



Women Empowerment In Informal Sector: A Study Based on Home Based Workers in Nayagarh, Odisha

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Abstract: The study has been undertaken to understand analyze the current scenario of women home based workers and their level of vulnerability. Women bear a number of structural, emotional challenges. Home Based women workers being the most exploited group of workers., with all economic constraints, socio-cultural normative patterns and lack of formal employment opportunities in developing countries.

The research work is to proposes a number of strategies and plans that will provide them decent working conditions and improve their living conditions and improve their standard of living. Some of the strategies include building awareness among them to get organized, improving statistics on these home-based workers, capacity building of these home-based workers etc.

Keywords – HBWs – Home Based Workers, SHGs – Self Help Groups, Women Empowerment in informal Sector, Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM), PMAY – Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, NGO – Non Governmental Organization.

I. INTRODUCTION

Informal sector contributes 50% of the GDP in India and constitutes 90% of the total workforce, and income from this source is considered to be the greater source of employment mostly for women than men. Informal sectors involve women in majority.

Interception from accessing decent paid work, bearing the brunt of unpaid childcare and domestic work and several structural constraints leave them with no choice but take up low quality jobs.

Lot of discriminatory and strong cultural social norms for women limits their access to property, assets and financial services; opportunities for education and skills development; and social protection.

II. NEED OF THE STUDY

In this male dominated society, there is need to change and make the women aware about their rights, get financially equipped and indirectly helping the economy of the country to grow faster.

Also, there are lot of women who are educated but are not able to be financially independent due some societal constraints and this study and proposal will help achieve a goal towards creating a women empowered country with lots of opportunities.

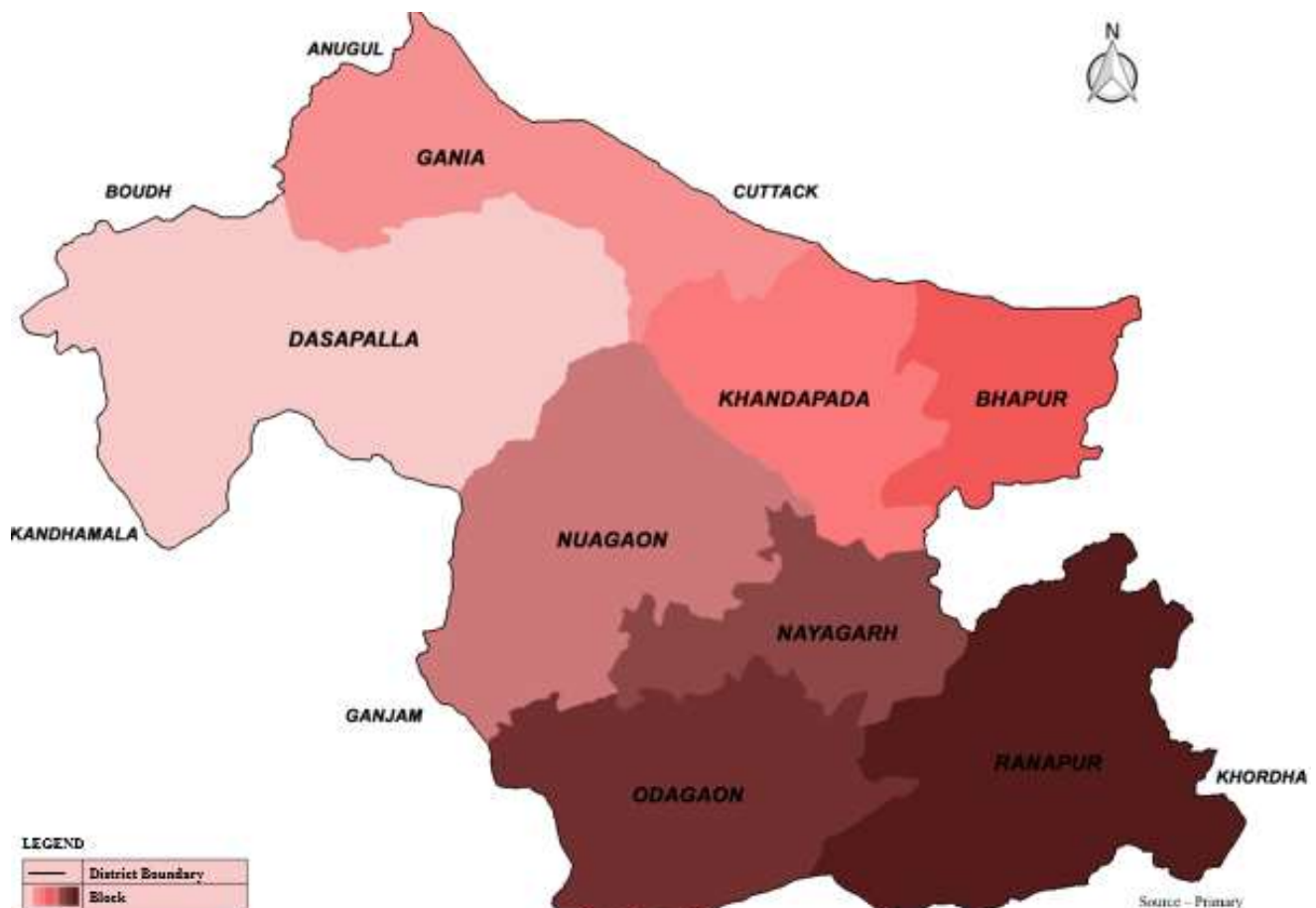
Illiteracy, no formal training, low level of skills, social exclusion are some of the main reasons due to which women turn to home based work.

Women working in this sector face barriers such as lower access to finance, social and labour rights, and lower voice and visibility. So, there is a need for more realistic approach to address and resolve the issues of home-based workers and emphasis on its effectiveness to enhance the development potential.

III. ABOUT THE STUDY AREA

Nayagarh being an administrative District of Odisha, bounded by Cuttack, Ganjam District, Khordha District on its North, South & East.

Women in this area face a number of issues due to lack of decent working conditions at their homes cum work places, lack of capital, technology and infrastructure, inappropriate policy environment and lack of organization and representation.



Map 1.1 – Showing Nayagarh District along with Blocks

JUSTIFICATION FOR SELECTION OF STUDY AREA

Only 12.83% of the total workforce constitutes of women out of which total home-based workers percentage is 2.09% containing only 1.60% of female home-based workers.

Being connected with districts like Ganjam, Khordha, Cuttack surrounded, have good opportunity to sell their products in a wider range. Out of total population 93% is rural population willing to improve their living condition can be given an opportunity to develop without migrating to urban areas.

IV. AIM

To promote development –oriented strategies and plans for home-based workers in the informal economy that will provide them decent working conditions and improve their standard of living.

V. OBJECTIVE

Identifying different groups of home-based women workers working in various sectors and evaluate the levels of their vulnerability and risks faced by them. This study helps to analyse the existing working conditions of these home-based workers. And suggest specific strategies or plans to help them achieve labour rights and social protections, organisation and representation, economic empowerment.

VI. DATA COLLECTION

Out of various informal sector home based workers in one of them which is diversified into two groups; salaried women get either weekly or monthly paid and self-employed women, every block has 15-20 SHGs and each SHGs have 10-12 members.

The Average family size of the household is 4.13 which is less than average India's household size which is 4.44. The Ratio of workers to the total household size is 1.19 out of which 30.14 % of households have at least one person is working in informal sector including Homebased Workers. 22.18% of households have at least one or more persons working in formal sector including homebased workers.

- Total number of women home based workers in rural area is 81% and 19% in urban area out of which 77% are women home based workers and 23% are male/others.
- 30.19 % of the home-based workers fall under the age of 30-39 years which is second highest and 37.20% home-based workers fall under 40-49 years which is the most active age group. 26.33% fall under 20-29 age group. 2.45% home-based workers fall under 60+ age group.
- Majority of Home-based Workers that is 58.33 % have completed primary to higher secondary education and 16.71 % are illiterate.
- Home based work is not the main source of income which engages only 1.47 % where as 48.7% are engaged in other informal works and there are 34.18% who don't have any income source.
- About 52.05 % Of women are married and do this work to meet household expenses. Less number of Widowed, separated and divorced women are engaged in this work which states that not only poor people but socially vulnerable people can also earn for their livelihood from this.
- Frequency of remuneration of Home-based workers out of which only 26% of women home based workers get daily payment and 60% get irregular payment, 2% of get weekly paid and 12% get monthly paid.
- Around 64% of women get less than Rs 5000, 25% get between 5000 – 10,000, 11% get more than 10,000.
- Home based work is not the main source of income which engages only 1.47 % where as 48.7% are engaged in other informal works and there are 34.18% who don't have any income source.
- Around 40.09 % household live in 1 room dwelling unit where 31.60 households live in 2 room dwelling unit which makes them difficult to work and store any raw materials in bulk. Residing in a small dwelling unit they cannot dedicate their whole time working due to space limitation and competing needs of the whole family.
- Around 30.81 % of households have mud brick wall material and 31.11% of households have thatched roof which denotes poor housing quality and not a reliable place for home-based workers. In rainy season it becomes difficult to store the raw materials and also in summer humidity doesn't make the environment comfortable to work in.
- About 93% have electricity supply in their household and 70% have individual drinking water source, 83% have inbuilt toilets in their household.
- Availability of Basic services is available but does not fit to working environment. Availability of drinking water is, electricity, toilet facility and drainage facility is adequate but not adequate to fulfil the work atmosphere to home-based workers.
- About 85.23% workers are dependent on public mode of transport and only 14.77 % have own vehicle.

ATTEMPTS TO CREATE SELF HELP GROUPS

Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) is a registered society working under Department of Mission Shakti, Government of Odisha, implemented the centrally sponsored scheme “Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission” (DAY-NRLM). It helps in enhancing the Socio-Economic condition of the rural poor through promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods.

Aim of the project is to enhance Economic and social status of the rural poor in Odisha.

The targeted poor households are mobilized and supported through financial easy bank loans and funds.

Objectives: -

To provide strategy guidance and technical support to SHGs

- Formation Of SHGs in Nayagarh started around the year 2015 and gradually started increasing with increasing year. But certainly, there were gradually developed active and non-active SHGs.

Issues For Home – Based Workers In Establishing Self Help Groups

- **Lack Of Marketing Skills:** Lack of knowledge in marketing skills required to sell their products so as to compete with substitute
- **Lack Of Entrepreneurship:** Skill to start any work forming a group, the confidence level among women is very less
- **Procurement Support by Government:** Government support to provide raw materials of the right quality, quantity and appropriate price to the Self-Help Groups.
- **Technical Support:** The lack of awareness of the chain of production, potential market, market demand, cost optimization, supply chain management, warehousing and risk diversification is huge setback in bringing an SHG into existence. Thus, there is huge need of technical support by the government. Also, regular workshops and training programs can enhance the knowledge gap.
- **Technological Guidance:** There has not been any changes in the process of assembling the raw materials into the final products made by the home-based workers for decades. The process can be optimized or changes can be introduced in the process that make them less detrimental to their health.

In Nayagarh , training programs from agriculture departments as well as mission shakti conducts training programs for a duration of 10 days in which women of all the villages are noticed to join .

- **Advantages:** -

- During training session accommodation & food is given to the women participating in the same.
- Training related to home-based works are emphasized.

- **Disadvantages:** -

- Transportation facilities are not provided.
- Supply of Raw materials are not provided.
- Duration of the training period is way too long.
- No proper assigned for the training programs
- No proper workplace is provided to them to conduct and continue the same after the training

VII. PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Suggestions

- Build Model Housing facility and model Working space in the local area for the home-based workers to serve as an example for government to take initiatives for such projects at larger scale in local bodies
- Simple processes for availing social security schemes
- Organizing trade fairs, stalls and more opportunities for home-based workers to sell their products
- Regular Research and Interventions to know the status of Home-based workers about their Work, and suggest ways to increase their productivity, selling and bargaining skills.
- Awareness among home based workers to get organized and stand together for collective Bargaining, advocacy and visibility
- Health services should be available in nearby local with adequate and good quality facilities

Recommendation For Organizing Home Based Workers in Communities, Provide Their Identity

- Area And Community Scanning
- Identification of potential HBWs in a certain area, their workspace and condition of the same and their leaders in this area.
- Drafting And Organizing a Recruitment Meeting Membership Campaign
- The plan should include contacting the leader, updating meeting time and place at a regular interval of time. This helps building a connection with and helps in making their time as a prioritize as their time is very precious.
- HBWs usually face Serious and daily concerns that require attention should be mobilized easy and effectively.
- Organizing Membership Campaign
- Regular check-ups and solving the issues helps the HBWs stay updated.
- Updating the Leaders with the updated or new schemes by the Government.
- Discussing regarding the opportunities of marketing and availing raw materials at the cheapest

Recommendation For Capacity Building of Home-Based Workers

- Training programs supplement the existing capacities of the grass root organizations.
- These ensures access to the basic services for home makers by providing exposure and support to home-based workers.
- The Key module of the program are: -
- Needs Assessment and community mapping.
- Monitoring and implementation of services
- Advocacy with the city officials
- Community organizing
- Training and exposure visits
- Creating monitoring committee
- Implementation of these programs can help in :
- Better Understanding of state government programs
- Capacity building in order to fulfil all the requirements and for sustainable development.
- Facilitation of additional trainings on relationship building and management with the urban local bodies

Recommendation For Improving Statistics

- Statistical data and picture of HBWs on status of employment, type of contracts and mode of payment.
- Identifying all HBWs within all workers or desired group of workers by using a place of work.
- Distinguish different categories of HBWs by using the employment status, type of work/contract, mode of payment.
- This helps to identify the type of HBWs are self-employed or dependent.
- This also helps in assembling information regarding monthly income of HBWs and also the annual growth in income generation of the same all over as a district profile.

- This also can be a part forming a recognizable identity as HOME BASED WORKERS to be identified as an income generating sector.

Recommendation For Improving Income Generation

- Through the community statistics report the mode of income generation and the amount received monthly and annually can help to identify the growth of HBWs.
- Statistical report of No. of SHG groups formed every 6 months and yearly checking up with the active and no active SHGs.
- Arrangement for Source of selling the products for self-employed HBWs through Government, NGOs will encourage them in a better way.
- Setting of stalls as a daily basis market for daily/ weekly/ monthly income also a basis of recognition in their area.

Recommendation For Improving Housing Condition of Home-Based Workers

- PMAY - Affordable Housing provision ensures 35% of the houses to be reserved for EWS category in any affordable housing projects.
- This scheme helps people to build their own houses on the land that is available to them through to granting tenure existing land or providing land appropriated through planning mechanism.
- This helps ensure access to easy locating lands and finance for the urban poor housing.
- Allowance for urban poor to construct their own houses with a work shed on their premises or neighbourhood to carry out their remunerative activity

VIII. CONCLUSION

Women in Nayagarh district have high potential for economic development, enthusiastic to learn new skill and most importantly keen to be independent not only for their livelihood but to own some recognition . keeping in min the factors and recommendation in mind there is need to change policy, institutional and legislative reforms as well participation of government into their day-to-day work environment and improvising the lack systems to achieve more participation of women in informal sector, thus leading to a sincere growth and development of district, state and country's development.

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