



IMPACT OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION ON WOMEN

Prof. I.V.Lalitha Kumari

Professor & BOS Chair person, Dept of Social Work, Sri Padmavathi Women's University, Tirupati, India.

Abstract

Family as a social unit is still deeply embedded in the Indian society. Family remains important for the development and welfare of its members. But today the institution of family faces numerous tensions and threats arising out of complexities of modern living. So in order to enable the families it would be necessary to empower the members of the family for its development and welfare. Hence the present study was undertaken to empower the women through family life education programme because she is the one who takes care of all the members in the family. Fifty women from the 5 slums of Tirupati town were selected as sample. General interview schedule and self anchored questionnaire on Family Life Education was used for data collection. Their knowledge and attitude on Family Life Education (FLE) was assessed before and after the intervention. Percentages were calculated for socio-demographic variables. Based on the scores obtained before and after intervention the "Z"- test was applied to compare the scores before and after intervention. The results proved to be statistically significant.

Introduction

Families in India today are experiencing the tremendous influences of the socio-economic, political changes brought about by globalization, technological developments and allied forces. These have posed new challenges to the family at two levels. At one level, they have affected the structure, functions and dynamics within the family system, the status, roles and power held by its members and family norms and practices. At another level, these forces have adversely affected the family system's interaction with other systems in its environment and its ability to access community resources.

Even so, the concept of family is still deeply embedded in the Indian ethos and culture. The concept of marriage remains very central to Indian culture and family life cycle events still remain important markers for the status of different family members, especially women. The socialization and development of human beings is still recognized as significant function of the family system.

As a social system, the family is the primary agency for meeting the various needs of its members such as physical care, health, education, social, emotional, economic and self-esteem needs. The family system is comprised process of attempting to maintain balance and equilibrium within itself and within its ecological environment.

The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world is a maxim well known to everyone, but a few realize the full implications of it. The years before a woman becomes a mother are the crucial years, when she prepares herself for this important role of motherhood. Her abilities physical, emotional and intellectual determine the quality of life she holds for her children. Hence, it is important that efforts should be made to see that particularly women are given the necessary education to play their role effectively as mothers that is the education for family life.

Family life education, with its objective of increasing satisfaction from family living is receiving increasingly greater attention all over the world. In the advanced, affluent countries, the institution of family faces numerous tensions and threats arising out of complexities of modern living. In these countries, family life education has a distinct socio-psychological connotation and is provided mainly through family counseling and specialized courses. Family life education programmes are also aimed at empowering families so that the family units are strengthened; exploitation, disintegration and destitution of families and their members is prevented.

In order to enable families to be truly a source of emotional and material strength to all its members, it would be necessary to empower the disadvantaged members of the family. For instance, women may be empowered by providing them with new perspectives, alternate meanings and a greater understanding of gender based power relations within the family and its ecological environment which militates against their self development and relationships of equality with others. So that they have a wider range of choice on which they can improve their lives (Atwood, 2001).

Review of Literature

Family life education programme is a new programme, which was started in United States of America in 1951. It is not a substitute for case work treatment, but it is an educational (and practical) programme to prevent unhappy family relationships and for the strengthening and enrichment of family life. The programme should include education in sex, preparations for



marital life and parenthood. Friedlander (1978) points out, in recent years there has been a growing emphasis on education as a process for strengthening the relationships of these activities have been called family life education and have been carried on by social workers in family service agencies.

Smith (1976) has described family life education as a programme of learning experiences planned and guided to develop the potential of individuals in their present and future roles as family members.

Family life education programme is a major social work approach utilizing adult education techniques. It is a group method of assisting individuals, Couples and families to broaden their knowledge of available attitudinal and behavioral alternatives so that they can cope more effectively with the maturational phases of life and transition or crisis points. It is meant to reach out to a broad range of populations in order to prevent family and social breakdown (Fallon, 1982).

Family life education is perceived to be usually operated through informal channels of education which incidentally every one receives. Family life education seems to be a learning process that begins almost at birth and continues throughout life. Family life education is not to be confused with sex -education; it is much broader – in space, though sex education is a part of it. The complexity of today's cultural milieu, the multiplicity of forces working upon the individual, the widening intergenerational gaps require an educational approach which is likely to help different members of the family to assess their role to create a harmony and strength in the family unit (Merh, 1984).

Thus the reviews reveals that, research are conducted on family life Education components mainly focusing on adolescents, but notable studies are not conducted covering adults on whose performance the future of to-day's citizens' rests.

Method

The study was conducted in two stages,

1. Assessment of family life education (FLE) knowledge and attitudes of women.
2. Impact of a need based family life education programme on women.

Objectives

1. To assess the sample respondent's knowledge on Family Life Education
2. To measure the attitudes of sample respondent's towards Family Life Education.
3. To identify the Family Life Education needs of sample respondent's.
4. . To measure the impact of a need based Family Life Education programme on sample respondents

Sampling and Tools of Data Collection

The study was conducted in 5 slums of Tirupati town, Chittoor district of A.P. There are 42 slums in Tirupati out of which 5 slums were selected randomly. From each slum 10 married women were selected randomly with the help of voters list. Thus, the sample consisting of 50 married women. An interview schedule was used to get personal profile of the sample and also self anchored questionnaire on family life education programme was administered before intervention to assess the attitudes and knowledge of women on Family Life Education. Based on the needs identified through questioner the family life education programme has been planned and conducted. Again after the intervention women's attitude and knowledge were assessed. Pre and Post intervention scores are utilized to measure the impact of intervention programme on women.

Intervention programme

A package of Family Life Education intervention programme used in the study was develop by UNESCO (1991) was adopted for intervention. Intervention programme consists of 8 areas. They are

1. Concept of family
2. Family functions
3. Psycho-social needs of the family
4. Family roles, relationships, responsibilities and rights
5. Family life cycle
6. Good parenting practices
7. Family planning
8. Health and Nutritional aspects

Total sample of 50 respondents were divided into 5 groups. Each group consists of 10 members (women). Intervention programme was imparted to group members by adopting lecture and group discussion methods. Totally 8 sessions were carried out by covering all the areas. Each session last for about 30 to 45 minutes.



Analysis

The results of the study indicated that the present study on needs, knowledge and attitudes of women and impact of a need based family life education, programme lead to the following findings:

TABLE: 1 General profile of the Sample

Characteristic	Number	Percent
Age (years):		
15-24	12	24
25-35	36	72
35 and above	2	4
Education:		
Primary	21	42
Secondary	26	52
Higher	3	6
Family Type:		
Nuclear family	34	68
Joint family	9	18
Family Size: (Number)		
2-4	32	64
4-6	14	28
6 and above	4	8
Occupation:		
Labour	24	48
Self employed	15	30
Home makers (Home wives)	11	22
Annual Family Income (Rs.):		
Less than 15,000	13	26
15,000-30,000	25	50
30,000 and above	12	24

The above table reveals the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. Majority of women (72 per cent) belonged to 25-34 years of age group. The education of the respondents showed that majority of the sample had secondary education. The majority of the sample belonged to nuclear families and the remaining to joint families. Majority of the sample had number of family members between 2 to 4. Majority of sample respondent's occupation was daily wage labour.

Table -2: Comparison of means of pre and post -test scores on Family Life Education attitudes of sample respondents

FLE Attitude	Pre- test scores		Post- test scores		'Z' Value
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
Women	41.06	4.57	56.1	2.21	17.53*

* Indicates significant difference at 0.05% level.

The Table No.2 shows that initial mean attitude scores of women and final values were taken. The standard deviation values for women initial and final values were 4.57 and 2.21 respectively. The 'Z' test values showed that it was greater (17.53) than the table value (1.96) which means that there was a significant difference between women with initial and final values regarding Family Life Education attitudes i.e. women has improved significantly after family life education programme.

Table -3: Comparison of means of pre and post - test scores on Family Life Education knowledge of sample respondents

FLE Knowledge	Pre-test scores		Post-test scores		'Z' Value
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
Women	106.3.	6.15	142.13	6.61	21.7*

* Indicates significant difference at 0.05% level.

The Table No.3 shows that initial mean knowledge scores of women and final values were taken respectively. The standard deviation values for women initial and final values are 6.15 and 6.61 respectively. The 'Z' test values shows that it is greater



(21.7) than the table value (1.96) which means that there is a significant difference between women with initial and final values regarding family life education knowledge.

Findings

A 'Z' test was done to know the impact of family life education programme on women by taking initial and final knowledge scores of women independently, which showed that family life education attitude, knowledge improved after the family life education programme as statistically significant difference was found between women with initial and final values.

Conclusion

There is a significant difference between women with respect to their family life education initial and final attitudinal scores, indicates women improved significantly after family life education programme. Statistically significant difference was found between women with respect to their family life education initial and final knowledge scores after the family life education programme.

Thus the results of the study allows concluding that, family life education programme had an impact on the women. Though in the present study, family life education programme was confined to women only due to some limitations(such as time).Family life education programmes need to be extended to men also in order to equip both the spouses with necessary knowledge and skills on family life education in order to achieve better quality of family life.

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