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Changing Scenario of Women Empowerment through Self Employment in Rural India

(A study of Tehsil-Pichhore, District-Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh)

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ABSTRACT

Women population constitutes more than 48% of the total population in India and they greatly contribute directly or indirectly in the economic activities of the nation. Their services towards economic and non-economic activities have been taken for granted specially in rural India. Now the time has come that we must recognize the role of women fraternity in the development of economy, society and family. An attempt has been made in this paper to evaluate the role of self employed rural women in economic activities as the empowerment of them by addressing three dimensions: economic empowerment, social empowerment and personal empowerment. This study has been conducted in the Tehsil-Pichhore, distt- Shivpuri in the state of M.P. by collecting primary data through schedule, interviews and observation. Collected data have been analyzed by using percentage analysis, 'Test of significance of difference between proportions' and 'Yule's Coefficient of Association' statistical tools. The findings indicate that self employment not only helps women to generate additional income but also enables them economically independent and self-sufficient. The paper also gives some suggestions to make the effective role of women in economy.

KEY WORDS

Women Empowerment, Self Employment, Personal Development, Rural Women, Economic Independent, Social Status.

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INTRODUCTION

According to census of 2011 population of women in India constitutes 48.46% of total population in figures it is 586.46 million. Out of them (833 million) 68.84% population lives in rural areas. According to NSSO 68th round (Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, 68th round, from July 2011 to June 2012) total workforce in India was 47.41 crore including rural and urban areas. Total women worker in the country were 15.0 crore in the rural areas it was 12.2 crore while in urban areas it was 2.8 crore. Total workforce participation rate of women workers was 25.5 percent. Women who are in workforce are engaged in different types of activities related to family, society and economy. From the history of earth to Vedic period women of India enjoyed equal status with men in terms of education, social freedom and other aspects of life. Some unfavorable conditions of chauvinistic society deteriorated their condition. By the end of twentieth century India has witnessed a positive transformation in women's empowerment specially women's employment and economic development. Now it has been accepted widely that women's role goes beyond the care of family and children. They are more alert and active about their rights and equality. Women are now taking interest and part in social activities, political activities, educational activities, development activities and economic activities. Their interests have increased into self employment and entrepreneurship for income generation to family, society, community and to nation. Without women empowerment we cannot imagine the development of family, society and country. Economic activities and economic empowerment is a dimension of women empowerment. Women contribution in agricultural activities has not been ignored. Self employment plays an eminent role in creating employment opportunities for rural communities. In modern India, contribution of women in development of the country can be justified from facts and figures available in different reports and publications.

Review of Literature

Mrs. Manashi Mazumdar, (2015) Mrs. Manashi Mazumdar and Mrs. Marjina Ahmed studied the woman empowerment through entrepreneurship in rural areas of India. The study is exploratory and descriptive which is based on the secondary data which were collected from books and literature review. In this study SHG (Self Help Group) and NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) are studied in the sense that these institutions are helpful in the entrepreneurship among the rural women. Study concludes that women participation in the field of entrepreneurship is increasing at a considerable rate. The entrepreneurship has increased self-confidence, self-reliance and independence among the rural women. The study suggests that Government should frame some policies for development of entrepreneurship among the women.

TT Chowdhury, (2016) A study has been conducted in Mymensingh district of Bangladesh to identify the factors influencing women empowerment. The study is based on the primary data collected by field survey from 60 women respondents. Data analyzed through Different simple statistical techniques and OLS regression analysis. The results show that the employed women are more empowered than non-employed women. The study suggests that women should be given all the facilities to get involved with income generating activities.

Fatima, (2020) Fatima studied 'Economic Empowerment of Rural women in India: An Exclusive Approach' in the context of Indian rural women by taking the main objective to access the contemporary economic condition of women in India, she also evaluated some Government program launched for economic empowerment of women in rural India. A conceptual research design has adopted for the purpose of the study which is based on the secondary data collected through national, international reports and studies. The study concludes that gender discrimination norms and practices are hurdle in the way of women empowerment. Women have the potential to boost the economic growth. The study suggests that women's education should be increased.

Dr. T. Paaneeswari, (2013) The study conducted on the basis of primary data related socio-demographic-economic profile of working women of unorganized sectors like handicrafts, tailoring, petty shop, preparing food products etc. in Thirunthangal town. The collected data analyzed by statistical tools like

percentage analysis, ranking technique and chi-square test. The study reveals that income, expenditure and savings of women before and after self-employment differ significantly. The study also suggests some suggestions to empower women towards social and economic point of view.

Ms. Syamala Devi Bhoganadam, (2014) The study was conducted to find out the relation between women empowerment and the economic development, to examine the relation between women empowerment and education, to understand the relation between the women empowerment and the poverty level. Secondary data has been used to conduct the study. The study concludes that women empowerment plays a major role in the developing countries like India and positive relations have found in different factors described above.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To find the favorable women self employment professions.
- ii. To access the role of women self employment in economic independence.
- iii. To examine the role of women self employment in up-lift of social and personal development.

Research Methodology

Women empowerment plays vital role in the development of family, society and economy of each country. It is a subject of great interest among the social, political and economic thinkers. The present study is undertaken to access the women empowerment through self employment. The study has been conducted in the rural area of tehsil-Pichhore of district Shivpuri M.P. Pichhore is a tehsil and subdivision of district Shivpuri. It consists one Nagar Panchyat and 186 villages which are divided into 75 Gram Panchayats. Total area of the tehsil is 1405.63 km². Total population of the tehsil (census 2011) is 259685 out of them rural population is 241558 and urban population is 18127, male population is 138082 and female population is 121603. There is no large or small scale industry in the tehsil and agriculture is main economic activity with some trade and commerce of agricultural products. For this study three villages namely- Bhonti, Tindhari and Muhar have been selected purposely. Bhonti (6083 population) is a biggest village of the tehsil and situated on the Pichhore-Shivpuri road. Tindhari (2986 population) is a medium village and situated in interior from main road with better connectivity of roads without public road transport services. Muhar (1984) is a small village situated in interior from main road without much connectivity of roads. The researcher has taken a sample of 55 self employed women engaged in Tailoring, Beautician, tuition, chat and fast food, retailing etc. by using non-random convenience technique.

To test the hypothesizes another survey is also conducted among the rural women who are neither self-employed nor employed but are engaged in home chores / study / agriculture activities; 60 rural women were selected randomly in the proportion of population of selected villages.

Primary data have been collected through schedule, interview and observation. To analyze the data, statistical tools like percentage analysis 'Test of significance of difference between proportions' and 'Yule's Coefficient of Association' are employed.

Limitations of the Study

- i. The study is conducted in short span of time i.e. 60 days.
- ii. The study conducted in a small research area. Only three villages selected to study.
- iii. Only 55 samples of self employed women and 60 samples of non self employed women analyzed to draw the results.

Hypothesis

- i. H_1 : self employment does not affect economic independence of rural women.
- ii. H_2 : self employment does not affect social status of rural women.
- iii. H_3 : self employment does not affect personal development of rural women.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Demographic data related to the samples collected through schedule, observation and interview which include fields related to age, sex, education level, size of family, marital status and Nature of family are important factor which affect the support to women for self employment. Therefore demographic profile of the respondents are analyzed is given below table

Table 1: Demographic description of self employed rural women

| Parameters | | No. of Respondents | Percent |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------|
| Age | 20-30 | 14 | 25.45 |
| | 30-40 | 16 | 29.09 |
| | 40-50 | 13 | 23.64 |
| | 50-60 | 9 | 16.36 |
| | 60-70 | 3 | 5.45 |
| Education | un-educated | 2 | 3.64 |
| | Upto 10+2 level | 34 | 61.82 |
| | Graduate | 16 | 29.09 |
| | Post Graduate | 3 | 5.45 |
| Marital Status | Married | 47 | 85.45 |
| | Unmarried | 6 | 10.91 |
| | widow | 2 | 3.64 |
| Type of Family | Nuclear | 31 | 56.36 |
| | Joint | 24 | 43.64 |
| Family members | 1 to 3 | 9 | 16.36 |
| | 4 to 6 | 24 | 43.64 |
| | More than 6 | 22 | 40.00 |

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table indicates that highest 29 percent of self employed women are from age group 30-40 and 25 percent from 20-30 age group means more than half of the self employed women are from 20-40 year of age.

From the point of view education level 62 percent are educated up-to secondary level, 29 percent are graduate and only 4 percent are uneducated. This indicates that educated women are running business successfully and they have the ability to calculate numbers which is a primary eligibility to run any business.

89 percent women are married or were married and only 11 percent are unmarried. This data shows that marriage is an important factor which affects the economic activity of the women. It has been found during the survey that women understand their responsibility towards the family and they are agree to left their comfortable zones to provide better facilities and better education to their family, means marriage play vital role to determine the economic life of the women.

Type of family affects the employment of the women in the survey it has been found that 56 percent self employed women are from nuclear family and rest belongs to joint family. In the survey during the interview of the family members of the respondent it has been found that male and other female members of the family allow the women to engage in economic activity although they suppose that working women will perform her family chores and duties.

In point of view of number of family members, 44% respondents belong to 4-6 family members and 40% belongs to family have more than 6 members. The reason behind is found that family with large number of member supports the other members and they feel emotionally strong to perform economic activity.

Table 2: Classification of self employment

| Type of self-employment | No. of Respondents | Percent |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| General Store | 6 | 10.91 |
| Kirana Store | 4 | 7.27 |
| Stationery Shop | 2 | 3.64 |
| Vegetable / fruit selling | 5 | 9.09 |
| Tailoring | 5 | 9.09 |
| Beautician / saloon | 6 | 10.91 |
| Tution / Coaching / Training | 4 | 7.27 |
| fast food / Chat / Restaurant | 4 | 7.27 |
| Milk selling | 3 | 5.45 |
| Flour mill | 2 | 3.64 |
| Mehandi service | 2 | 3.64 |
| Cloth / Readymade store | 4 | 7.27 |
| Bangle selling | 5 | 9.09 |
| other | 3 | 5.45 |
| Total | 55 | 100.00 |

(Source: Primary Data)

Beautician and general stores are most favorable self employment professions among the rural women highest equal 11% respondents are engage in these professions. The above table discloses that vending of vegetable/fruits, tailoring and bangles selling are on second favorable business among rural women.

Table 3: Classification of taking decision about business

| Decision taken by | No. of Respondents | Percent |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Self | 46 | 83.64 |
| Husband/ father | 6 | 10.91 |
| Other member of the family | 3 | 5.45 |
| Total | 55 | 100.00 |

(Source: Primary Data)

Taking decision about something is a symbol of empowerment. It shows the knowledge and decision taking power of someone. 84 percent of respondent told that they self took the decision about the business. 11% replied that her husband or father and only 6 percent respondent replied that other member of the family takes decision about the business.

Table 4: Location of shop/economic activity

| Location | No of Respondents | Percent |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Main Market | 18 | 32.73 |
| Sub market | 23 | 41.82 |
| Colony shop | 14 | 25.45 |
| Total | 55 | 100.00 |

(Source: Primary Data)

Above table shows the transformation of women empowerment in the sense of location of their business place. Before some time women's enterprises used to establish in marginal market i.e. in colonies/ inner part of the village/ in non-economic zone etc. But now the scenario has changed and they are establishing their business in main market and dominant male business community has accepted them as businessman instead of helper or marginal businessman. One third of the women's enterprises are established in the main market means in the core place (main economic zone) of the village. 42% percent are established in sub market means near the core place and 26% are established in the inner part or non-economic zone of the village.

The location of the enterprises of women reveals the transformation of traditional women to business women. Their ability of doing economic activities, management of business, taking decision about business has proved.

Table 5: Relation between Self Employment and Economic Independence

| Employment/ Economic Independence | | Economic independence | | Total |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------|----|-------|
| | | Yes | No | |
| Employment | Self employed women | 42 | 13 | 55 |
| | Neither employed nor self employed women | 08 | 52 | 60 |
| Total | | 50 | 65 | 115 |

(Source: Primary Data)

Difference between proportions/Standard error = $0.6336/0.1=6.34$

Table 6: Relation between Self Employment and Social status

| Employment/ Social status | | Does Self employment uplift Social Status? | | Total |
|---------------------------|--|--|--------|-------|
| | | Yes 'B' | No 'b' | |
| Employment | Self employed women 'A' | 48 | 07 | 055 |
| | Neither employed nor self employed women 'a' | 32 | 28 | 060 |
| Total | | 80 | 35 | 115 |

(Source: Primary Data)

Calculated Value of $Q_{AB} = +0.7143$

Table 7: Relation between Self Employment and Personal development

| Employment/ Social status | | Does Self employment helpful in personal development? | | Total |
|---------------------------|--|---|--------|-------|
| | | Yes 'B' | No 'b' | |
| Employment | Self employed women 'A' | 51 | 04 | 055 |
| | neither employed nor self employed women 'a' | 38 | 22 | 060 |
| Total | | 89 | 26 | 115 |

(Source: Primary Data)

Calculated Value of $Q_{AB} = +0.7614$

Table 8: Result of Tests of Significance in Attributes

| Between | Test | calculated value | Inference |
|---|--|---|-------------|
| Self employment and Economic Independence | Significance of difference between proportions | (Calculated value = 6.34) Difference between proportions is more than three times of standard error | Significant |
| Self employment and Social Status | Yule's Coefficient of Association | (Calculated value $Q_{AB} = +0.7143$) there is a moderate degree positive association between self employment and social status | Significant |
| Self employment and Personal Development | Yule's Coefficient of Association | (Calculated value $Q_{AB} = +0.7614$) there is a high degree positive association between self employment and personal development | Significant |

- i. **H₁**: Self employment does not affect economic independence of rural women
'Test of significance of difference between proportions' applied to get the significance difference between Self employment and Economic independence. It has been calculated that difference is significant, hence null hypothesis is rejected therefore self employment and economic independence are closely associated.
- ii. **H₂**: self employment does not affect social status of rural women
'Yule's Coefficient of Association' applied to get the significance difference between Self employment and Social status. It has been calculated that difference is significant, hence null hypothesis is rejected therefore self employment and social status are closely associated.
- iii. **H₃**: self employment does not affect personal development of rural women
'Yule's Coefficient of Association' applied to get the significance difference between Self employment and Personal development. It has been calculated that difference is significant, hence null hypothesis is rejected therefore self employment and personal development are closely associated.

Findings

Highest 29% women of 30-40 age groups are engaged in self employment. 96 percent self employed women are educated. 35 percent respondents are educated up-to graduate or post graduate level. 96 percent self employed women are married. 56 percent belong to nuclear family. 84 percent of women belong to family having more than 4 members.

Most favorable business among the rural women is either running general stores or serving as a beautician, after that vegetable/fruit selling, tailoring and bangle selling businesses are liked by the rural women. They feel convenient to run these businesses.

84% women take decision by self about the business this indicate that women are becoming decision making personality.

'Test of significance of difference between proportions' reveals that self employment is closely associated with the economic independence. 'Yule's Coefficient of Association' reveals that social status and personal development of rural women are affected by self employment means self employment is a symbol of the women empowerment.

Suggestion

On the basis of the study researcher drew some suggestion for empowering women towards self employment.

- Financial support should be provided to rural women.
- Awareness about the empowerment should be spread through NGO's and other modes.
- Training for self employment skill specially in trade and production activities should be provided to them.
- Vocational training should be provided to rural women who are interested.
- Women should make aware about the gender equality and their rights.

CONCLUSION

Development of any family, society or country depends on the development of women and development of women can be achieved to make them empower. There are many ways to make them empower out of them most convenient and effective way is to make them economically strong which can be done easily by making them self employed. There are many opportunities are available in the society especially in rural areas which can transform the backward and bias situation of rural women. They have many indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish and manage enterprise. Now the time has come that awareness should be spread about the economic freedom and empowerment. Government, NGO's and society should have proper plan to empower rural women towards economic activities. If, we able to make women empower than only we can expect to make our country developed and empowered.

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