

# **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND ITS CONSEQUENCE ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE IN SELECTED STATES: NFHS-3 DATA ANALYSIS**

**By**  
**Prof. C. P. Prakasam\***  
[c\\_prakasam@yahoo.com](mailto:c_prakasam@yahoo.com)

Women are primary care givers in the household and utilization of reproductive health care depends upon her status in the family and in the society. Research studies (Dyson and More, 1983, Jejeebhoy, 1995, Kabeer, 2001) revealed that status and empowerment of women enhances in promoting reproductive health care utilization.

Keeping above concept in view the present study aims to examine the interrelation between women's empowerment and decision making in the family, wife beating justified and refusing to have sex. Further women empowerment and utilization of Reproductive health care facilities in selected states in India has been examined. To achieve the objective data were derived from NFHS-3 for the three southern states viz: Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Analysis has been done by developing index of women empowerment in terms of Decision making at household (DH), reason for which wife-beating justified (WB) and refuse to have sex with husband (RS) have been calculated by giving scores for the responses. These three empowerment index is related to three reproductive health indicators viz: receiving Antenatal care (ANC), received delivery assistance (DA) and received postal natal care from health personals (PNC) and examined in the selected states viz: Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Logistic regression analysis has been applied to examine the effects of women empowerment on utilization of reproductive health care services in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Results revealed that women empowerment index is related to all three reproductive health indicators. In Andhra Pradesh around 75 percent women in the reproductive age had low decision making power; high acceptance of wife-beating low score of refuse to have sex reveals low status of empowerment. It has been observed that utilization of reproductive health care found to be low. It has been found to be same with Tamil Nadu and Kerala states. Further analysis with background variables has been carried out and discussed in the paper.

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\*Address for communication:

Prof. C. P. Prakasam, C2-5/2:3, Sector-4, Vashi-400703, New Bombay, Maharashtra  
[c\\_prakasam@yahoo.com](mailto:c_prakasam@yahoo.com)