

A study on Role of Rural Development in Women Empowerment

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Abstract:

Women's empowerment in rural regions has been identified as a necessary prerequisite for poverty decreases. Despite the fact that women account for half of the Indian population, their involvement in different activities is still not equal to that of males. Society as a whole cannot be considered to have progressed enough without the involvement of women in the development process. Women's empowerment in rural regions has been a hot issue in recent decades, particularly in emerging nations like India. Women in rural areas are critical agents for India's long-term development. The purpose of this research is to look at the role of rural development in women's empowerment. The Life of Indian Women, the Need for Women Empowerment, Strengthening Women in the Rural Economy, and some suggestions for empowering the rural population studied.

Keywords: MBA, Rural women, Rural development, Women empowerment

Introduction:

Statics defines that despite the fact that women make up 48 percent of India's population they only make up 29% of the workforce. Rural women make up 90% of the overall labor force in rural regions, particularly in agriculture and animal husbandry, with 80% of women working in unorganized sectors. Nonetheless, it is discovered that 66% of the female population in rural areas is unemployed. According to census statistics, rural Indian women have a literacy rate of 58.75 percent, while males have a literacy rate of 78.57 percent.

Empowering women to fully engage in economic activity across all sectors is critical for building resilient economies because it increases sustainability and quality of life. However, empowerment is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, and multi-layered notion that demands women to assume a larger share of control over resources such as knowledge, information, and ideas, which may be material, human, or intellectual. It also includes financial resources such as money, that help women gain power by providing them with financial resources and allowing them to participate in decision-making at home, in their communities, in society, and at the national level. Encouraging Women to be Multifaceted will provide more opportunities for women based on their ability to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from growth processes in ways that value

their contributions, respect their dignity, and make it possible to negotiate a more equitable distribution of growth benefits. As a result, women's control over economic resources will improve, and their economic security will be strengthened. Women's empowerment in rural areas is critical since it would enable women to escape societal abuse and tragedies. Many recommendations have been made in this study work that will increase awareness in the environment and society in which women live, allowing them to become active members and therefore fight for their rights.

Life of Indian women

In India, rural women are less literate than rural males. The family has a bad attitude about teaching the female kid. Although primary education is free, many parents refuse to take their children to school. The right to education was approved by Parliament, but it is still a long way from being a reality. A mid-day food program has been devised in order to entice young children to attend school. However, this plan was derailed when a number of schoolchildren died as a result of eating food from the school kitchen.

The majority of rural Indian women are unable to select their spouse. It is always determined by the family elders, and marriage is arranged with an endogamous group, with caste playing a significant part. The traditional authorities of the villages reject the girl's desire to marry someone from a different caste or clan. There are Khap Panchayats, or traditional village elders, in states like Haryana that penalize adult females and boys from the same village and caste who fall in love and marry. Marriage inside the village or caste, according to the Khap authorities, is the same as marrying a sibling. They operate as kangaroo tribunals, punishing people to the point of death. In many instances, even the parents are unconcerned by the severity of such acts. Because of the strength of these Khap Panchayats, elected members from these constituencies do not criticize them for fear of losing their support.

The majority of rural women are not just poor in terms of money, but also in terms of knowledge. In India's national economy, rural women are important and productive employees. The underestimation of the importance of rural women in development is statistically biased. Despite the fact that women work longer hours than men and contribute significantly to the family income, they are not seen as productive employees. Pankajam and Lalitha They are quiet employees that work from sunrise to dark to accomplish the domestic chores. However, she is often chastised in the family for not being genuine in her work. If the family members had to pay for the whole household's work as well as the free labor she performs on the tiny agricultural land of rural people, her true value might have been recognized. She accomplishes this on a daily basis without jeopardizing the family's interests, yet she receives the respect she deserves in just a few households (1).

One of the foundations of the global gender equality movement is equal pay for equal labor. However, according to Labor Bureau statistics, there has been minimal improvement in India in terms of salary equity for men and women doing comparable labor. Even more concerning is the fact that, although pay inequalities have always existed in rural areas of the nation, they have grown in certain sectors of activity. So, whereas males were paid 70% more for ploughing labor than women at the end of 2004-05, the gap widened to 80.4 percent in end-March 2012 and 93.6 percent at the start of 2013-14. In March 2005, males were paid 75% more than women for well-digging labor, while the gap was already at 80% in the current fiscal year. Daily pay differences have mostly stayed steady since 1999, but they did increase in the early 2000s, according to the statistics. As of 2013, pay discrimination against women is more prevalent in physically demanding jobs (such as plowing and well-digging), but less so in jobs like sowing and harvesting. When it comes to unskilled non-agricultural employment, it seems that gender preconceptions have won out once again outside of the agricultural sector.

In rural India, just a small percentage of women possess land or productive assets. This proves to be a stumbling hurdle in the world of institutional lending. Women make up the majority of agricultural laborers. They mostly delegated physical labor. Machine operations are carried out by men. Agriculture, which is the backbone of the rural Indian economy, is mostly supported by female labor. They are the unseen lifeblood of agricultural rural communities. From childhood, rural women have been responsible for caring for younger siblings, cooking, doing household tasks, and looking after the fodder for their parents' domestic animals. At a young age, they are married off. Serfdom, obscurity, and facelessness are the fates of Indian women. The core of the problem is a culture that is "gender insensitive." Singh et al., 2004 Child marriage, according to UNICEF, is a violation of a child's rights. Child brides are often forced to leave school, are exposed to the dangers of early pregnancy, and are more likely to face abuse and isolation. This is a reality that about 23 million Indian females confront. The vast bulk of them come from rural regions (2).

Women's employment in rural regions has suffered an alarming drop in the last two years, according to the National Sample Survey Agency (NSSO), a government of India organization. Rural women lost a stunning 9.1 million employment in occupations that are done for "the majority of the year." This is due to the fact that women are no longer able to get longer-term, higher-paying employment, and are thus obliged to accept short-term, transitory labor.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act shines a bright light on rural women in this bleak situation. Several studies have shown that after the passage of this Act, many rural women have ventured out of their homes for the first time to work for a living. Because it is a government initiative, the patriarchal socio-cultural stigma associated with working in public spaces that existed before is gradually dissipating. Furthermore, rural women's mentalities are changing as a result of their financial independence via employment. For the first time, they are making decisions about how to spend their money. Financial

empowerment leads to social empowerment, since many of them join self-help organizations to improve their skills.

Need of Women Empowerment

Empowerment is the process of disadvantaged individuals gaining these fundamental possibilities, either directly or via the assistance of marginalized and non-marginalized individuals who share access to these possibilities. It also involves aggressively resisting attempts to prevent such opportunities from occurring. Empowerment also includes promoting and strengthening self-sufficiency abilities in people, with the goal of removing the need for charity or assistance in the future. Starting and successfully implementing this procedure may be challenging. Cultural norms are at the root of many of the obstacles to women's empowerment and equality. One of the effective ways to rural/women development is the empowerment concept. The focus is on collective action to achieve rights, self-reliance, and other forms of independence, as well as to confront institutions that perpetuate women's subordination. The World Conferences on Women and its discussions on women have played a critical role in developing policies for third-world nations to implement in this setting. The Indian government has also launched a number of creative initiatives and created new organizations to achieve this goal. Other attempts are also being made to mainstream gender issues in development, with a focus on 'gender budgeting and gender auditing.' All of these initiatives have resulted in significant improvements in the lives of rural women (3).

Gender empowerment is important in rural development programs

The Mediterranean Agronomic Institute's participation in initiatives and programs related to "gender empowerment" has coincided with a firm acknowledgment of women's role in development plans and policies implemented as part of international cooperation efforts.

Connecting the binomial "woman and development" with global efforts to combat underdevelopment is, in fact, a sign of significant cultural liberation and a rising recognition of women's increasing importance in nations suffering from social, cultural, and economic backwardness.

This process of raising awareness is effective, and it has involved a new and different attention to the social processes and economic mechanisms that are now also considered in a gender perspective, i.e. within an approach that considers both men and women as beneficiaries of a development-oriented policy in their specific social group (4).

Item 3 of the Millennium Development Goals, which were adopted by the United Nations in 2000 and are expected to be achieved by 2015, is focused on this theme and directs the adoption of strategies aimed at narrowing the gap between men and women, who are expected to achieve comparable living standards by 2015.

Implementing empowerment procedures that enable women to play a more effective role in sectors such as food security and natural resource management, for example, is a requirement for long-term development.

However, because of its highly varied meaning, which is influenced by social settings, individual situations, and political circumstances, the concept of empowerment is difficult to define. Subjective empowerment, for example, differs from collective empowerment in that it has distinct goals and approaches to execution. What is certain and unmistakable is that enhancing women's roles and expanding their options is a result of a much larger and more complicated commitment aimed at altering the political and social processes that lead to discrimination and marginalization. In order to accomplish the goal under consideration, the social, political, and economic aspects are inextricably linked.

In developing nations, improved labor market access and wage treatment necessarily result in increased self-esteem, strengthened family decision-making, and increased potential involvement in community decisions and social sphere.

The key activities that contribute to the improvement of women's roles in rural and non-rural regions react to a few basic priorities: access to resources, support for self-determination, awareness-raising, involvement in production, and welfare programs.

Empowering Women in the Rural Economy

Rural women's contributions are distinctive as laborers, entrepreneurs, and keepers of traditional knowledge, particularly in the context of natural resource management, agriculture, and forestry, all of which are important to climate mitigation and adaptation. Traditional knowledge also promotes innovation in the rural economy, increasing resilience and creating green employment possibilities.

Despite their reduced production as a result of the aforementioned obstacles, rural women produce more than half of the world's food.

In many cultures, they are the main caretakers for families and are crucial to providing food and nutrition security at the home level. According to data from the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), women cultivate up to 90% of rice in Southeast Asia and produce up to 80% of essential commodities for family use and sale in Sub-Saharan Africa. Women supply up to 90% of the food consumed by the rural poor. According to some studies, if women farmers had equal access to resources as males, the world's hungry population might be decreased by up to 150 million. Given that over 800 million people suffer from chronic hunger, it is critical to alleviate rural women's responsibilities and enhance their productivity and working conditions, thus increasing food security.

The following are some suggestions for empowering the rural community

The MGNREGS projects should be designed to take advantage of the agricultural laborers' off-season. Laborers will be able to work in the off-season as a result of such preparation. Projects under the MGNREGS should be time-bound. Because it is a government program and the bureaucrats' goal is to spend money, many employees believe it is a way to make easy money. It's assumed to be a stipend. There is animosity among the employees whenever efforts are made to guarantee accurate measuring of the job done (5, 6).

The involvement of the local community in the design and execution of the works is critical to the NREGA's success. It must be included into the village's long-term development plan by the local community. Gram Sabha gatherings are few and far between. A poor track record indicates that there are issues in the neighborhood. The administrative bureaucracy is heavily involved in the planning and execution of the works.

Maintenance is not covered under the present implementation regime. While a significant number of assets are produced, the Panchayats are instructed to maintain them. The issue is that Panchayats lack the financial resources to carry out such large-scale maintenance projects. According to our research, the majority of the assets will be decommissioned as a result of this. Another crucial aspect is that each asset produced should have a bound task completion plan. If the community asserts its rights, MGNREGS may be made effective. Women in rural areas may play an important part in this. Only via an effective process of awareness and mobilization can this be achievable. Some wage earners have a poor degree of knowledge of unemployment benefits, pay due if labor is supplied outside a five-kilometer radius, social audit and grievance resolution procedures, and so on. Appropriate media and agencies for raising awareness should be found and used (7).

Workers should be made aware of issues via both traditional and contemporary media. The techniques for raising awareness should be designed in such a way that wage employees can understand them. The majority of them are illiterate or have only attended elementary school. As a result, public awareness messages should be delivered in the form of short films, animation slides, posters, and other media.

Traditional media such as folk music, puppet shows, and other forms of storytelling should be used to effectively communicate with the community. The Ministry of Rural Development, state governments, non-governmental groups, and others have all expressed their opinions on this issue. To provide high quality content with acceptable standards, the opinions of the National Institute of Rural Development, State Institutes of Rural Development, and experts should be in detail examined.

It's tough because, according to the majority of participants, government officials are unable to contact the vast majority of rural people due to their workload, logistical issues, and attitude. As a result, non-governmental groups may be enlisted to fulfill this job at a low cost.

The planning must take into account the topography, rainfall, socioeconomic circumstances, and local presences, among other factors. Core banking operations, weekly and monthly account reconciliation, Muster Roll operation using a two-cycle method, Mobile Monitoring System (MMS) for recording attendance at workplace and location, salary payments through mobile vans, and so on are just a few of the services available. Staff incentives may help the program succeed by motivating employees. Getting rid of corruption is a certain method to make the plan more effective (8).

Several research studies on MGNREGA have shown that it has provided rural families with an additional source of income, which they are using to establish their own businesses. This program benefits the rural population, especially rural women. It has resulted in a substantial rise in rural families' monthly per capita consumer spending. Marginalized groups, such as Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, have a high level of involvement. In both cases, the participation rate surpasses their proportion of the overall population. It has helped women's socioeconomic position by reducing conventional gender pay inequality, especially in the public works sector. This is a significant contribution since men and women have equal rights to labor and compensation. When compared to migration undertaken for economic development or other reasons, the program has had a more immediate and beneficial effect on lowering distress migration. Distress migration from rural regions causes a slew of societal issues, which MGNREGS is working to address. (<http://www.nird.org.in>) Rural women have indigenous knowledge that the government may put to good use. If rural women's indigenous knowledge can be learned, conservation of bio variety and food security may be embedded in the rural community (9).

The scheme's target demographic was women in rural regions who came from low-income households. In India, the 73rd Amendment of 1992 established Panchayat reservation. Thirty percent of the seats are set aside for women from rural areas. It is also specified in the MGNREGS that women should account for at least 30% of the beneficiaries. They have exceeded the minimal number in several states. Because all of the male residents of the community are busy in other jobs, the whole government program is carried out by the women in certain villages. Their self-esteem has risen as a result of their confidence in themselves that they can manage their families and the community. The difficulties may arrive, but rural women are prepared to face them. The increase in self-assurance has aided them in advancing in a variety of areas (10-12).

One of the four winners of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Literacy Prizes this year is a newspaper published exclusively through women India (UNESCO) in rural. Khabar Lahariya, a biweekly newspaper delivered to over 20,000 people in Uttar Pradesh, is

completely produced and sold by newly literate "low caste" women in Chitrakoot and Banda districts who are studying to become journalists. This weekly publication received the King Sejong Literacy Prize. (13)

Conclusion:

Women's employment may assist increase economic growth and, as a result, GDP. This research has made some recommendations. Increasing women's and girls' education and employment will boost economic development and reduce the gender gap in the workforce.

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