



A study of women empowerment and Economic Development: A Case Study of Guntur District

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ABSTRACT

Women normally have to work harder than men, especially in the countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. They maintain traditional vegetable gardens, raise domestic animals, and do the farming. They are responsible for child rearing, feeding their families, doing the domestic chores, collecting the fire wood, and fetching the water. They supervise the education of their children and nurse them back to health when they get sick. They guarantee domestic stability, taking on any work they can get to secure the family income, more often than not in the informal sector and without the benefit of social security. They do sewing, cooking, hairdressing, or house cleaning, produce and market processed agricultural products and handicrafts. More and more they are finding work in clerical or secretarial occupations or in the service sector. Objectives of the My Paper is to assess influencing factors of women's participation in Economic development and to assess policy initiatives on addressing women's participation in Economic Development

KEYWORDS : Employment, Educated, Economic Development, Empowerment of Women

Introduction

Women normally have to work harder than men, especially in the countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. They maintain traditional vegetable gardens, raise domestic animals, and do the farming. They are responsible for child rearing, feeding their families, doing the domestic chores, collecting the fire wood, and fetching the water. They supervise the education of their children and nurse them back to health when they get sick. They guarantee domestic stability, taking on any work they can get to secure the family income, more often than not in the informal sector and without the benefit of social security. They do sewing, cooking, hairdressing, or house cleaning, produce and market processed agricultural products and handicrafts. More and more they are finding work in clerical or secretarial occupations or in the service sector.

But despite the important role they play for family and society, in all essential areas of life women are generally at a significant disadvantage as compared with men, whether in terms of education, income, partner choice, inheritance laws, property rights, decision-making processes, community organization, or access to leadership positions in education, business, or politics. The goal of gender equality is far from being achieved both in the public mind as well as in reality. Work with and for women in the interest of "women's empowerment" will continue to be one of the main tasks of adult education for a long time to come. The task is a difficult one, considering that it involves the calling into question and changing of socio cultural behaviour patterns and rules. The advantage is that all over the world, women play a highly active role in the continuing education sector.

It will take more than just education and training measures, however, to empower women to overcome their education deficits and to develop the self-confidence and initiative they need to take action and assume new roles in society. Before women can gain equal status with men, it will be necessary to secure equal rights on the political and legal plane. This makes women-specific education a political task as well as an educational one. Besides working directly with women, adult educators are called upon to intervene with decision makers on the national and global level. One such advocacy initiative has been launched by a broad group of women's organizations and networks which have joined together to form the "Women and Gender Constituency". Explaining their purpose as follows: "We seek to ensure the representation of women's voices, experiences, needs and capacities, as women are still underrepresented in planning and decision-making at all levels, including Parties and observer organisations to the UN-FCCC", this network participates at all international conferences in order to influence and monitor the adoption of resolutions.

Longwe & Clark (1994) Different writers have described women's

empowerment in various ways but all point towards one direction which is the assumption of power or ability by women to address their needs. For instance, perceives it as a means to overcome barriers to women's equality with men especially in patriarchal societies.

Safilios-Rothschild (1985) For instance, attributed women's invisibility in agriculture to patriarchal values that rigidly sustains powerful male supremacy.

According to Mayoux (2000) women assuming the ability to identify their aspirations and strategies for change besides gaining skills and resources to achieve these aspirations constitutes their empowerment. In addition, women's empowerment is viewed as a process that increases women's choices or ability to make choices about their life and the environment they live in

Mosedale (2005) argued that third parties cannot be given the responsibility to empower women but they themselves should claim it. Similarly, Sharp et al (2003) noted the importance of women themselves perceiving that they can ably assume roles ascribed to men rather than depending on development agents to address their strategic needs.

Objectives of the My Paper is

- To assess influencing factors of women's participation in Economic development
- To assess policy initiatives on addressing women's participation in Economic Development

Status of Women Empowerment in Andhra Pradesh

In previous times, the status of women in India was inferior than men in the practical life. However, they had a higher status in scriptures. They are considered as the perfect home maker in the world. With their incomparable quality of calmness of their mind, they can easily handle even toughest situation. Indian women are completely devoted to their families. They're preached in the names of Goddess Saraswati, Goddess Durga, Parvati & Goddess Kali. Their condition remains unchanged even during the modern times with only little changes. In India, women were never given any right of liberty & equality. Their condition becomes even worse when they gave birth to girls. Men treated them in a humiliated manner. They were not only permitted not to step outside their house but also abstained from being educated. They were also supposed to eat after their husbands or even sometimes to eat their husband's leftovers. Women were prohibited from prohibited from taking external matters as well as domestic matters. They were under the influence of their parents before marriage & their husband after marriage.

Results and Discussions

Table-1 Women’s empowerment focus in economic and productive sectors in Andhra Pradesh

Women’s Empowerment and Free Trade	Share of total aid per sector
Agriculture &Rural Development.	20%
Banking &Business	12%
Energy	18%
Transport &Storage	31%
Other	19%

Source:Primary Data

Above Table-1 the Women’s Empowerment and Free Trade focus of bilateral aid to all sectors combined is notably higher, amounting to one third of all aid allocated by sector in 2007-08. DAC members placed comparatively less emphasis on gender equality and women’s empowerment in the economic and productive sectors than they did in their support for other sectors. The largest share of bilateral aid to gender equality and women’s empowerment in the economic and productive sectors was committed to agriculture/rural development. 5 Large shares of aid also targeted gender equality and women’s empowerment in the sectors of banking/business, public financial management and urban development. Only small shares of aid, however, targeted gender equality and women’s empowermentand Fair Trade Policy in mining, construction, transport/storage (including road building), energy, communications and trade. Above figure represent aid commitments and point to areas where donors could increase their investments to women’s economic empowerment.

Table-2 Women’s empowerment focus on sector-allocated aid in the economic and productivesectors

Women’s Empowermenteconomic and productivesectors	Productivity average per year 2010-11(%)
Econ. & prod. categories combined	27%
Public _Nance management	49%
Employment policy	31%
Transport & storage	9%
Communications	19%
Energy	13%
Banking & business	39%
Agriculture & rural develop.	49%
Industry	21%
Mining, construction & tourism	8%
Trade	19%
Urban develop.	51%

Source:Primary Data

Table-2 shows the different categories of sector-allocated aid in the economic and productive sectors,Public -Nance management,Employment policyTransport & Storage,Communications, Energy, Banking & Business, Agriculture & Rural Development, industry, etc. In Andhra Pradesh,23 per cent of the workers are doing cultivation, 16 per cent are agricultural labourers, 4per cent are engaged in household industry and 57 per cent are performing other services.In all the three districts it is found that large numbers of workers are engaged inagriculture and very low percentage of workers are involved in household industry.

Table-3 Working women’s and Empowerment Categories in the Selected Districts in Percentages

District	Cultivators	Agriculture Labourers	Working in HH Industry	Other Services	Total Main and Marginal Workers
Guntur	14%	11%	05%	70%	100
Visakhapatnam	24%	17%	03%	56%	100

District	Cultivators	Agriculture Labourers	Working in HH Industry	Other Services	Total Main and Marginal Workers
Warangal	30%	21%	03%	46%	100
Andhra Pradesh	23%	16%	04%	57%	100

Source of Data: Primary Data

Table-3 shows the different categories of main and marginal workers, such ascultivators, agriculture labourers, workers engaged in household industry, etc. In Andhra Pradesh,23 per cent of the workers are doing cultivation, 16 per cent are agricultural labourers, 4per cent are engaged in household industry and 57 per cent are performing other services.In all the three districts it is found that large numbers of workers are engaged inagriculture and very low percentage of workers are involved in household industry.

Table-4 General Characteristics of SHGs in the Study

Particulars	Guntur	Visakhapatnam	Rayalaseema	Andhra Pradesh
Total No. of Empowerments Surveyed	30%	25%	09%	64%
No. of Participants Surveyed	90 %	74%	26%	190%
Size of Empowerments s	9-20%	10-20%	10-15%	9-20%
Average Number of Members in a Empowerments	13%	14%	12%	13%

Source of Data: Primary Data

Table-4 shows the status of Empowerments surveyed in this study. For the purpose ofthe study, 64 Empowerment are surveyed. Out of these, 30 Empowerment are selected from differentvillages of Guntur district, 25 from Visakhapatnam district and 9 from Warangal district. 124Three Empowerments members were interviewed from each of the selected Empowerments. In this way,total 190 group participants are surveyed. It is found that the range of group membershipvaries from 9 to 20 members but on average there are 13 members per Empowerment. In order tostudy the impact of microfinance programme over different group durations, both theyoung and mature groups are surveyed. The age of groups surveyed varies from 2 to 8years at the time of the survey.

Conclusion

This is one of the first studies bridging the efforts of fair trade clothing toempower women with examples of how its efforts can effectively address many currentissues for women in Andhra Pradesh. In answering the question, “is fair trade clothingan effective model to empower women in Andhra Pradesh,” the findings suggest thatthere are several different ways that fair trade cans effectively women’s economic empowerment economically, socially, and politically throughout this region. The literature reflects myhypothesis that fair trade does have the capabilities to significantly influencewomen’s economic empowerment but is most effective and sustainable when addressing severaldifferent issues women in this region face. The findings confirm the many benefitswomen gain from joining a fair trade organization, while this organization canprovide women in Andhra Pradesh immense opportunities that they may not have hadpreviously in order to greatly improve their lives. However, beyond women’sempowerment my findings even expressed a larger and more significant impact that canbe seen throughout the continent of Africa. Fair trade clothing has endless possibilities,and if organized correctly, the simple item of clothing has the opportunity to influencemany different people, lifting more than just women out of poverty. Fair trade clothingcan ultimately create a web of benefits stretching from women producers in Cameroon, to cotton farmers in Mali, to fashion designers in South Africa and to even the final sellerworking in ecotourism in Tanzania. Therefore, from the information that I have analyzed,fair trade clothing doesn’t only effectively empower women in sub-Saharan African but itcan create a chain of benefits for many people throughout all of Africa Though my findings indicate that fair trade clothing can be an effective model toempower women in sub-Saharan Africa, evidence also displayed the many imperfectionswithin fair trade as well. I have also concluded that though fair trade clothing

does include aspects that are different from other fair trade sectors, allowing for greater impacts on women, it is still a fair trade organization and therefore shares many of its general benefits and problems. Fair trade is not without flaws and neither is fair trade clothing, and the literature portrayed several critiques that can also be applied to the clothing sector. However, fair trade clothing has shown to be a better alternative in some circumstances than traditional aid, therefore my findings have shown that currently fair trade clothing's positives outweigh its negatives and thus can be used to empower women throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Though I have concluded my findings regarding fair trade clothing's effects on women in sub-Saharan Africa, my work is still significantly limited. As stated previously, the main limitation to my research, and also the most significant in regards to collecting data, was the fact that I had to rely on secondary sources. Since I was unable to personally travel throughout sub-Saharan Africa conducting interviews and surveys regarding this topic, I had to solely depend on using previous literature while merging my own previous experiences and observations while living in Cameroon. This is also a substantial limitation in that there is very little research regarding fair trade clothing, which made collecting sources very difficult and had an effect on my overall findings and conclusion.

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