



Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship

R. HIMALINI DEVI

Department of Commerce, S.P.M.H.KALASALA, MACHILIPATNAM

ABSTRACT

The study deals with various aspects of empowerment of women in rural development in India. As women forming about half of the India's population make a case for developing women empowerment in the country particularly in rural areas. They are, regarded as the better half of the society. In traditional societies, they were confined to the four walls of houses performing household activities. In modern societies, they have come out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of activities. The global evidences buttress that women have been performing exceedingly well in different spheres of activities like academics, politics, administration, social work and so on. As such, rural areas are ultimately marked by abject poverty and backwardness. In such situation, rural development by empowerment of women in the country. The study deals with various aspects of rural development such as entrepreneurship, agricultural development, social development, NGOs for the future development of rural people in the country. Therefore, while discussing on women empowerment and development, it seems in the fitness of the context to study about the empowerment of women in rural area in the country. The present study therefore, aims at discussing the growth and problems of women empowerment in rural India.

KEYWORDS : Women Empowerment in Education – Socio and Economic Development – Entrepreneurship – Agricultural Development – NGOs – Self Help Group – Milk Process, Kalankari works, Gold covering works etc.

INTRODUCTION

“ Women are the builder and moulder of nation's destiny. Through delicate and soft as lily, she has a heart, far stronger and bolder of man... she is supreme inspiration of man's onward march”

In the history of human development woman has been as important as man. In fact, the status, employment and work performed by women in society are the indicator of a nation's overall progress. Without the participation of women in national activities, the social, economical or political progress of a country will be stagnated. The hands that rock the cradle, may though, as the myth goes have not yet ruled the world. The fact is that most of the women's domestic role is combined with economic activities and utilization of their skill and labour to earn the extra income for the family, which makes the difference between a reasonably decent survival and humiliating poverty. Women constitute half of the humanity, even contributing two-thirds of world's work hours. She earns only one-third of the total income and owns less than one-tenth of the world's resources. This shows that the economic status of women is in pathetic condition and this is more so in a country like India.

Among total Indian population of 1027.10 million, women constitute 495.73 million, therefore, “women constitute nearly 50% of population, perform two-thirds of the work and produce 50% of food commodities consumed by the country. They earn on third of remuneration and won 10% of the property or wealth of the county” Women are regarded as the “better half” of the society and at par with the men. But unreality, our society is still male dominated and women are not treated as equal partners both inside and outside the four walls of the house. In fact they are treated as weak and dependent on men. As such Indian women enjoy an unfavourable status in society. Rural women in india constitute 77% of the female population they share abundant responsibility and perform a wide spectrum of duties in running the family, maintaining the house hold activities like rearing, feeding, attending to farm labour, tending domestic animals and the like, even then they suffer from being both economically and socially invisible. Within the framework of democratic policy, our laws, development policies, plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. Since independence numbers of innovative schemes have been launched for the enhancement of women in our country. The social welfare department reported that, the status of women in 1974 highlighted the total lack of implementation of the concept of gender equality established in Indian constitution and indicated that Indian women remained deprived economically and socially.

The fifth five year plan (1974-79) replaced the social welfare approach with development approach. This recognized women's productive

role and her contributions and efforts were made to remove the invisibility of women's economic contributions to the household and economy. The sixth five year plan (1980-85), is a landmark in the history of women's development with emphasis on health, education and employment. The seventh five year plan (1985-90) gave priority for programmes to improve the status of women and operationalized the concern of equality and empowerment, generating awareness about their rights and privileges and training them for economic activities and employment. The focus also was on bringing them into the main stream of national development. The eighth and subsequent five year plan (1992-97) continued emphasis on ensuring the benefits of development in the different sectors do not circumvent women and that women must be able to function as equal partners in the development amendment to Panchayat Raj Act which specifies one-third of the posts of “Sparpanch” and Chairman of the block level assemblies (Samithi) and the district assembly (Zilla Parishad) to be women. This is expected to bring radical change in women's status and will generally increase their political participation. The government is putting lot of efforts to empower the women, hence there is need to know the extent of empowerment of rural women.

1. WOMEN EMPOERMENT IN RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women entrepreneurs may be as a woman or group of woman who initiate, organize and run a business enterprise. In terms of Schumpeterian concept of innovative entrepreneurs, women who innovate, imitate or adopt a business activity are called “women entrepreneur”. The women entrepreneurs based on women participation in equity and employment of a business enterprise. A women entrepreneur is “an enterprise owned and controlled by a women having a minimum financial interest of 51% of the capital and giving at least 51% of the employment generated in the enterprise to women”. However, mainly on the condition of employing more than 50% women workers in the enterprises owned and run by the women. In nutshell, women entrepreneurs are those women who think of a business enterprise, initiate it, organize and combine the factors of production, operate the enterprise and undertake risks and handle economic uncertainly involved in running a business enterprise.

2. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN SMALL – SCALE INDUSTRIES

- (i) The small-scale and village industries will be provided incentives and support to facilitate their growth and employment. It will be ensured that foreign investment does not displace such industries.
- (ii) Credit facilities to small-scale industries will be increased. For this, the financial institutions will be motivated to offer factoring services to the SSIs in addition to the present system of discount-

ing bills.

- (iii) The investment limit for the S51 sector will be revised to number of crore to take account of inflation and also to enable this sector the achievement of minimum economics of scale and up gradation of technology so as to withstands emerging competition.
- (iv) Technology development and up gradation in the VSI sector, especially in the case of small-scale industries, handlooms, power looms, coir-handicrafts, wool etc., will receive special attention.
- (v) Special attention will be paid to sericulture to improve the quality of raw silk by introducing better silk worm breeding practices. One way to look at the Government's concern for developing village and rural industries may be the financial provisions made in various Five-year plans for these industries. The government is assigning increasing importance to the development and role of rural industries sector in India. What these trends imply that while the increasing importance was given to the rural industries in the Five-Year Plan, the professions were not matched by plan expenditure-e in various Five-Year Plans on the development of village and rural industries. The Kalamkari works are also increases in the area of MTM locality of Pedana.



3. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The rural development programme in general has a long gestation period and the speed of implementation is slow in the initial stage. In such long term development programmes, it is also necessary to sustain their interest of the community. With this background, BAIFF a leading voluntary agency has introduced activities such as formation of Self Help Groups for saving the income, establishment of grain bank to ensure the supply of food grain during the critical monsoon season, establishment of consumers. Cooperatives to avoid exploitation, cultivation of vegetable crops, raising of fruit and forestry plants, food processing, etc. which can supplement the income of the participating families. The formation of self-help groups and active participation of the local families in the process of planning and project implementation would help in developing harmony and build unity among the members of the community, irrespective of their caste and economic diversities. Under such a situation, the village communities provide voluntary services for community development, through various innovative approaches and manage the development programme more efficiently and economically. With the team work at the village level in the form of 'Gram Sabha', the community will be able to monitor the services provided by the government. There are instances where the members of the village self-help groups are monitoring the attendance of the teachers of local schools and Anganwadis and health workers. Such groups have eliminated vested interests in controlling the gram panchayats and elected new members to ensure transparency. In many states, several farmers groups involved in milk marketing are able to independently hire the services of veterinarians to avail livestock breeding and health care services, while the farmers in many other states are still dependent on government assistance for similar services. Such group activities are able to sustain the development programme without external assistance. Thus motivation and training of the target groups to build local leadership will play a vital role in poverty alleviation and sustainable development in India.

4. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN RURAL EDUCATION & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

It plays a very vital role for social mobilization. It is required for field functionaries as well as beneficiaries involved in development. The

women workers involved in rural development need to be exposed to management principles and leadership development skills. Such training should cover project preparation, identification of local needs through field surveys and participatory rural appraisals, availability of resources, selection of appropriate technologies, opportunities for processing and marketing the produce and economic analysis. They should also be trained in leadership development and development of local organizations. Based on these new skills, the field functionaries should be able to develop a suitable work plan for motivation the rural to generate year round employment and enhance their income. The present training programmes for the field functionaries and extensions officers emphasize on technical skills. No doubt appropriate technology is essential but it is necessary to understand the socio-economic conditions of the beneficiaries and motivate people to develop their own enterprises to adopt these technologies. The entire programme may not be able to take off, unless the project is implemented as an enterprise. As the field workers involved in rural development hail from rural areas with lower level of education, special training in community organization and project management will be beneficial for successful project implementation. Motivation of beneficiaries should be the primary step for programme initiation, to ensure their participation right from the project conception. Training of beneficiaries is another important component. The content, duration and methodology of the training may vary widely depending on the local needs. Such training will ultimately lead to development of leadership and team spirit, and up gradation of skills to manage the project without depending on outsiders. Thus, social mobilization is the prerequisite for people's participation. People's participation is also linked with economic viability of the programme. Money being a powerful tool for motivation poor people, the programme should have the potential to generate adequate income. The participation of the local people for implementing the project should be in the form of ideas and planning, physical labour and cost sharing. Such participation will be cost-effective and sustainable. In such projects, the role of the development organizations can be that of a catalyst, which can withdraw technical and financial support within a short period.

5. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Most of the work in agriculture sector either as workers, in household farms or as wage workers. Yet it is precisely livelihood in agriculture that has tended to become more volatile and insecure in recent years and women cultivators have therefore been negatively affected. The government's policies for alleviating poverty have failed to produce any desirable results, as women do not receive appropriate wages for their labour. There is also significant amount of unpaid or non-marketed labour within the household. He increase in gender disparity in wages in the urban areas is also quite marked as it results from the employment of women in different and lower paying activities. They are exploited at various levels. They should be provided with proper wages and work at par with men so that their status can be elevated in society.

6. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN NGOS

Non-Governmental organizations are playing a significant role in the empowerment of disadvantages of women. Just a few years after independence, the Government set up the Central Social Welfare Board, an apex body of the voluntary sector that aids more than 10,000 NGOs across the country, helping women stand on their own through such programmes as socio-economic programme, vocational training and other similar programmes. Humanity is the greatest virtue of a human being. This world is full of sorrow, grief and disasters. Most of us are happy with our life because we have the better environment to survive. But what about them who cannot afford the essential things that are really important to live in this world? Think about that child who is abandoned by its mother just after the birth. What would be the future of a destitute woman? Thanks to the NGOs that are doing very noble work in order to bring happiness on the faces of needy ones. There are many women empowerment NGO in this country so that Child Care NGO and for women, but only few of them meet the level of perfection. A common man only thinks about his family, his society and so on. He is always busy with the problems of his own but the saints believe in 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam' that means that the whole world is one single family. Didi Maa always says that the service of the underprivileged section of the society is equivalent to the service of God. And it is also the motto of the traditional Indi-

an Society. To improve the condition of poor people is an uphill task for any government in India. All schemes which are currently running across the nation are not enough for the purpose. Here, the role of the Non-profit organizations becomes crucial. NGO can bring awareness among these people about leading a better life. Many organizations provide vocational training to the women of this section of society. They can earn a healthy amount of money by using the skills they learn at such centers. It will definitely bring women empowerment in India. In the words of Didi Maa 'an independent woman can make a better society as well as a better country'.

7. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN SELF-HELP GROUPS

The formation of Self – Help Groups and active participation of the local families in the process of planning and project implementation would help in developing harmony and build unity among the members of the community, irrespective of their caste and economic diversities. Under such as a situation, the village communities provide voluntary services for community development, through various innovative approaches and manage the development programme more efficiently and economically. With the team work at the village level in the form of Gram Sabha the community will be able to monitor the services provided by the government. There are instances where the members of the village self-help groups are monitoring the attendance of the teachers of local schools and Anganwadis and health workers. Such groups have eliminated vested interests in controlling the gram panchayats and elected new members to ensure transparency. In many states, several farmers groups involved in milk marketing are able to independently hire the services of veterinarians to avail livestock breeding and health care services, while the farmers in many other states are still dependent on government assistance for similar services. Such group activities are able to sustain the development programme without external assistance. Thus motivation and training of the target groups to build local leadership will play a vital role in poverty alleviation and sustainable development in India.

8. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN RURAL ECONOMIC

It is one of the means to empower the women. Enhancing women's economic productivity is important strategy for improving the welfare of 60 million Indian households living below the verity line of rural women. The existence of women in a state of economic, political, social and knowledge disempowerment is known to be a major hindrance to economic development. The position of women in any society has been the subject of many inexpert opinions and guesses and has often been misrepresented by stereotypical portrayal. A more balanced and scientific way to asses women's position has been given by Anthropologist J.Cooper "Status of women in the domestic, economic, social, political and religious spheres". "Freedom depends on economic condition even more than political. If a woman is not economically free and self-earning, she has to depend on her husband or son or father or someone-else and dependent are never free".

CONCLUSION

Rural development symbolizes rural industrialization. Rural industrialization provides the best solution to tackle with the twin problems of unemployment and poverty stalking the rural areas in the country particularly women employees. However, the development of rural industrialization is plagued by some equipment, and inadequate infrastructural facilities. Solving these problems is necessary for developing rural industries in the country. Of late, NGOs have proved as an effective agent in developing industries in rural areas with effective empowerment of women in our country.

REFERENCES

1. Agarwal D, capacity building for rural women, Social welfare. | 2. Bepin Behari: Rural Industrialization, Vikas publishing House Pvt.Ltd, New Delhi. | 3. Choudhary, Empowering strategies for rural women in India. | 4. T.S. Papola: Rural Industrialization, Himalaya Publishing House, New Delhi. |