



Analysis of Poverty Eradication Through Velugu Programme in Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Poverty as a global phenomenon has varied genesis, dimensions, and definitions. The eradication of poverty has been an integral component of the strategy for economic development in India. VELUGU Programme is implemented in all the 13 rural district of Andhra Pradesh. The basic objective of VELUGU is to implement various programmes for strengthening of Self-Help Groups with similar implementation strategy. VELUGU Programme has been designed by clubbing women Empowerment with Poverty Alleviation and implemented in all the districts of Andhra Pradesh including Drought Prone Area i.e., Rayalaseema Region. Rayalaseema Region is a Drought Region with low literacy, meager income and with marginal holdings, the VELUGU Programme have brought significant changes on employment and income levels of the selected rural women beneficiaries in study area.

KEYWORDS : Poverty Eradication, VELUGU Programme, SHGs, Employment, Income

Introduction

Empowerment of the poor encompasses three basic dimensions-reduction of poverty, creation of employment, and erasing inequality. Since the magnitude of poverty challenges the very basis of State as an independent economic and political unit, it has been realized by the policy planners that development, needs to be people centered and participation oriented across various interfaces. Poverty Alleviation has thus assumed a new thinking and new practices have emerged through integrated community participation of the poor. The Philosopher behind micro finance is self-organization of the poor at the community level driven by a desire and an inherent capacity to improve their living conditions by themselves. Inspired by the success of the Bangladesh Grameen experiment, the self-help group approach in India has taken strong roots as an effective and viable channel to take the poor to a new domain of economic empowerment and social upliftment. Micro finance, which synergies the thrift and credit habits of the poor in a participatory and informal setting, is now widely acknowledged as a strategic tool to dent poverty in all poverty alleviation programmes. With the fast expanding Self Help Groups movement covering nearly 8 lakhs SHGs across the country, India is poised to provide pragmatic solutions by demonstrating the success of micro finance for eliminating total poverty in the coming decade.

The success of the anti-poverty strategy can be gauged from the decline in poverty levels from 50.1 per cent in 1993-1994 to 25.7 per cent in 2011-2012 in the rural areas. In absolute terms, the number of rural poor fell below the 216.7 million for the first time since 1973-74.

VISION 2020

In keeping with the development commitment of the state and as boldly envisaged in Swarnandhra Pradesh 'Vision 2020' policy document, Andhra Pradesh Government has initiated the 'Rural Poverty Elimination Program' under the project 'Velugu' (literally 'light'). In this direction the government of Andhra Pradesh has established Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP).

The Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) is an independent, autonomous society registered under the Societies Act to implement the project. The Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project (APDPIP) is being implemented by Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty in 180 backward mandals in the six districts of Adilabad, Mahbubnagar, Anantapur, Chittoor, Srikakulam and Vizianagaram in the state. The Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project is an Rs.600 crore World Bank supported five year (2000-2005) poverty elimination project with the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh as its

chairperson. At the state level Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty directly coordinates with the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Ministry.

VELUGU Programme

VELUGU Programme is implemented in all the 13 rural district so Andhra Pradesh. The basic objective of VELUGU is to implement various programmes for strengthening of Self-Help Groups with similar implementation strategy. VELUGU Programme has been designed by clubbing women Empowerment with Poverty Alleviation and implemented in all the districts of Andhra Pradesh including Drought Prone Area i.e., Rayalaseema Region.

Several studies have been conducted by social scientists, financial institutions and agencies, which highlight the positive trends and impact of Self Help Groups on empowerment, credit accessibility and the social change. It is very difficult to review all the relevant studies since proper documentation of such studies is still to be ensured. Therefore, available relevant studies, particularly case studies, workshops, seminars and symposia, have been critically reviewed.

SINGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study is important to assess the impact of VELUGU (Women Self Help Groups) on its members in terms of socio-economic empowerment in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The study findings may be useful for policy makers for further improvement in the programme to achieve cent percent results.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the present study is to analyse and evaluate employment and income of women through SHGs under VELUGU in Drought Prone Region i.e., Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh. However, the specific objectives of the study are;

To analyse and assess the impact of SHGs under VELUGU in-terms of employment and income of selected beneficiaries in the Drought Prone Region i.e., Rayalaseema Region.

Methodology

The present study is based on the data from primary sources. The primary data have been collected from the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Castes and other caste women purposefully selected for the present study and the beneficiaries who were provided assistance under VELUGU (SHGs) during the years 2012-2015 were selected. A well structured interview schedule has been prepared and administered to the beneficiaries of VELUGU (SHGs), personal visits

were made to the selected four districts to make on the spot study of various economic conditions of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Backward Caste and other caste of women.

Study Area

The study was undertaken in a Drought Prone Region i.e., Rayalseema Region of Andhra Pradesh.

Survey

The selected districts were surveyed twice. First, a census survey was conducted covering all the women belonging to the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Backward Caste and Other Caste beneficiaries who were covered under SHGs (VELUGU).

Secondly, a household survey was conducted to find out the extent of employment and income generated from the various activities of SHGs (VELUGU). This survey was also conducted to know the inherent problems in marketing their finished goods and to find out the number of beneficiaries who could significantly improved their employment and income.

Tools of Analysis

PAIRED 't' test

$$t = \frac{\bar{d}}{\frac{s_d}{\sqrt{n}}} \times \rightarrow t = (n-1)$$

Where

$$d = \frac{\sum d_i}{n}, \bar{d} = \frac{\sum d_i^2}{n}, s_d = \sqrt{\frac{\sum d_i^2}{n} - (\bar{d})^2}$$

Rayalaseema Region is one of the Drought Prone Region in the state of [Andhra Pradesh](#) in [India](#). It includes the southern districts of [Anantapuramu](#), [Chittoor](#), [Kadapa](#) and [Kur-nool](#). With an area of 67,526 km² (42.00 per cent of the state territory), Rayalaseema Region is larger than [Kerala](#), [Pun-jab](#), [Himachal Pradesh](#) and nine other states in India.

As per 2011 census, the total population of Rayalaseema Region is 1,51,91,144 of which, 76,46,803 are men (50.33 per cent) and 75,45,441 are women (49.67 percent). Among the total population, the Scheduled Castes population account for 16.93 percent and the Scheduled Tribes population account for 3.11 percent. The total literates in the region is 88,22,765 (65.60 per cent) of which, 50,64,336 are men (75.18 per cent) and 37,58,429 are women (55.95 per cent). Rayalaseema borders the state of [Tamil Nadu](#) to the south, [Kar-nataka](#) to the west, [Telangana](#) to the north and the [Coastal Andhra](#) region of Andhra Pradesh to the east.

To reduce the incidence of poverty among rural women the novel idea of formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) was introduced in the region. The fundamental aim behind the formation of these SHGs is to improve the living conditions of rural poor women by motivating them for savings and providing bank loans for their betterment and upliftment of poverty levels.

Social Category

In Indian society caste is an important factor for consideration to get the socio economic status. During the study period the caste particulars are recorded in all four sample districts and the same is presented in table 1.

Table – 1
Social category of sample SHGs women beneficiaries in Rayalaseema Region

S.No	Social Category	No. of Beneficiaries	% to Total
1.	S C	360	25.00
2.	S T	360	25.00
3.	B C	360	25.00
4.	O C	360	25.00
Total		1440	100.00

Source: Primary data from the field survey

It is evident from table 1 that equal per cent i.e. 25.00 of sample beneficiaries' hail from the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled tribe, Backward Classes and Others caste in four selected districts in the Rayalaseema Region.

Employment Generation before and after the formation of SHGs in Rayalaseema Region

The thrust of the SHG programme is on generating employment opportunities in the country side, by raising productivity in agriculture and other sectors of the rural economy. Comparative analysis of employment days availed by rural women beneficiaries before and after joining in SHGs is presented in table 3.

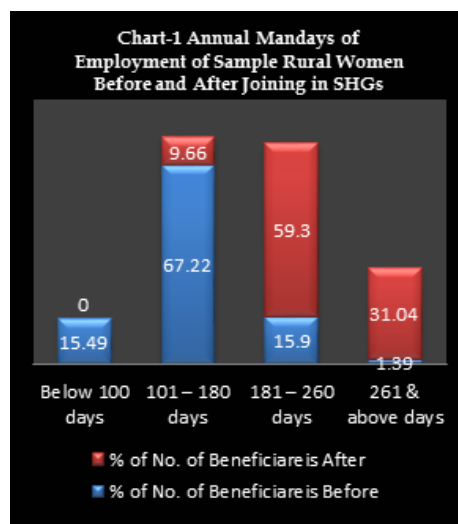
As per the table 2, in Rayalaseema Region 67.22 per cent of the rural women SHG beneficiaries had employment days between 101 to 180 days before joining in SHGs. The employment level of 15.49 percent of beneficiaries is below 100 days. The number of beneficiaries whose man-days of employment is above 181 and below 260 days constitute 15.90 percent and only 1.39 per cent of the women beneficiaries have more than 261 and above days of employment before joining in SHGs in the Rayalaseema Region.

Table – 2
Annual mandays of employment of sample rural women before and after joining in SHGs under VELUGU in Rayalaseema Region

S.No	Man-days of Employment	No. of Beneficiaries	
		Before	After
1	Below 100 days	223 (15.49)	0 (0.00)
2	101 – 180 days	968 (67.22)	139 (9.66)
3	181 – 260 days	229 (15.90)	854 (59.30)
4	261 and above days	20 (1.39)	447 (31.04)
Total		1440 (100.00)	1440 (100.00)

Paired t test was Calculated			
	Mean Value	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	112.30	36.22	2.04
	t - Value	Table 't' Value	Sig. (2 tailed)
	56.66	2.326	0.00

Source: Primary data from the field survey, (Figures in parenthesis are percentage to the total.)



As per the table 2, in Rayalaseema Region, after joining in SHGs 0.00 percent of rural women beneficiaries got less than 100 days of employment. It means that 100.00 percent of selected women beneficiaries got more than 100 days of employment after joining in SHGs. 59.30 per cent of the beneficiaries got 181 to 260 days of employment in the Rayalaseema Region. With regard to 260 days and above

it is 31.04 per cent and 9.66 per cent of beneficiaries got 101 to 180 days of employment after joining in SHGs in the Rayalaseema Region.

Analysis of Paired t – test

In order to know whether the increased employment of the rural women beneficiaries after the implementation of SHG's is significant or not, Paired t-test was applied in Rayalaseema Region. As the calculated t value for Rayalaseema Region (56.66 > 2.326) is greater than the table value it is statistically significant and it is inferred that, the SHG's Programmes have significant change on the employment levels of the selected women beneficiaries in the Rayalaseema Region.

The rural women beneficiaries with employment level of below 180 days have been decreased and with high employment level i.e., 181 days and above 260 days have been increased in the Rayalaseema Region.

Annual Income of selected beneficiaries before and after Joining in SHGs

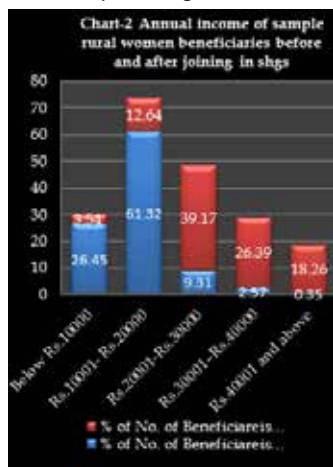
Fundamental objective behind the formation of self-help groups is to generate income for poor women in rural areas. Table 4 gives the details of annual income of beneficiaries before and after joining in SHGs in Rayalaseema Region.

The table 3 show that in Rayalaseema Region, the income levels of 61.32 per cent of the SHG beneficiaries ranges between Rs.10,001/- to Rs.20,000/- before joining in SHGs. The income range of 26.45 percent of beneficiaries is below Rs.10,000/-. The number of beneficiaries whose income is above Rs.20,001/- and below Rs.30,000/- constitute 9.31 percent. 2.56 per cent of the women beneficiaries are in the income range of Rs.30,001/- to Rs.40,001/- and only 0.35 per cent of the women beneficiaries are in the income range of Rs.30,001/- and above before joining in SHGs in the Rayalaseema Region.

Table – 3
Annual income of sample rural women beneficiaries before and after joining in SHGs under VELUGU in Rayalaseema Region

S.No	Income levels	No. of Beneficiaries	
		Before	After
1	Below Rs.10000	381 (26.45)	51 (3.54)
2	Rs.10001- Rs.20000	883 (62.32)	182 (12.64)
3	Rs.20001-Rs.30000	134 (9.31)	564 (39.17)
4	Rs.30001-Rs.40000	37 (2.56)	380 (26.39)
5	Rs.40001 and above	5 (0.35)	263 (18.26)
	Total	1440 (100.00)	1440 (100.00)
Paired t test was Calculated			
	Mean Value	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean
	15984	7343.79	381.02
	t - Value	Table 't' Value	Sig. (2 tailed)
	41.49	2.326	0.00

Source: Primary data from the field survey, (Figures in parenthesis are percentage to the total.)



As per the table 3, in Rayalaseema Region, the income levels of 39.17 per cent of the SHG beneficiaries ranges between Rs.20,001/- and below Rs.30,000/-. The income range of 26.39 percent of beneficiaries is Rs.30,001/- to Rs.40,000/-. The number of beneficiaries whose income is above Rs.10,001/- to Rs.20,000/- constitute 12.64 percent. In case of income group of above Rs.40,001/- it constitute 18.26 per cent and the beneficiaries with income range of below Rs.10,000/- in the district are 3.54 per cent after joining in SHGs in the Rayalaseema Region.

Analysis of Paired t – test

In order to know whether the increased income of the rural women beneficiaries after the implementation of SHG's is significant or not, Paired t-test was applied in Rayalaseema Region. As the calculated t value for Rayalaseema Region (41.49 > 2.326) is greater than the table value it is statistically significant and it is inferred that, the SHG's Programmes have significant change on the income levels of the selected beneficiaries in the Rayalaseema Region.

The rural women beneficiaries with income range of below Rs.20,000/- have been decreased and with high income range i.e., above Rs.20,001/- have been increased after joining in SHGs in the Rayalaseema Region.

Conclusion

VELUGU Programme is a statewide poverty reduction project to enable the rural poor to improve their livelihoods and quality of life through their own organizations. It aims to cover all the rural poor households in the state with a special focus on poorest of the poor households. It is implemented by Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Department of Rural Development and Government of Andhra Pradesh. To reduce the incidence of poverty among rural women the novel idea of formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) was introduced in the region under VELUGU Programme. The fundamental aim behind the formation of these SHGs is to improve the living conditions of rural poor women by motivating them for savings and providing bank loans for their betterment and upliftment of poverty levels.

The study reveals that even though the Rayalaseema Region is a Drought Region with low literacy, meager income and with marginal holdings, the VELUGU Programme have brought significant changes on employment and income levels of the selected rural women beneficiaries in study area.

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