

Language Learning as a Factor of Women Empowerment as Perceived by the Ab Els Students

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Abstract:- The purpose of this study was to investigate language learning as a factor of women empowerment among 1st year to 4th year students of the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students of Isabela State University – Echague Campus and its relationship between the respondents' profile and their attitudes towards women empowerment. It also aimed to find out the significant difference between the respondents' profile and the general perception of the respondents towards women empowerment. The researcher employed stratified random sampling technique with a total of 145 respondents. The researcher administered a survey questionnaire adapted from Shuja (2020) and Spada (2020) which were revised to fit the context of the respondents. The questionnaire is designed to measure the perception of the respondents on language learning as a factor of women empowerment. Based on the results, it can be observed that there were more female respondents than male, however result showed that there is a positive perception of the female and male respondents towards women empowerment.

Keywords:- Language learning, Women Empowerment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language learning plays an important role in human and social development not only because it is the language spoken by more than a billion people worldwide but as the world's language and the key holder for the future. English is used by people all over the world to communicate in order to achieve quality communication goals. Furthermore, English proficiency is also essential for students, and must comprehend and utilize English in order to be competent in the face of global competition.

On the other hand, the discussion of gender inequality is very common in all cultures, therefore, the topic of women empowerment and how language learning influences gender empowerment is high on everyone's understanding. According to Ahmed et al. (2001), in developing countries, gender disparity is highly uncontrolled compared to the developed countries. For example, Ahikire et al. (2015) pointed out that even with the continuing policies in place to make sure female participation in the public, the status of women remains notably lower than that of a man in all aspects of society. As an outcome, the low empowerment of women and the high gender gap still block the development process of the country (Environmental Protection Authority, 2012).

Women empowerment is an act of raising women's voices and making women feel safe about their self-worth. It is also a transformational process that enables people to make decisions and act on those decisions into desired actions. It is, therefore, essential to be involved how the way students learn a language as well as how it impacts them in terms of taking control of their lives, improving their roles, establishing their agendas, gaining skills, developing self-confidence, overcoming obstacles, and so on. Self-sufficiency 2 should be established as a process of increasing self-confidence and contributing to communal development since empowerment leads to community engagement.

According to Swain and Wallentin (2008), the empowerment of women is a prerequisite and very important requirement in order to make the process of personal development and development of a country stable and sustainable it generally takes place when women challenge prevailing customs and culture to improve their well-being. The modern Western world has been characterized by acknowledging the rights and significance of women and is aiming to achieve gender equality. Women's and men's rankings nonetheless, in the outlook is not as good in underdeveloped countries.

Furthermore, Inglehart and Norris (2003), Inglehart and Welzel (2005), Welzel (2003), Inglehart, Norris and Welzel (2002) stated that growing emancipatory ideals 3 strengthen women's empowerment across society. The idea emphasizes developments in contemporary cultures that are especially favorable to women empowerment and make a relationship between cultural modernization and a public that desires greater gender equality.

Women empowerment is a process and gives women power or authority to challenge certain situations (Basu & Basu, 2001). According to Murphy-Graham (2008), the increase of knowledge, self-confidence and awareness of gender equity are signs of empowerment. There is a proof that these components are usually developed as a result of higher education (Maslak & Singhal, 2008). Educated women become more confident and they have better communication skills and can defend their point of view in more effective and diplomatic way and can make their own decisions.

The primary objective of this study is to determine the perception of the male and female AB ELS students of Isabela State University Echague Campus on the language

learning as a factor of women empowerment. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

- What is the profile of the respondents as to:
 - a. age;
 - b. sex;
 - c. language at home; and
 - d. year level.
- What is the general perception of the respondents towards women empowerment in terms of Educational Factors?
- What is the attitude of the respondents towards women empowerment?
- Is there a difference between the profile of the respondents and the general perception of the respondents towards women empowerment?
- Is there a relationship between the profile of the respondents and their attitudes toward women empowerment?

The hypothesis of the study is that there is no significant difference between the profile of the respondents and the language learning as a factor of women empowerment in terms of educational factors and there is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and their attitude towards women empowerment.

The abovementioned were prevailing issues where empowering women is considered and there is a scarcity of studies that includes men. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate language learning as a factor of

women empowerment and their attitude towards women empowerment.

II. METHODS

This study utilized the descriptive-correlational research method. The study respondents were comprised of the randomly selected 145 students from the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies (first year to fourth year) of Isabela State University, Main Campus. The respondents were determined using stratified random sampling. In this study, the researcher administered a survey questionnaire adapted from Shuja (2020) and Spada (2009) which were revised to fit the context of the respondents. The questionnaire was designed to measure the perception of the respondents on language learning as a factor of women empowerment. Part I of the questionnaire focuses on the personal information of the respondent in terms of age, sex, language at home and 15 year level, while part II was composed of questions determining the language learning as a factor of women empowerment, a 5-point Likert Scale with description: Strongly Agree (5) Agree (4) Undecided (3) Disagree (2) Strongly Disagree (1) was used. After the retrieval, the data were tallied, tabulated and computed that facilitated the analysis and interpretation of data. Frequency and percentage distribution were used to determine the profile of the respondents. The weighted mean was used in treating the data to answer research questions 2 and 3. The researcher used F-value, T-test and Kruskal-Wallis H to determine if there is a significant difference between the profile of the respondents and their general perception towards women empowerment and Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) and chi-square were used to study the significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and their attitudes towards women empowerment.

III. RESULTS

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency (n=145)	Percentage (100%)
Age		
17 to 19	38	26.2
20 to 22	98	67.6
23 Above	9	6.2
Sex		
Male	37	25.5
Female	108	74.5
Language at Home		
Ilocano	54	37.2
Tagalog	73	50.3
Yogad	11	7.6
Bisaya	1	.7
Ifugao	2	1.4
Ybanag	4	2.8
Year Level		
First Year	29	20.0
Second Year	24	16.6
Third Year	22	15.2
Fourth Year	70	48.3

Table 2. Computed mean on the perception of the respondents towards women empowerment in terms of Education Factor

Statements	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. I like seeing women learning grammar during speaking, writing, listening or reading activities.	4.17	Strongly Agree
2. I believe that women's English will improve quickly if she studies and practice grammar.	4.29	Strongly Agree
3. I like the female teacher to correct my mistakes after an activity is completed.	4.34	Strongly Agree
4. Doing communicative activities with my female friends is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	4.24	Strongly Agree
5. I can learn grammar while reading or listening to a passage written or spoken by women.	4.16	Strongly Agree
6. I prefer to learn grammar as I work with my female friends on different skills and activities.	4.14	Strongly Agree
7. Doing grammar exercises with female friends is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	4.15	Strongly Agree
8. I and my female friends find it hard to learn grammar through reading or listening.	3.43	Agree
9. I believe my grammar will improve quickly if I communicate using English with my female friends.	4.28	Strongly Agree
10. I like learning grammar by using language when I converse with my female friend.	4.27	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.15	Strongly Agree

Table 3. Computed Mean on the Attitude of the respondents towards women empowerment

Statements	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Empowering women is necessary for the society and country to flourish.	4.14	Strongly Agree
2. It is necessary to give women equal occupational opportunities	4.34	Strongly Agree
3. Opportunities must be given to women to take top positions	3.97	Agree
4. Women should be allowed to go wherever on they want to on their own.	4.21	Strongly Agree
5. Women should be allowed to live their life the way they want to live	4.43	Strongly Agree
6. Women should be allowed to keep all earnings from their job for themselves.	4.14	Strongly Agree
7. There should be complete gender equality between men and women in every field.	4.18	Strongly Agree
8. Boys education is more important than girls' education.	2.52	Undecided
9. Women should be considered equally responsible for their own lives as men are considered for their lives.	4.22	Strongly Agree
10. Woman should have completely the same opportunities in getting jobs and promotion as men	4.25	Strongly Agree
Grand Mean	4.04	Strongly Agree

Table 4. Significant difference in the general perception of the respondents towards women empowerment in terms of Education Factor when they are grouped according to their Age

STATEMENTS	17-19		20-22		23 above		F-Value	Sig
	Mean	Desc	Mean	Desc	Mean	Desc		
Education								
1. I like seeing women learning grammar during speaking, writing, listening or reading activities.	3.97	A	4.24	SA	4.11	SA	3.15*	0.05
2. I believe that women’s English will improve quickly if she studies and practice grammar.	4.11	SA	4.38	SA	4.11	SA	3.10*	0.05
3. I like the female teacher to correct my mistakes after an activity is completed.	4.13	SA	4.42	SA	4.33	SA	3.32*	0.04
4. Doing communicative activities with my female friends is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	3.97	A	4.37	SA	4.00	A	5.71*	0.00
5. I can learn grammar while reading or listening to a passage written or spoken by women.	3.95	A	4.26	SA	4.00	A	3.44*	0.03
6. I prefer to learn grammar as I work with my female friends on different skills and activities.	4.08	SA	4.19	SA	3.89	A	1.08 ^{ns}	0.34
7. Doing grammar exercises with my female friends is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	3.92	A	4.23	SA	4.22	SA	2.71 ^{ns}	0.07
8. I and my female friends find it hard to learn grammar through reading or listening.	3.37	A	3.42	A	3.89	A	0.73 ^{ns}	0.48
9. I believe my grammar will improve quickly if I communicate using English with my female friends.	4.00	A	4.39	SA	4.22	SA	4.84*	0.01
10. I like learning grammar by using language when I converse with my female friends.	4.08	SA	4.34	SA	4.33	SA	2.18 ^{ns}	0.12

ns – not significant * significant SA-Strongly Agree A-Agree U – Undecided D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree

Table 5. Significant difference in the general perception of the respondents towards women empowerment in terms of Education Factor when they are grouped according to Sex

STATEMENTS	Male		Female		T-Test	Sig.
	Mean	Desc	Mean	Desc		
Education						
1. I like learning grammar during speaking, writing, listening or reading activities.	4.05	SA	4.20	SA	4.17*	0.04
2. I believe my English will improve quickly if I study and practice grammar.	4.30	SA	4.29	SA	0.59 ^{ns}	0.45
3. I like the teacher to correct my mistakes after an activity is completed.	4.38	SA	4.32	SA	0.17 ^{ns}	0.68
4. Doing communicative activities is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	4.27	SA	4.23	SA	1.74 ^{ns}	0.19
5. I can learn grammar while reading or listening to a passage.	4.16	SA	4.16	SA	2.50 ^{ns}	0.12
6. I prefer to learn grammar as I work on different skills and activities.	4.19	SA	4.13	SA	1.32 ^{ns}	0.25
7. Doing grammar exercises is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	4.03	SA	4.19	SA	1.07 ^{ns}	0.30
8. I find it hard to learn grammar through reading or listening.	3.68	A	3.35	A	4.13*	0.04
9. I believe my grammar will improve quickly if I communicate using English.	4.14	SA	4.32	SA	2.70 ^{ns}	0.10
10. I like learning grammar by using language.	4.16	SA	4.31	SA	5.88*	0.02

^{ns} – not significant * significant SA-Strongly Agree A-Agree U – Undecided D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree

Table 6. Significant difference in the general perception of the respondents towards women empowerment in terms of Social and Cultural Factor when they are grouped according to their Language at Home

STATEMENTS	Ilocano		Tagalog		Yogad		Bisaya		Ifugao		Ybanag		Kruskal-Wallis H	Sig.
	Mean	Desc	Mean	Desc	Mean	Desc	Mean	Desc	Mean	Desc	Mean	Desc		
Education														
1. I like seeing women learning grammar during speaking, writing, listening or reading activities.	4.15	SA	4.22	SA	4.09	SA	4.00	A	4.00	A	3.75	A	0.63 ^{ns}	0.68
2. I believe that women’s English will improve quickly if she studies and practice grammar.	4.43	SA	4.26	SA	4.09	SA	3.00	U	4.50	SA	3.75	A	2.39*	0.04
3. I like the female teacher to correct my mistakes after an activity is completed.	4.33	SA	4.36	SA	4.18	SA	4.00	A	5.00	SA	4.25	SA	0.74 ^{ns}	0.59
4. Doing communicative activities with my female friends is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	4.22	SA	4.21	SA	4.45	SA	4.00	A	5.00	SA	4.25	SA	0.81 ^{ns}	0.55
5. I can learn grammar while reading or listening to a passage written or spoken	4.19	SA	4.16	SA	4.09	SA	3.00	U	4.50	SA	4.00	A	0.82 ^{ns}	0.53
6. I prefer to learn grammar as I work with my female friends on different skills and activities.	4.19	SA	4.11	SA	4.27	SA	4.00	A	4.00	A	4.00	A	0.21 ^{ns}	0.96
7. Doing grammar exercises with my female friends is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	4.13	SA	4.18	SA	4.09	SA	4.00	A	4.00	A	4.25	SA	0.08 ^{ns}	0.99
8. I and my female friends find it hard to learn grammar through reading or listening.	3.41	A	3.30	A	4.09	SA	4.00	A	4.50	SA	3.75	A	1.31 ^{ns}	0.26
9. I believe my grammar will improve quickly if I communicate using English with my female friends.	4.24	SA	4.36	SA	4.00	A	4.00	A	4.00	A	4.25	SA	0.70 ^{ns}	0.62
10. I like learning grammar by using language when I converse with my female friend.	4.26	SA	4.25	SA	4.36	SA	4.00	A	4.50	SA	4.50	SA	0.24 ^{ns}	0.94

ns – not significant * significant SA-Strongly Agree A – Agree U-Uncecided D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree

Table 7. Significant difference in the general perception of the respondents towards women empowerment in terms of Education Factor when they are grouped according to their Year Level

STATEMENTS	First Year		Second Year		Third Year		Forth Year		Kruskal-Wallis H	Sig.
	Mean	Desc.	Mean	Desc.	Mean	Desc.	Mean	Desc.		
Education										
1. I like seeing women learning grammar during speaking, writing, listening or reading activities.	4.00	A	4.00	A	4.41	SA	4.21	SA	3.05*	0.03
2. I believe that women’s English will improve quickly if she studies and practice grammar.	4.14	SA	4.13	SA	4.41	SA	4.37	SA	1.84 ^{ns}	0.14
3. I like the female teacher to correct my mistakes after an activity is completed.	4.07	SA	4.17	SA	4.59	SA	4.43	SA	4.93*	0.00
4. Doing communicative activities with my female friends is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	4.03	SA	3.96	A	4.50	SA	4.34	SA	4.25*	0.01
5. I can learn grammar while reading or listening to a passage written or spoken.	3.97	A	3.96	A	4.50	SA	4.20	SA	3.92*	0.01
6. I prefer to learn grammar as I work with my female friends on different skills and activities.	4.03	SA	4.08	SA	4.36	SA	4.14	SA	1.09 ^{ns}	0.35
7. Doing grammar exercises with my female friends is the best way to learn to use English more accurately.	4.03	SA	3.83	A	4.45	SA	4.21	SA	3.46*	0.02
8. I and my female friends find it hard to learn grammar through reading or listening.	3.45	A	3.29	A	3.32	A	3.51	A	0.29 ^{ns}	0.83
9. I believe my grammar will improve quickly if I communicate using English with my female friends.	4.07	SA	4.00	A	4.59	SA	4.36	SA	4.53*	0.00
10. I like learning grammar by using language when I converse with my female friends.	4.10	SA	4.04	SA	4.64	SA	4.30	SA	4.15*	0.01
ns – not significant * significant SA-Strongly Agree A – Agree U-Undecided D-Disagree SD-Strongly Disagree										

Table 8a. Significant relationship between the age of the respondents and their attitudes towards women empowerment

Statements	Corr.	P-Value
1. Empowering women is necessary for the society and country to flourish.	0.12 ^{ns}	0.12
2. It is necessary to give women equal occupational opportunities	0.19*	0.01
3. Opportunities must be given to women to take top positions	0.28*	0.00
4. Women should be allowed to go wherever on they want to on their own.	0.13 ^{ns}	0.11
5. Women should be allowed to live their life the way they want to live	0.05 ^{ns}	0.55
6. Women should be allowed to keep all earnings from their job for themselves.	0.10 ^{ns}	0.20
7. There should be complete gender equality between men and women in every field.	0.19*	0.02
8. Boys education is more important than girls’ education.	0.01 ^{ns}	0.88
9. Women should be considered equally responsible for their own lives as men are considered for their lives.	0.17*	0.03
10. Woman should have completely the same opportunities in getting jobs and promotion as men	0.18*	0.02
ns-not significant * significant		

Table 8b. Significant relationship between the sex of the respondents and their attitudes towards women empowerment

Statements	X ² -Value	P-Value
1. Empowering women is necessary for the society and country to flourish.	15.25*	0.00
2. It is necessary to give women equal occupational opportunities	15.68*	0.00
3. Opportunities must be given to women to take top positions	4.46	0.34
4. Women should be allowed to go wherever on they want to on their own.	10.36*	0.03
5. Women should be allowed to live their life the way they want to live	10.46*	0.01
6. Women should be allowed to keep all earnings from their job for themselves.	7.92 ^{ns}	0.09
7. There should be complete gender equality between men and women in every field.	8.57 ^{ns}	0.07
8. Boys education is more important than girls' education.	7.59 ^{ns}	0.10
9. Women should be considered equally responsible for their own lives as men are considered for their lives.	7.15 ^{ns}	0.12
10. Woman should have completely the same opportunities in getting jobs and promotion as men	9.66*	0.04

ns-not significant * significant

Table 8c. Significant relationship between language at home of the respondents and their attitudes towards women empowerment

Statements	X ² -Value	P-Value
1. Empowering women is necessary for the society and country to flourish.	38.44*	0.00
2. It is necessary to give women equal occupational opportunities	37.60*	0.01
3. Opportunities must be given to women to take top positions	27.45 ^{ns}	0.12
4. Women should be allowed to go wherever on they want to on their own.	11.99 ^{ns}	0.91
5. Women should be allowed to live their life the way they want to live	22.00 ^{ns}	0.10
6. Women should be allowed to keep all earnings from their job for themselves.	14.72 ^{ns}	0.79
7. There should be complete gender equality between men and women in every field.	24.46 ^{ns}	0.22
8. Boys education is more important than girls' education.	30.80*	0.05
9. Women should be considered equally responsible for their own lives as men are considered for their lives.	16.70 ^{ns}	0.67
10. Woman should have completely the same opportunities in getting jobs and promotion as men	24.16 ^{ns}	0.23

ns-not significant * significant

Table 8d. Significant relationship between the year level of the respondents and their attitudes towards women empowerment

Statements	Corr.	P-Value
1. Empowering women is necessary for the society and country to flourish.	0.23*	0.00
2. It is necessary to give women equal occupational opportunities	0.28*	0.00
3. Opportunities must be given to women to take top positions	0.37*	0.00
4. Women should be allowed to go wherever on they want to on their own.	0.29*	0.00
5. Women should be allowed to live their life the way they want to live	0.15 ^{ns}	0.06
6. Women should be allowed to keep all earnings from their job for themselves.	0.14 ^{ns}	0.08
7. There should be complete gender equality between men and women in every field.	0.23*	0.00
8. Boys education is more important than girls' education.	-0.07 ^{ns}	0.38
9. Women should be considered equally responsible for their own lives as men are considered for their lives.	0.29*	0.00
10. Woman should have completely the same opportunities in getting jobs and promotion as men	0.24*	0.00

ns-not significant * significant

IV. DISCUSSIONS

This study was conducted during the school year 2022-2023 to investigate language learning as a factor of women empowerment. The study also determined the general perception of the respondents towards women empowerment in terms of Education factors, their attitudes toward women empowerment, and the relationship and different between and among the variables involved.

Based on the result gathered, it can be observed that there were more women respondents than men. Table 1 shows that in terms of age, 38 or 26.2 percent of the respondents were ages 17-19, 98 or 67.6 percent of the respondents were ages 20-22 and 9 or 6.2 percent of the respondents were ages 23 above. In terms of sex, 37 or 25.5 percent of the students were male and 108 or 74.5 percent were female. With regards to their Language at home, 54 or 37.2 percent of the respondents were Ilocano, 73 or 50.3 percent were Tagalog, 11 or 7.6 percent were Yogad, 1 or .7 percent of the respondents were Bisaya, 2 or 1.4 percent of the respondents were Ifugao and 4 or 2.8 percent of the respondents were Ybanag. With respect to their Year Level most of the respondents 29 or 20.0 percent were first year, 24 or 16.6 percent were second year, 22 or 15.2 were third year and 70 or 48.3 percent were fourth year.

The results of the study also revealed that the participants agreed on all items presented in Education factors which obtained a Grand Mean total of 4.15 with a 43 descriptive equivalent "Strongly Agree." Under the attitudes

of the respondents toward women empowerment, it showed that that item 5 "Women should be allowed to live their life the way they want to live" obtained the highest mean of 4.34 and a descriptive equivalent "Strongly Agree." With respect to the profile of the respondents, Education factors show significant difference with their age, sex, language at home and year level. Although, some of the factors shows no significance, still majority shows significant difference to the respondents' profile. In terms of year level, it showed that most of the respondents specifically third year and fourth year showed a significant difference in their perceptions on language learning as a factor of women empowerment. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Lastly, in the results, it could be seen that there is a significant relationship between the attitude of the respondents towards women empowerment. It revealed that there existed significant relationship in terms of attitude of the respondents with their age, sex, language at home, and year level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The general conclusion drawn from the current research is that students' perception with regard to language learning and women empowerment is diverse. According to the result, the respondents have a positive perception and attitudes with regard to women empowerment. This implies that the respondents are positively interacting with their community with no judgments and discrimination existing

in their community in all aspects of their lives including the way they communicate with others.

However, it has been discovered that there is a considerable difference between the learners' profiles. This could mean that the result indicates that most respondents have varied ways of learning and communicating with others and it can be varied by their intentions to someone. Furthermore, it shows that the respondents' attitude toward women empowerment is positively presented. This leads to the conclusion that in order to achieve women empowerment in society, the needs of the learners must be addressed. Though they have diverse points of view and perspectives on the problem, their participation serves as vital for the concept of empowerment in society.

With these results, the researcher gives the following recommendation. 1. It is recommended to have an equal number of respondents to avoid biases in order to achieve accurate results of the study. 2. Since language learning influences women empowerment in terms of educational factors, teachers can now make an adjustment in terms of providing them with quality education to feel empowered. 3. To improve student self-awareness, a comprehensive approach to empowering individuals, both women and men, should be incorporated to achieve the actualization of equal empowerment in the institution. 4. For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct a similar study exploring a wider scope of this study to see whether the same result will be obtained.

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