# Understanding the Dynamics of MGNREGA Beneficiaries through Social Work Lens: A Study in Shivamogga District, Karnataka State, India

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*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## ABSTRACT

This comprehensive study delves into the intricate tapestry of MGNREGA beneficiaries' perspectives, unravelling a rich array of insights that illuminate their empowerment journey. The objectives of the study include understanding the socioeconomic dynamics of MGNREGA beneficiaries, examining its impact on livelihood security, exploring the role of social work in its implementation, and analyzing the empowerment dimensions of the program. Utilizing data from 80 respondents in Shivamogga District, the study employs the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality, ANOVA for group differences, and Tukey's post-hoc test for specific comparisons. Key findings highlight

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significant improvements in communication skills, decision-making power, leadership skills, and social empowerment among beneficiaries. Economic empowerment aspects, such as annual income and food consumption patterns, also showed positive outcomes. Psychological empowerment, encompassing attitudes towards the program, role perception, and desire for control, reflected a high level of empowerment. The research highlights the critical role of social work in enhancing and sustaining these positive impacts, offering recommendations for policy improvement and contributing to the advancement of rural development practices. This exploration extends beyond mere statistical analyses, offering a profound examination of the human dimensions that shape empowerment dynamics in rural India.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the vast tapestry of India's rural landscape, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) stands as a testament to the nation's commitment to poverty alleviation, rural development, and social justice. Enacted in 2005, this pioneering legislation sought to provide a social safety net for the country's most vulnerable populations by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment to every rural household. With a primary focus on labour-intensive public works, MGNREGA was envisioned as a transformative mechanism, promising not only economic self-sufficiency but also the empowerment of rural communities. The MGNREGA, since its inception, has been a topic of intense national and international interest. Praised for its audacious goals and criticized for its complex implementation, it has sparked debates and discussions across the spectrum of development studies [1-3]. At its core, this ambitious program aimed to break the cycle of rural poverty by ensuring that the most marginalized individuals could access an essential human right - the right to work and earn a dignified livelihood. Over the years, MGNREGA has achieved substantial success in providing employment opportunities, building rural infrastructure, and improving the socio-economic conditions of millions of beneficiaries. However, to genuinely grasp the impact of this program and its implications on the lives of those it serves, a more nuanced and comprehensive approach is imperative [4-7]. This research paper, titled "Empowering Rural Voices: Unveiling the Dynamics of MGNREGA Beneficiaries through a Social Work Lens," emerges as a significant contribution to this critical discourse. It endeavours to go beyond the statistics and administrative facets of MGNREGA, reaching deep into the lives of its beneficiaries, and in doing so, sheds light on the complex dynamics at play in rural India. The unique aspect of this research lies in its fusion of social work perspectives with economic and sociological analysis. Social work, as a discipline, is rooted in the principles of empowerment, advocacy, and human rights. In employing this lens, we aim to move beyond a purely quantitative assessment of MGNREGA's impact to understand the profound qualitative changes it can bring to the lives of beneficiaries [8-11]. By doing so, we strive to contribute to the broader conversation on the effectiveness of social welfare programs and the real-world implications of such interventions. This research is not confined to an academic exercise. It is a call to action, a catalyst for positive change, and a tribute to the voices of rural India. It seeks to explore the hopes, dreams, aspirations, and challenges of those whose lives have been directly touched by MGNREGA, thereby weaving a more humane and realistic narrative of rural empowerment. The study employs a multifaceted methodology, including interviews, surveys, fieldwork, and data analysis, to unearth the untold stories of MGNREGA beneficiaries. By engaging with these narratives, we endeavour to bring forth the human faces behind the policy figures, allowing their experiences to shape the direction of our research. "Empowering Rural Voices" is not just an examination of the dynamics of MGNREGA; it is a testament to the resilience, creativity, and agency of rural communities. Through a rigorous analysis of their experiences, we aim to provide insights that can be instrumental in shaping future policy decisions and interventions. In doing so, we strive to empower rural voices and amplify their agency, thereby fulfilling the true spirit of MGNREGA and, indeed, the promise of a more equitable, inclusive, and just India.

## 2. METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

An integral goal of the research is to explore the multifaceted dimensions of empowerment experienced by MGNREGA beneficiaries, encompassing social, economic, and psychological empowerment and to evaluate the socioeconomic impact of MGNREGA, including its contribution to livelihood security, income stability, and poverty alleviation among rural beneficiaries. For the purpose of the study researcher adopted Quantitative research technique using Descriptive research method. The primary data was collected from the beneficiaries from selected areas of Shivamogga District. The primary data was collected through structured Questionnaire Women Empowerment scale developed by Pallavi, G. and Shivalingegowda, N. S. 2021. Which is a five point likert scale. The reliability was 0.9289 wherein Split half method developed by Brown prophecy was employed. The data was subjected for statistical validity, which was found to be 0.9638. The data was collected from 80 respondents through interview. For analysing the data Descriptive and Inferential statistical test and SPSS 26.0 software was used.

### 2.1 Research Objectives

1. To Understand the Socioeconomic Dynamics of MGNREGA Beneficiaries.
2. To Examine the Impact of MGNREGA on Livelihood Security.
3. To Explore the Role of Social Work in MGNREGA Implementation.
4. To Analyse the Empowerment Dimensions of MGNREGA.
5. To Amplify the Voices of Rural Beneficiaries.
6. To Provide Recommendations for Policy Improvement.
7. To Contribute to the Advancement of Rural Development Practices.

### 2.2 Hypothesis

1. (H0): The social empowerment scores of the population follow a normal distribution.
2. 2. (H1): The social empowerment scores of the population do not follow a normal distribution.
3. (H0): The economic empowerment levels of the population are normally distributed.
4. (H1): The economic empowerment levels of the population are not normally distributed.
5. (H0): The psychological empowerment scores of the population conform to a normal distribution.
6. (H1): The psychological empowerment scores of the population do not conform to a normal distribution.
7. (H0): People from different backgrounds (like age, gender, education) have similar social empowerment scores.
8. (H1): People from different backgrounds have different social empowerment scores.
9. (H0): People with different incomes have similar economic empowerment scores.
10. (H1): People with different incomes have different economic empowerment scores.
11. (H0): There's no change in psychological empowerment scores between categories.
12. (H1): There's a change in psychological empowerment scores between categories.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Age:** The Age Group 2 (30-41) dominates the sample with 55.0% representation, indicating its significance. Age Group 3 (42-53) follows with 23.8%, suggesting a notable presence of individuals in their early 40s to early 50s. Age Group 1 (18-29) comprises 21.3%, though smaller, it remains significant. Overall, the data portrays a balanced distribution across the three age groups, with Age Group 2 being the most prominent demographic.

**Education:** The data reveals a diverse educational distribution, with primary education being the largest category, followed closely by secondary education. Tertiary education represents a smaller proportion, while the presence of illiterate individuals underscores the need to address educational disparities. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of promoting access to higher education opportunities and addressing educational inequalities within the sample.

**Marital status:** The data indicates a predominantly married population, comprising 87.5% of the sample, while widowed individuals represent a smaller but notable proportion at 8.8%. Separated individuals constitute the smallest group at 3.8%, highlighting diverse marital statuses within the sample. Understanding these marital dynamics is essential for tailored support and demographic analyses.

**Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents**

| Demographic Variable | Counts | Per cent of Total | Cumulative Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Education Level** | | | |
| Illiterate | 9 | 11.30% | 11.30% |
| Primary Education | 31 | 38.80% | 50.00% |
| Secondary Education | 30 | 37.50% | 87.50% |
| Tertiary Education | 10 | 12.50% | 100.00% |
| Total | 80 | 100.00% | |
| **Marital Status** | | | |
| Married | 70 | 87.50% | 87.50% |
| Widow | 7 | 8.80% | 96.30% |
| Separate | 3 | 3.80% | 100.00% |
| Total | 80 | 100.00% | |
| **Household Income** | | | |
| 20,000-30,000 | 31 | 38.80% | 38.80% |
| 30,000-40,000 | 42 | 52.50% | 91.30% |
| 40,000-50,000 | 5 | 6.30% | 97.50% |
| 50,000 above | 2 | 2.50% | 100.00% |
| Total | 80 | 100.00% | |
| **Categories** | | | |
| SC/ST | 37 | 46.30% | 46.30% |
| OBC | 24 | 30.00% | 76.30% |
| General | 12 | 15.00% | 91.30% |
| Minority | 7 | 8.80% | 100.00% |
| Total | 80 | 100.00% | |

**Income:** This data reveals a distribution of households across different income ranges. The majority fall within the "30,000-40,000" income range, followed by "20,000-30, 000," "40,000-50, 000," and "50,000 above" income brackets. Understanding household income distribution is crucial for assessing the economic diversity within the sample or population, which can inform economic policies, strategies, and social programs.

Backward Classes. The "General" category constitutes 15.0% of the sample, while "Minority" make up 8.8%, showcasing diverse representation. Understanding the distribution of social categories within the sample or population is important for addressing social equity, policy formulation, and ensuring fair representation and opportunities for individuals from various backgrounds.

**Table 2. Social empowerment descriptive analysis: Communication skills, decision making power, leadership skills, and social empowerment**

| | N | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Communication Skills | 80 | 3.58 | 0.509 |
| Decision Making Power | 80 | 3.38 | 0.466 |
| Leadership Skills | 80 | 3.76 | 0.535 |
| Social Empowerment | 80 | 3.56 | 0.33 |

**Categories:** The sample is predominantly composed of individuals from the "SC/ST" category, comprising 46.3% of the total, indicating a significant presence of Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. "OBC" individuals represent the second-largest group at 30.0%, highlighting the notable presence of Other

**Table 3. Economic empowerment, descriptive analysis: Annual income, food consumption patterns, access to credit, and economic empowerment**

| | N | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Annual Income | 80 | 4.22 | 0.4 |
| Food Consumption Patterns | 80 | 3.93 | 0.452 |
| Access to Credit | 80 | 3.26 | 0.746 |
| Economic Empowerment | 80 | 3.84 | 0.318 |

The data on various aspects of social empowerment among MGNREGA beneficiaries reveals several important insights. Firstly, the mean score for communication skills is 3.58 with a moderate standard deviation (SD) of 0.509, suggesting that participants generally feel

confident in their ability to communicate effectively, though there is some variability in this confidence. These states there are some individuals who may not feel as secure in this aspect. This variance could stem from differences in educational background, prior work experience, or personal communication styles among the participants. Identifying and understanding the factors contributing to this variability is crucial for designing targeted interventions to support those who may need additional assistance in improving their communication skills. It also highlights the importance of creating inclusive communication platforms and training opportunities that cater to the diverse needs and preferences of all beneficiaries, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to enhance their communication abilities within the MGNREGA program. The mean score for decision-making power (3.38) and its lower variability (SD = 0.466) suggests that while participants feel positively empowered in their decision-making abilities, there is still room for enhancement [12-16]. The data on leadership skills among MGNREGA beneficiaries shows a high mean score of 3.76, indicating strong perceived leadership abilities. However, the substantial standard deviation (SD) of 0.535 suggests significant variability in these perceptions. This disparity implies that while some beneficiaries are very confident in their leadership skills, others are less so, potentially due to differences in personal experiences, educational backgrounds, or exposure to leadership opportunities.

**Table 4. Psychological empowerment: descriptive analysis: Attitude toward programme, role perception, desire for control, and psychological empowerment**

|  | N | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attitude Toward Programme | 80 | 3.53 | 0.312 |
| Role Perception | 80 | 3.67 | 0.806 |
| Desire for Control | 80 | 4.18 | 0.449 |
| Psychological Empowerment | 80 | 3.72 | 0.271 |

From the data, several key findings emerge regarding the economic empowerment of MGNREGA beneficiaries. Firstly, the mean scores (4.22) indicate a relatively high level of annual income and food consumption patterns (3.93) among the participants. This suggests that, on average, beneficiaries have sufficient

income and access to food, which are vital components of economic well-being [12,17]. However, the SD (0.4) for these variables imply some variability in income and food consumption patterns (0.452) across the sample, indicating that while many beneficiaries fare well economically, others may face challenges in these areas [18]. This suggests a need for targeted interventions to address economic disparities among beneficiaries. Programs aimed at enhancing financial literacy and facilitating access to credit could be particularly beneficial in addressing these challenges, thereby promoting greater economic inclusion and well-being within the beneficiary population. On the other hand, access to credit shows a lower mean score (3.26) compared to annual income and food consumption patterns, indicating that beneficiaries perceive relatively limited access to credit resources. The higher SD (0.746) suggests a significant variation in access to credit among participants, with some facing more barriers than others in obtaining financial support. Addressing barriers to credit and expanding access to microfinance and other financial services could play a crucial role in empowering beneficiaries to invest in income-generating activities and build financial resilience. Overall, the data reflects (3.84±0.318) a positive perception of economic empowerment among MGNREGA beneficiaries [19] with relatively high mean scores across the measured variables. However, the variability indicated by the SDs underscores the importance of recognizing and addressing the diverse economic needs and challenges faced by different individuals within the beneficiary population. The importance of adopting a tailored and holistic approach to address the diverse needs and challenges faced by different individuals within the beneficiary population. Community engagement and participatory approaches could be instrumental in ensuring that interventions are culturally sensitive, contextually relevant, and responsive to the unique circumstances of MGNREGA beneficiaries.

The mean score for attitude toward the program is 3.53, indicating a moderate positive attitude among the participants. The low standard deviation of 0.312 suggests a relatively consistent positive attitude toward the program among the respondents [20]. The mean score for role perception is 3.67, suggesting a moderately positive perception of one's role. The higher standard deviation of 0.806 indicates greater variability in responses, suggesting diverse

**Table 5. Shapiro-wilk normality distribution**

| | N | Mean | SD | Shapiro-Wilk | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | W | p |
| Social empowerment | 80 | 3.56 | 0.33 | 0.986 | 0.533 |
| Economic empowerment | 80 | 3.84 | 0.318 | 0.967 | 0.059 |
| Psychological empowerment | 80 | 3.72 | 0.271 | 0.99 | 0.788 |

**Table 6. One Way ANOVA Results (Hypothesis 1)**

| | Categories | N | Mean | SD | Test of Homogeneity of Variances | | ANOVA | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | | Levene's Statistics | Sig. | F | Sig. |
| Social empowerment | SC/ST | 37 | 3.65 | 0.298 | 0.584 | 0.627 | 2.83 | 0.044 |
| | OBC | 24 | 3.56 | 0.37 | | | | |
| | General | 12 | 3.45 | 0.298 | | | | |
| | Minority | 7 | 3.31 | 0.269 | | | | |

**Table 6.1. Tukey post-Hoc test – social empowerment**

| Group Comparison | MD | t-value | P-value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SC/ST vs. OBC | 0.0901 | 1.08 | 0.705 |
| SC/ST vs. General | 0.197 | 1.854 | 0.257 |
| SC/ST vs. Minority | 0.338 | 2.566 | 0.058 |
| OBC vs. General | 0.107 | 0.944 | 0.781 |
| OBC vs. Minority | 0.248 | 1.806 | 0.279 |
| General vs. Minority | 0.141 | 0.929 | 0.789 |

*Note: * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001*

opinions regarding role perception among the participants. The mean score for desire for control is 4.18, reflecting a relatively high desire for control among the participants. With a spread of 0.449, it seems like respondents are all navigating in the same direction when it comes to their desire for control. It suggests that participants feel empowered to take control of their circumstances and are confident in their ability to do so, contributing to their sense of independence and self-esteem [21,22]. The mean score for psychological empowerment is 3.72, indicating a moderate to high level of psychological empowerment among the participants. The tight spread of 0.271 implies a unified viewpoint on psychological empowerment among the respondents suggesting a shared sense of confidence and agency. Overall, the data suggests that participants generally hold positive attitudes towards the program, perceive their roles moderately positively, express a strong desire for control, and demonstrate a moderate to high level of psychological empowerment. However, there is variability in role perception, highlighting the need for further exploration and

clarification of individual roles within the program.

The results of the Shapiro-Wilk normality test for three variables are as follows: for Social Empowerment, a test statistic (W) of 0.986 and a p-value of 0.533 suggest that the data can be considered approximately normally distributed, as the p-value exceeds the significance level (typically 0.05). In contrast, the data for Economic Empowerment, with a test statistic (W) of 0.967 and a p-value of 0.059, exhibits no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis of normality, implying that it follows a normal distribution. Lastly, the data for Psychological Empowerment, with a test statistic (W) of 0.990 and a p-value of 0.788, indicates no significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis of normality, affirming that this variable can be considered approximately normally distributed.

**HO:** People from different backgrounds (like age, gender, education) have similar social empowerment scores.

The hypothesis tests if social empowerment among the beneficiaries differs across different

categories to which they belong. Participants were divided into SC/ST, OBC, General, and Minority. The ANOVA results shows that the Social Empowerment scores among different categories of respondents do not differ significantly.

Levene's test is used to assess whether the variances of the social empowerment scores in different categories (SC/ST, OBC, GENERAL, and MINORITY) are approximately equal. The Levene's statistic is 0.584 with a p-value (Sig.) of 0.627. Further post-hoc tests or a pairwise comparison was conducted to identify which specific categories differ significantly from each other. According to the Tukey Post-Hoc Test results, there are no big differences in social empowerment scores between any of the category pairs. (SC/ST (M=3.65±0.29) vs. OBC (3.56±0.37), (SC/ST (M=3.65±0.29) vs. General (3.45±0.298), (SC/ST (M=3.65±0.29) vs. Minority (3.31±0.269), OBC (3.56±0.37) vs. General (3.45±0.298), OBC (3.56±0.37)vs. Minority (3.31±0.269), and General (3.45±0.298), vs. Minority (3.31±0.269) at the conventional significance level (α = 0.05). However, there is a borderline significance (p = 0.058) between SC/ST and Minority, which may warrant further investigation or consideration.

**(H0):** People with different incomes have similar economic empowerment scores.

The hypothesis tests if Economic empowerment among the beneficiaries differs across different

categories to which they belong. Participants were divided into SC/ST, OBC, General, and Minority. The ANOVA results shows that the Economic Empowerment scores among different categories of respondents do not differ significantly.

Levene's test is used to assess whether the variances of the social empowerment scores in different categories (SC/ST, OBC, GENERAL, and MINORITY) are approximately equal. The Levene's statistic is 0.598 with a p-value (Sig.) of 0.618. Further post-hoc tests or a pairwise comparison was conducted to identify which specific categories differ significantly from each other.

As per the Tukey Post-Hoc Test, no noteworthy differences were found in economic empowerment scores across any category pairs. (SC/ST (M=3.84±0.328) vs. OBC (3.9±0.274), (SC/ST (M=3.84±0.328) vs. General (3.7±0.382), (SC/ST (M=3.84±0.328) vs. Minority (3.89±0.269), OBC (3.9±0.274)vs. General (3.7±0.382), OBC (3.9±0.274)vs. Minority (3.89±0.269), and General (3.7±0.282), vs. Minority (3.89±0.269)at the conventional significance level (α = 0.05). The p-values for all category pairs are much greater than α, implying that people with different incomes have similar economic empowerment scores. Therefore, the study does not find evidence of significant disparities in economic empowerment among the different categories.

**Table 7. One way ANOVA results (Hypothesis 2)**

|  | | | | | Test of Homogeneity of Variances | | ANOVA | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Categories | N | Mean | SD | Levene's Statistics | Sig. | F | Sig. |
| Economic Empowerment | SC/ST | 37 | 3.84 | 0.328 | 0.598 | 0.618 | 1.12 | 0.347 |
|  | OBC | 24 | 3.9 | 0.274 | | | | |
|  | General | 12 | 3.7 | 0.382 | | | | |
|  | Minority | 7 | 3.89 | 0.269 | | | | |

**Table 7.1. Tukey post-Hoc test for economic empowerment**

| Comparison | MD | t-value | P-value |
|---|---|---|---|
| SC/ST vs. OBC | -0.0642 | 0.773 | 0.866 |
| SC/ST vs. General | 0.136 | 1.29 | 0.572 |
| SC/ST vs. Minority | 0.0505 | -0.387 | 0.98 |
| OBC vs. General | 0.2 | 1.78 | 0.289 |
| OBC vs. Minority | 0.0137 | 0.101 | 1 |
| General vs. Minority | -0.1864 | -1.236 | 0.606 |

*Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001*

**Table 8. One way ANOVA results one way ANOVA results (Hypothesis 3)**

| | Categories | N | Mean | SD | Test of Homogeneity of Variances | | ANOVA | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | | | Levene's Statistics | Sig. | F | Sig. |
| Psychological Empowerment | SC/ST | 37 | 3.73 | 0.217 | 4.29 | 0.008 | 0.461 | 0.711 |
| | OBC | 24 | 3.68 | 0.372 | | | | |
| | General | 12 | 3.79 | 0.187 | | | | |
| | Minority | 7 | 3.7 | 0.273 | | | | |

**Table 8.1. Tukey post-Hoc test – psychological empowerment**

| Comparison | MD | t-value | P-value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SC/ST vs. OBC | 0.0517 | 0.72 | 0.889 |
| SC/ST vs. General | -0.0575 | -0.631 | 0.922 |
| SC/ST vs. Minority | 0.0328 | 0.291 | 0.991 |
| OBC vs. General | -0.1092 | -1.127 | 0.674 |
| OBC vs. Minority | -0.0189 | -0.16 | 0.999 |
| General vs. Minority | 0.0903 | 0.693 | 0.899 |

*Note. \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001*

The One-Way ANOVA did not detect statistically significant differences in psychological empowerment scores among the four categories, despite the violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances. This suggests that while the variances of psychological empowerment scores differ across categories, the means of psychological empowerment are not significantly different. Therefore, based on this analysis, there is no evidence of significant disparities in psychological empowerment among the different categories. Further post-hoc tests or a pairwise comparison was conducted to identify which specific categories differ significantly from each other.

According to Tuckey post hoc test there aren't any big differences in psychological empowerment scores between any of the category pairs.(SC/ST (M=3.73±0.217) vs. OBC (3.68±0.372), SC/ST (M=3.73±0.217) vs. General (3.79±0.182), SC/ST (M=3.73±0.217) vs. Minority (3.7±0.273), OBC (3.68±0.372)vs. General (3.79±0.182), OBC (3.68±0.372)vs. Minority (3.7±0.273), and General (3.79±0.182), vs. Minority (3.7±0.273) at the conventional significance level (α = 0.05). Therefore, study does not find evidence of significant disparities in psychological empowerment among the different categories. These findings suggest that, in terms of psychological empowerment, the groups represented by these categories are not significantly different from one another.

## 3.1 Illuminating Empowerment through the Lens of Social Work Perspective

The analysis of the data provides valuable insights into the demographic and empowerment profiles of the respondents. Social work can play a crucial role based on these findings:

## 3.2 Demographic Profile

With a diverse age distribution, social workers can tailor programs and services to address the specific needs of different age groups. For example, empowerment programs for the age group 30-41 could focus on career advancement, while those for the age group 42-53 might target retirement planning or second career options.

## 3.3 Education Level

Recognizing that a substantial number of respondents have primary and secondary education, social workers can design literacy and skill development programs to improve employability. For illiterate individuals, basic education and vocational training can be provided to enhance their economic empowerment.

## 3.4 Marital Status

Given the prevalence of married individuals, social work initiatives may include support for family well-being, marital counselling, and

financial planning. Programs designed for widows and separated individuals could focus on economic empowerment, emotional support, and access to resources.

## 3.5 Household Income

Tailored financial literacy and microfinance programs can be developed for different income groups to enhance economic empowerment. Advocacy and policy recommendations for job creation and income generation opportunities for low-income households may be pursued.

## 3.6 Social Categories

Social workers can advocate for policies that promote social equity and inclusivity, ensuring representation and opportunities for all categories. Programs could be initiated to address specific needs within each social category, such as skill development, entrepreneurship support, or educational access.

## 3.7 Empowerment Scores

- **Program Development:** Develop targeted workshops and training programs focused on enhancing verbal and non-verbal communication skills. These programs should include modules on effective listening, clear articulation of thoughts, public speaking, and conflict resolution.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with local educational institutions and communication experts to design and deliver these workshops.
- **Implementation:** Organize regular training sessions within the community centers or at locations convenient for beneficiaries. Ensure these sessions are interactive, using role-plays, group discussions, and real-life scenarios to practice skills.
- **Evaluation:** Continuously assess the effectiveness of these programs through pre- and post-training evaluations, feedback forms, and follow-up sessions to monitor progress and adjust the curriculum as needed.
- **Client-Centered Interventions:** Use findings to tailor interventions according to clients' specific needs, such as offering targeted financial counseling or job training programs aimed at addressing identified economic challenges.

- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Collaborate with local organizations, businesses, and government agencies to pool resources and expertise, enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of economic empowerment initiatives.
- **Advocacy and Policy Change:** Advocate for policy changes based on research findings to address systemic barriers to economic empowerment, such as advocating for fair lending practices or increasing access to affordable housing and healthcare.
- **Workshops on Critical Thinking:** Conduct workshops that focus on enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. These should include activities such as case studies, decision-making simulations, and group problem-solving exercises.
- **Assertiveness Training:** Provide training on assertiveness to help beneficiaries express their needs and opinions confidently and respectfully.
- **Role-Playing Scenarios**: Use role-playing scenarios to practice decision-making in a safe and supportive environment, allowing beneficiaries to explore different outcomes and strategies.
- **Customized Leadership Training:** Develop tailored training modules to address the specific needs and strengths of beneficiaries, ensuring appropriate support for all participants.
- **Peer Mentoring Programs:** Implement peer mentoring programs where confident leaders mentor those less confident, fostering peer learning and community cohesion.
- **Focus on Diverse Experiences:** Consider personal experiences, educational backgrounds, and exposure to leadership opportunities when designing interventions, offering varied experiences within the program.
- **Continuous Skill Development:** Establish ongoing initiatives like workshops, seminars, and hands-on leadership opportunities to provide practical experience and build confidence over time.
- **Regular Assessment and Feedback:** Implement regular assessment and feedback mechanisms to track progress and identify areas needing further development, ensuring training remains relevant and effective.

- **Engagement through Strengths-Based Approach:** Utilize participants' positive attitude towards the program as a foundation for engagement. Employ strengths-based assessments to identify participants' assets and capabilities, fostering a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy.
- **Role Clarification through Client-Centered Techniques:** Employ client-centered techniques such as active listening and reflective questioning to clarify participants' perceptions of their roles within the program. Facilitate open dialogue to address any misunderstandings or uncertainties, empowering participants to define their roles based on their own values and goals.
- **Enhancing Autonomy through Empowerment Strategies:** Implement empowerment strategies such as skill-building workshops, advocacy training, and peer support groups to promote participants' autonomy and self-determination. Encourage active participation in decision-making processes and provide opportunities for leadership development within the program.
- **Psychological Empowerment through Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches:** Integrate cognitive-behavioral techniques to enhance participants' sense of psychological empowerment. Offer cognitive restructuring exercises to challenge negative beliefs and self-limiting attitudes, promoting a positive sense of self-efficacy and resilience.
- **Tailored Support using Ecological Perspective**: Apply an ecological perspective to assess participants' needs within the context of their environments. Collaborate with community resources and stakeholders to provide comprehensive support that addresses participants' individual, familial, and community-level challenges and strengths.

## 3.8 Policy Recommendations

### 3.8.1 Education access and enhancement

Develop programs to enhance education and skill development, with a focus on improving the educational attainment of illiterate and primary-educated individuals.

### 3.8.2 Marital support services

Offer marital counselling and support services for married individuals to strengthen family bonds and well-being.

### 3.8.3 Economic empowerment programs

Create income-generation opportunities, financial literacy programs, and access to microfinance for all income groups, considering the variance in income levels.

### 3.8.4 Social equity initiatives

Advocate for policies that ensure equal representation and opportunities for all social categories, emphasizing the elimination of disparities in access to resources and services.

### 3.8.5 Program evaluation

Continue monitoring and evaluating empowerment programs to measure their effectiveness and adjust them to address the specific needs of each demographic group.

### 3.8.6 Empowerment consistency

Promote consistency in empowerment across demographic and social categories, ensuring that no group is left behind or disadvantaged.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the demographic profiles and empowerment scores has revealed important insights into the specific characteristics and needs of the target population. While there is diversity in the demographics, the study did not identify significant disparities in empowerment across various categories. This provides a foundation for social work interventions that aim to improve the overall empowerment of the population while tailoring programs to address specific demographic and social factors. By implementing the proposed policy recommendations and focusing on equity and inclusivity, social work can contribute to enhancing the well-being and empowerment of the entire community.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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