

Review of: "Socio-cultural factors influencing women empowerment: A cross-sectional study among an ex-criminal tribe in West Bengal, India"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The paper does not contribute any additional knowledge to the existing evidence, instead analysing the various indicators that have been shown to increase women's decision making. It would have been more insightful if they had provided a situational analysis on why they expected the study population to deviate what is known in literature. This would help show the knowledge gap the study is trying to fill.

What is women empowerment? Start with definition, be clear whether its overall empowerment or specific dimensions. How is women empowerment operationalised in this study? The definition is given in methods sections, but should move up to front end.

Given that they interviewed women, they would have sort women's view on empowerment, what being empowered means to them. Also just interviewing married women limits the generalizability of the findings. How do they justify excluding single women?

The study makes sweeping generalisations that are not substantiated in the results. In addition, the authors need to reflect more on their findings. For example, the woman who joined SHG even after being told by family not to join, is her empowerment because of SHG or intrinsic (Self-confidence)? The conclusion that SHG participation should be promoted not conclusive from the results. Who are the women who joined the SHG? Are they different from those who didn't join?

2nd para in introduction: "but the initiative has not brought about the expected outcome" this sentence starts off as referring specifically to the Indian status, but then talks about other countries. What initiative? What was the expected outcome? These statements are too broad, need to be specific.

Include a section on limitations.