



AN STUDY OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

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Abstract

Rural women have to be empowered to face the ever increasing demand for their products and also threats posed by the multinational corporations. Like women's unpaid domestic work, women's home based productive work for cash income is generally invisible and undervalued. This is very paradoxical because income derived from home based work by women frequently provides the basis for the survival of families in poverty. As we have seen above, this is primarily an unorganised sector, falling under the small-scale and cottage industry category. It is, therefore, generally ignored by data gathering systems, policy makers and administrators.

Keywords: Rural, Women, Paradoxical, Unorganised.

Introduction

The prosperity and growth of a nation depends on the status and development of its women as they, not only constitutes nearly half of its population, but also influences the growth of the remaining half. Women along with man, from time immemorial, have formed an integral part of the social structure throughout the world. In Indian Society, too, she has played and continues to play an important role. Variations in the status of woman, according to the cultural milieu, family structure, caste, class and proprietary rights etc have been taking place from time to time.

From the beginning, women have been unrecognized and unacknowledged contributors to the sharing of the duties and responsibilities of maintaining the daily life of their families on equal terms with their men folk. Besides looking after all the household work including the health care and education of children and family management as well, they also participate in several economic activities. This is more relevant in case of rural women who as equal partners contribute to agriculture, animal husbandry and allied process of production. The many activities women perform are not included in the national statistics.

Obstacles to Women's Participation

As the entrepreneurial process (the establishment of firm and its possible growth) is assumed to be path dependant, initial financing and continued financing for growth become related issues. Hence, the outcome of the entrepreneurial process is sensitive to the effect of a wide range of initial conditions, but also to the contingent events in altering these conditions over time. Therefore, it is not enough to review the general conditions that affect women's entrepreneurship, but it is also necessary to review how these different conditions actually translate into barriers women might meet when being engaged in the entrepreneurial process.

Women Participation in Small Scale Industries

The position of the women and their status in the society is an index of its civilization. Women are to be considered as equal partners in the process of development. But, because of centuries of exploitation and subjugation, Indian women have remained at the receiving end. Women in India have been the neglected lot. They have not been actively involved in the mainstream of development even though they represent equal proportion of the population and labor force. Primarily women are the means of survival of their families, but are generally unrecognized and undervalued, being placed at the bottom of the pile.

Women as an independent target group, account for 495.74 million and represent 48.3% of the country's population, as per the 2001 census. No country can achieve its potential without adequately investing in and developing the capabilities of women. In the interest of long-term development it is necessary to facilitate their empowerment. In many developing countries, including India, women have much less access to education, jobs, income and power than men. Even after five and half decades of planned development Indian women have not achieved expected success in the mainstream of life. Our country will be unable to have a competitive edge over others until and unless the status and role of women is improved.

Women are most one half of the world's population having enormous potential but being underutilized or unutilized for the economic development of the nation. There is need to strengthen and streamline the role of women in the development of various sectors by harnessing their power towards nation building and to attain accelerated economic growth.



Majority of women do not undertake entrepreneurial ventures. Entrepreneurship is a key to economic development of country. History is full of instances of individual entrepreneurs whose creativity had led to the industrialization of many nations. Small Scale Industries (SSI) plays a key role in the industrialization of the country. It is considered as an important means for checking concentration of economic power in the few hands and bringing about economic dispersal and more equitable distribution of national income. The nature and characters of SSI is suitable to women to become entrepreneurs. In this article an attempt has been made to view the participation of women entrepreneurs in Small Scale Industries.

State-Wise Distribution of Total SSI Units in India

The Small Scale Industries units are functioning in all the states in India. According to Third All India Census of Small Scale Industries, there are 10.52 million units functioning in India. The total employment contribution of the sector is 24.93 million, with a per unit contribution of 2.37. Table-1 reveals the state wise distribution of small scale industrial units in India.

Table -1, State wise Distribution of SSI units in India

S.No.	Name of the State/ Union Territory	No. of SSI Units	% of Total
1	Uttar Pradesh	1707977	16.23
2	Andhra Pradesh	875430	8.32
3	Maharashtra	803568	7.64
4	Madhya Pradesh	793552	7.54
5	Tamil Nadu	787965	7.49
6	West Bengal	771388	7.33
7	Karnataka	658821	6.26
8	Gujarat	530314	5.04
9	Bihar	519351	4.94
10	Kerala	452826	4.30
11	Rajasthan	441572	4.20
12	Orissa	388277	3.69
13	Punjab	376826	3.58
14	Chhattisgarh	263900	2.51
15	Haryana	223294	2.12
16	Assam	194379	1.85
17	Delhi	177080	1.68
18	Jharkhand	132446	1.26
19	Uttaranchal	106484	1.01
20	Himachal Pradesh	76198	0.72
21	Jammu and Kashmir	73125	0.70
22	Manipur	47999	0.46
23	Tripura	24352	0.23
24	Meghalaya	22520	0.21
25	Chandigarh	22247	0.21
26	Nagaland	13861	0.13
27	Mizoram	11116	0.11
28	Pondicherry	8860	0.08
29	Goa	7097	0.07
30	Andaman and Nicobar Island	3203	0.03
31	Daman, Diu, Dadra and Nagarhaveli	3010	0.01
32	Arunachal Pradesh	1252	0.01
33	Lakshadweep	532	0.01
34	Sikkim	368	0.01
	Total	10521190	100

It is inferred from table 1 that the state Uttar Pradesh tops the list with more than 17 lakh SSI units followed by Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Tami Nadu. Sikkim has the lowest number of SSI units (368 units).



State wise Distribution of SSI units in India owned by women entrepreneurs

In India small scale industrial units are owned both by men and women. Table 2 reveals that among the small scale industrial units owned by Women Entrepreneurs in India, Kerala tops of the table with 1.39 lakh units followed by Tamil Nadu with 1.30 lakh units. Tamil Nadu ranks second in the total number of small scale units owned by Women Entrepreneurs in India. Lakshadweep has the lowest number of small scale industrial units owned by Women Entrepreneurs (67 units).

Table 2, State wise Distribution of small scale industrial units owned by women entrepreneurs

S.No.	Name of the State/ Union Territory	No. of SSI Units	% of Total
1	Kerala	139225	13.09
2	Tamil Nadu	129808	12.20
3	Karnataka	103169	9.70
4	Maharashtra	100670	9.46
5	Andhra Pradesh	77166	7.25
6	Uttar Pradesh	72667	6.83
7	West Bengal	69625	6.55
8	Madhya Pradesh	68823	6.47
9	Gujarat	57703	5.05
10	Bihar	49443	4.65
11	Rajasthan	38233	3.59
12	Orissa	36371	3.42
13	Punjab	29068	2.73
14	Delhi	14383	1.35
15	Assam	11757	1.11
16	Manipur	10745	1.01
17	Chhattisgarh	10034	0.94
18	Haryana	9620	0.90
19	Uttaranchal	8804	0.83
20	Jharkhand	7865	0.74
21	Jammu & Kashmir	5742	0.54
22	Himachal Pradesh	3722	0.35
23	Mizoram	3700	0.35
24	Meghalaya	3580	0.34
25	Chandigarh	2243	0.21
26	Pondicherry	1065	0.10
27	Tripura	863	0.08
28	Goa	810	0.08
29	Daman, Diu & Nagarhaveli	213	0.02
30	Nagaland	179	0.02
31	Arunachal Pradesh	150	0.01
32	Andaman and Nicobar Island	110	0.01
33	Sikkim	98	0.01
34	Lakshadweep	67	0.01
	Total	1063721	100

Classification of SSI Units Owned by Men and Women on The Basis of Registration

Table 3 shows the classification of SSI units owned by men and women on the basis of registration. This table also reveals that among the 94.57 lakhs SSI units owned by men functioning in India, 86.92% are unregistered and registered units amount to 13.08%. In the total number of SSI units owned by men functioning in India more than forth-fifths of the units (86.92%) are unregistered.

In 1064 lakhs SSI units owned by women, 87.07% units are unregistered and 12.93% units are registered. More than forth-fifths of the SSI units (87.07%) owned by women are unregistered.



Table 3, Classification of SSI units in India on the Basis of Registration

S.No.	Characteristic	Registered Units (in lakhs)	Unregistered Units (in lakhs)	Total
1	Men	12.37(13.08)	82.20(86.92)	94.57(100)
2	Women	1.38(12.93)	9.26(87.07)	10.64
	Total	13.75(13.07)	91.46(86.93)	105.21(100)

Government Schemes for Women Participation

The government programme for women development began as early as 1954 in India but the actual participation began only in 1974. At present, the Government of India has over 27 schemes for women operated by different departments and ministries. Some of these are:

- Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)
- Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM)
- Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY)
- Women's Development Corporation Scheme (WDCS)
- Working Women's forum
- Indira Mahila Yojna
- Indira Mahila Kendra
- Mahila Smiti Yojna
- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh
- Khadi and Village Industries Commission
- Indira Priyadarshini Yojna
- SIDBI's Mahila Udayam Nidhi Mahila Vikas Nidhi
- SBI's Sree Shakti Scheme
- NGO's Credit Schemes
- National Banks for Agriculture and Rural Development's Schemes

The efforts of government and its different agencies are ably supplemented by non-governmental organizations that are playing an equally important role in facilitating women empowerment. Despite concerted efforts of governments and NGO's there are certain gaps. Of course we have come a long way in empowering women yet the future journey is difficult and demanding.

Conclusion

The economic participation of women in the study area is very important. In the study area vast majority of women are employed in agricultural sector. Amongst rural women workers, about 85 percent are employed in agriculture sector as labourers. Survey of the area has shown that two third of agricultural operations are performed by women. These women participate in agricultural operations besides the household works. Generally, rural women workers are hired by rich cultivators on daily wage basis.

The small manufacturing units in the district have also employed women in various types of jobs. They are, however, employed in simple production processes. The small manufacturing units which produce pottery, cotton clothes including Khadi clothes, silk and woollen garments, handicrafts, toys, perfumes and scented oils, biscuits, sarees, ladies dresses, furniture etc. have employed women workers in their establishments. These, women are mostly employed temporarily on piece rate wages. Besides manufacturing units, women workers are also employed in hospitals and nursing homes and in trading and commercial establishments in urban areas of the study area. In the study area, a large number of women workers are also employed in the building and construction sector. These women workers are assigned the work of carrying earth, mortar, cement, stones, water, bricks, etc., which they carry on their heads or backs. They are also employed for crushing the stones, carrying head-loads and for working on hand pumps etc. The women workers in construction work are employed as they are cheaper than men and are found more disciplined.

The domestic service is also an important occupation particularly for migrated women in urban and semi-urban areas of the study area. The employers of women domestic servants are mainly the businessmen, doctors, engineers, chartered accountants, teachers, government employees and other high economic strata families. These women are either full time workers, part time workers or residential workers. The women domestic servants are assigned various jobs such as cooking, cleaning utensils, washing clothes, cleaning the house, fetching water, bringing vegetables and provisions from the market



etc, The wages paid to the women workers sometimes include the labour of their daughters. These young girls are not given cash for the work that they perform with their mothers.

The self-employment is regarded as one of the important unorganised sector occupations. In study area, a large number of women in urban and semi-urban areas are self-employed. Most of them are vendors, hawkers and petty businessmen. Artisan work is also included in self-employment activities such as handicraft production and household enterprises like knitting, weaving etc. In urban areas women run roadside water and tea stalls and vegetable and fruit shops. They are also engaged in street vending, retailing in cotton and woollen garments, second-hand clothes, utensils, toys, petty grocers etc. The women in the study area also work as dry cleaners, pressers, washers, tailors etc. In the cities of study area women are also running beauty parlours. The women hawkers on the streets of urban and semi-urban residential areas of the study area who sell flowers, vegetables, fruit, ready foods, toys, clothes etc. are very prominent.

The unorganised sector in study area is characterised by the several factors such as wage discrimination between men and women, no limit of minimum wages, long hours of work, lack of job security, lack of legislative cover, lack of minimum facilities at work place, heavy physical work, ill treatment by the employers and sexual harassment and exploitation.

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