home Scientists but also their entire family.

4. Independence: Being educated and employed, women are now able to be self-reliant, able to buy



whatever they want for their children and fulfil their own hobbies too.

5. Critical Thinking: Women are able to analyse the practical usefulness of the old ideologies and also follow the right modern practices.

6. Expressiveness: Home Science education empowers women to have a say in important matters of society.

7. Inter-personal relationship: Able to maintain a harmonious relationship with others in family and work place.

8. Open-mindedness: Able to have a broad vision and welcome

positive changes in their lives with open mind.

9. Self-confidence: Home Science education makes women have a positive self image by realising their worth.

Changes at social level:

1. Perceived positive image in the society: Positive changes in the personality of Home Scientists give them a positive image in the society.

2. Increased sense of power: Self-assertiveness, decision making and critical thinking promote an increased sense of power in them (7).

**TABLE – 1**

**CAREER AVENUES IN THE MAJOR AREAS OF HOME SCIENCE**

Sr. No.	Major and allied areas of Home Science	Career Avenues after B.Sc.	Career Avenues after M.Sc.
1.	Food and Nutrition, Food Service Management and Dietetics, Food Processing, Catering and Hotel Management	Junior Dietician, Quality Control Technician, Food Product Tester, Waitress, Front Office Manager, Food and Beverage Attendant, Assistant Chef , House keeper, Guest Service Clerk, Floor Supervisors in	Chief Dietician, Nutritionist, Food Technologist, Quality Analyst in Food and Nutraceutical industry, Caterer, Baker, Food Service Manager, Health Care Professional,



		multi speciality hospitals	Chef, Guest House Manager, House Keeping Manager, Hospitality Supervisor, Hotel Manager
2.	Textiles and Clothing, Fashion Designing	Designer in garment manufacturing firm, Accessories designer, Sales Associate, Supervisor in Dry cleaning shop, embroidery unit, tailoring unit, Quality Control Assistant in Textile Industry	Textile Designer, Fashion Designer, Fashion Coordinator, Fashion Illustrator, Supervisor in garment units and export houses, Quality Analyst in Textile Testing labs, Quality Control Manager in Textile mills
3.	Human Development, Early Childhood care and Education	Residential care assistant, Adult Day Care worker, Elder Care Worker, Preschool teacher, Family Child Care Provider	Supervisor in Day Care Center for children, Counsellor in Child Guidance Clinics, Special Education Teacher, HR Managers in IT company, Child Development Project Officers, Maternity and Child Welfare Officer
4.	Family Resource Management, Interior Designing and Decoration	Interior Design Assistant, Showroom Sales Assistant, Furnishings Sales Associate, Florist	Interior Designer, Colour Consultant, Landscape specialist, Interior Decorator, Window Display Designer, Photo Stylist, Housekeeping Instructor
5.	Extension Education and	Research Investigator, Teacher, Media-	Managers in NGOs, Officers in



	Communication	programmer, Journalist, Press Reporter, News Reader	Rural Development departments, Block Development Officers, Extension Officers, Counsellor, Researcher
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**OTHER JOB OPPORTUNITIES****FOR HOME SCIENTISTS:**

Apart from the above mentioned career avenues specifically suitable for Home Scientists, the following jobs for others are also available for Home Science students.

- ❖ Field Sales Executive
- ❖ Primary and Secondary school teachers
- ❖ Customer Support Executive
- ❖ Business Development Executive
- ❖ Graduate Trainee or Intern
- ❖ Speech Therapist
- ❖ Language Trainers
- ❖ HR Executive
- ❖ Administrative Assistant
- ❖ Research Assistant
- ❖ Business Development Manager
- ❖ Junior Project Fellows in NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training)
- ❖ Journal Executive Editor in any Publishing House
- ❖ District Coordinator / District Program Assistant in any State
- ❖ Relationship Manager

- ❖ Tele Sales Executive
- ❖ Marketing Executive
- ❖ Curriculum Developer

**HEALTH AND EMPOWERMENT:**

Holistic health is vital for empowerment. Only a healthy mind in a healthy body will have clarity to plan and achieve goals that finally leads to empowerment. The core areas of Home Science enlighten the young minds that lead to the attainment and maintenance of overall health of an individual.

**Food and Nutrition:** Knowledge on food groups and nutrients and their role in maintaining health make the Home Scientists stay healthy by consuming balanced diet. Chronic and acute diseases can be kept at bay by following modified food pattern, avoiding faulty food practices and switching over to a healthy life style.

**Textiles and Clothing:** Learning the types of personality and wardrobe



planning make an individual choose garments and accessories that are appropriate for the occasion, attractive and comfortable. Clothes with proper fit ensure physical wellbeing and thereby instil self- confidence.

**Human Development:** Different styles of parenting and changes that occur during adolescence dealt in Human Development make the Home Scientists accept the storm and stress during adolescence gracefully. This keeps them emotionally strong and mentally alert.

**Family Resource Management:** Application of suitable colours to the interiors, a skill learnt through Family Resource Management, gives soothing ambience to our home. This in turn ensures physical comfort and peace of mind.

**Extension Education:** This area of Home Science promotes good inter- personal skill that is vital for achievements and empowerment.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes (8). Enlightened mind and economic independence are key factors that lead to empowerment. Home Science

education paves way for better health and brighter job opportunities. Hence it can be concluded that Home Science education announces the empowerment of an individual by giving her a respectable place in the family and society.

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