



Rural Women Empowerment and Development

Ch.Pavani

Lecturer, dept.of Computer Science K.B.N College, Vijayawada

V.Chandrika

Lecturer, dept.of Computer Science K.B.N College, Vijayawada

ABSTRACT

Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in recent times. The economic empowerment of women is being regarded these days as a Sine-quo-none of progress for a country; hence, the issue of economic empowerment of women is of paramount importance to political thinkers, social scientists and reformers. The Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have paved the way for economic independence of rural women. The members of SHGs are involved in Micro-Entrepreneurships. Through that, they are becoming economically independent and providing employment opportunities to others. This article deals with empowerment of rural women through entrepreneurship and the advantages entrepreneurship among the rural women. "Economic empowerment of women led to development of family and community".

KEYWORDS :

Introduction

"You cantell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women"

-JawaharlalNehru.

The emergence of women entrepreneurs and their contribution to the national economy is quite visible in India. The number of women entrepreneurs has grown over a period of time, especially in the 1990s. Women entrepreneurs need to be lauded for their increased utilization of modern technology, increased investments, finding a niche in the export market, creating a sizeable employment for others and setting the trend for other women entrepreneurs in the organized sector. While women entrepreneurs have demonstrated their potential, the fact remains that they are capable of contributing much more than what they already are. Women's entrepreneurship needs to be studied separately for various reasons. The first reason is that women's entrepreneurship has been recognised during the last decade as an important untapped source of economic growth. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and also by being different. They also provide the society with different solutions to management, organisation and business problems as well as to the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. The second reason is that the topic of women in entrepreneurship has been largely neglected both in society in general and in the social sciences. Not only have women lower participation rates in entrepreneurship than men but they also generally choose to start and manage firms in different industries than men tend to do.

Development of the society is directly related with the Income Generation Capacity of its members with agriculture, as the key income generation activity the entrepreneurship on farm and home can directly affect the income of a major chunk of our population. The growth of modernization processes such as industrialization, technical change, urbanization and migration further encourage it. Entrepreneurship on small scale is the only solution to the problems of unemployment and proper utilization of both human and non-human resources and improving the living condition of the poor masses.

Entrepreneurship is the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. This wealth is created by individuals who take the major risks in terms of equity, time and career commitment of providing value to some products or services the product or service itself may or may not be unique but value must somehow be infused by the entrepreneur securing and allocating the necessary skill and resources. The delivery of microfinance to the poor is smooth; effective and less costly if they are organized into SHGs. SHG is promoting micro enterprise through micro-credit intervention. Micro enterprises are an effective instrument of social and economic development.

The microfinance is an agenda for empowering poor women. Microenterprises are an integral part of planned strategy for securing balanced development of the economy of the poor women. Rural women's par-

ticipation in agro-based activities is much more than what statistics reveal. This is mainly due to the fact that most of the work done by the women at farm and home is disguised as daily chores. Mechanization and easy availability of labour provide more time to energetic women to engage themselves in self-employment or entrepreneur ventures.

Rural women are having human and non-human resources to take up an enterprise need an innovative mind and motivation. Entrepreneurship is the only solution to the growing employment among rural youth. It helps to generate employment for a number of people within their own social system.

This is more beneficial for women in rural areas as it enables them to add to the family income while taking care of their own home and livestock entered task. Rural women possess abundant resources to take up enterprises. She has the benefit of easy availability of farm and livestock based raw materials and other resources.

Hence, she can effectively undertake both the production and processing oriented enterprises. Entrepreneurship development among rural women helps to enhance their personal capabilities and increased decision-making status in the family and society as a whole.

Development of Rural Women through Self Help Groups

Women comprise half of human resources they have been identified as key agents of Sustainable development and women's equality is as central to a more holistic approach towards stabilizing new patterns and process of development that are sustainable.

The contribution of women and their role in the family as well as in the economic development and social transformation are pivotal. Women constitute 90 percent of total marginal workers of the country. Rural women who are engaged in agriculture form 78 percent of all women in regular work

Experience of NIRD action research

projects reveal that, the operational aspects, such as the extent of enabling that goes into the community self-help processes and sharpening the mind set of women. Men and the project administrators are low or critical components that determine their extent to which empowerment may or may not take place. The role of micro-credits to improve the socio and economic development of women and improve the status of women in households and communities. The micro entrepreneurs are strengthening the women empowerment and remove the gender inequalities. Self-Help Group's micro credit mechanism makes them member to involve in other community development activities. Micro credit is promoting the small scale business enterprises and its major aim is to alleviate poverty by income generating activities among women and poor. Therefore, they could achieve self-sufficiency.

Now-a-days economic development is one of the factors

hathavechangedtheentire scenario ofsocial and cultural environ- ment withinthecountry especiallyforthewomen. Theruralwomena- reengagedin small-scale entrepreneurshipprogrammewiththehelp of SelfHelpGroups.Throughthatthey were economicallyempoweredand- dattainingstatus infamilyandcommunity.

Rural women playavital roleinfarmand homesystem.She contributes- substantially in the physicalaspectof farming,livestock management, post-harvest and allied activities.Herdirectandindirectcontribu- tion at the farm and home level along with livestockmanage- mentoperationhasnotonly helptosavetheirassetsbutalsoledtoincrease the family income. She performs various farm, livestock, post-har- vest and allied activities andpossessesskillsand indigenous knowl- edgein theseareas.Thewomenwere empoweringthemselvestechnical- ly to cope with the changing times and productively usingtheir free time andexistingskills for settingandsustainingenterprises.They were engagedin starting individualorcollective incomegenerationprogram- mewiththehelp of self-helpgroup.This willnotonly generate income- forthembutalsoimprovethedecision- makingcapabilitiesthatledto overall empowerment.

Areas of Micro-Enterprise Development

Depending numberof factorsrangingfrom landholdings,subsidiary occupations,agro climaticconditionsand socio-personal character- isticsof theruralwomenandher family member the areas of micro- enterprises also differ from place to place. The micro enterprises are classified under threemajorheads:

1. Micro Enterprise development relatedtoagricultureand allied agriculturalactivitieslikecultivating toorganicvegetables,flow- ers,oil seeds and seed production are some ofthe areasbe- sidetaking upmushroom growingandbee-keeping.Somemore areascanbe like dehydrationof fruits and vegetables,canningor- bottling of pickles,chutneys,jams,squashes,dairy andother prod- ucts thatarereadyto eat.
2. Micro-Enterprise development relatedto livestock man- agement activities like dairy farming, poultry farm,livestockfeed productionand productionof vermicompostingusing the animal- wastecanbeanimportant area in which womencanutilizeboth hertechnical skills andraw materials fromthefarm and livestock- toearn substantialincomeandsmallscaleagro- processingunits.
3. Micro-Enterprisedevelopment related to household based op- erationslike knitting, stitching, weaving,embroidery,bakery and- flour milling, petty shops,foodpreparation andpreservation.

Advantages of Entrepreneurship amongRuralWomen

Empoweringwomenparticularly rural women is a challenge. Micro enterprises in ruralarea can helpt to meet these challenges. Micro- enterprisesnotonly enhancenational productivity, generateemploy- mentbutalso help to develop economicindependence, personaland socialcapabilitiesamong rural women.Followingaresomeoftheperson- aland social capabilities,whichweredevelopedas result of taking up enterprise amongrural women.

- Economicempowerment
- Improvedstandardofliving
- Self confidence
- Enhanceawareness
- Senseofachievement
- Increasedsocialinteraction
- Engagedinpoliticalactivities
- Increasedparticipationlevelingram sabhameeting
- Improvementinleadershipqualities
- Involvementinsolvingproblemsrelated towomenandcommunity
- Decisionmakingcapacity in familyand community.

Economic empowerment ofwomen bymicro entrepreneurship led to the empowermentof womeninmany thingssuchassocio-economic op- portunity,property rights,political representation,social equality,per-

sonalright, family development,marketdevelopment, communityde- velopmentandatlastthe nation development.

Conclusion

Women'sentrepreneurshipis bothabout women's position in society and about the role ofentrepreneurship in thesame society. Women entrepreneurs faced manyobstacles specifically in markettheir prod- uct(including family responsibilities)thathavetobe overcomeinor- dertogivethemaccesstothe same opportunities as men. In addition, in somecountries,womenmay experience obstacleswithrespectto- holdingproperty and entering contracts.Increasedparticipationof womenin thelabourforceisaprerequisitefor improvingthepositionof womenin society and self-employed women. Particularlythe entry ofruralwomeninmicroenterpriseswill be encouragedandaggravated. Rural women candowondersby theireffectiveand competentinvolv- ementin entrepreneurial activities.Therruralwomenare havingbasic indigenousknowledge,skill, potentialand resourcestoestablish and- manageenterprise. Now,whatistheneedis knowledgeregarding ac- cessibility to loans, various funding agencies procedure regard- ingcertification, awareness on government welfare programmes, motivation, technical skilland support from family, government andother organization.More overFormationand strengthening of- rural women Entrepreneurs networkmustbe encouraged.Women entrepreneur networks aremajor sources of knowledgeabout wom- en'sentrepreneurship andthey areincreasinglyrecognizedasa valuab- letoolfor its developmentand promotion. Thisnetwork helpt to give lectures,printedmaterialimpartingfirst hand technicalknowledgein- production,processing, procurement,management and marketing among theotherwomen.Thiswillmotivate other ruralwomentoen- gageinmicro entrepreneurshipwiththe rightassistanceand theycan strengthen their capacities besides addingtothefamily incomeandna- tional productivity.

REFERENCES

- Meenu Agrawal, Shobana Nelasco (2009) "Empowermentof RuralWomeninIndia" KanishkaPublishers,NewDelhi | 2. Ram Naresh Thakur (2009). "Rural Women EmpowermentinIndia" in Empowerment of RuralWomeninIndiaKanishkaPublishers,New Delhi. | 3. Prabha Singh (2009) "Rural Women and Development ofEntrepreneurship withspecial referenceto Punjab" inEmpowerment ofRural Womenin India KanishkaPublish- ers,New Delhi. | 4. Lipi (2009) "Women Empowerment: Globalizationand Opportunities" in Empowerment ofRural WomeninIndia KanishkaPublishers,NewDelhi | 5. Case Study, Penamaluru Mandalam, YanamalakuduruVillage,KrishnaDistrict |