

Title of the Study: Women Entrepreneurship as a Partner of Development: A Case Study from Saheli SHG in Bagicha Block of Jashpur; Chhattisgarh.

SUMAN LAKRA (Research Scholar)

Department of Social Work

Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, (a Central University)

Bilaspur, Koni, Chhattisgarh, India-495009

Contact No. +91-9406139750

E-Mail id: sumanlakra83@gmail.com

Abstract

Entrepreneurship among women has been a recent concern. Women entrepreneurship development is an instrument of development. Economic and social development is necessary for overall development of individual, family, community/society and nation. Now- a- days rural women are increasingly participating in the process of development through Self Help Groups (SHGs). They are concentrated in informal, micro-size, low productivity entrepreneurship and run their own business to attain gender equality, reduce poverty and ensure stronger economies in the communities/societies. They are become aware of their rights and their work situation. The present paper is divided into three parts; the first part of this paper emphasizes on how women entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth in the family of a broader livelihood strategy. Secondly deals with developing partnership with the stakeholders and giving space for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the project for their own development is an ideal situation of participatory development, sustainable progress. Moreover this paper focuses on enhancement of the entrepreneurial skill which opens up new avenues for creating employment opportunities for rural women in turn their empowerment. Last part of this paper concludes with rural women entrepreneurship that discontinues the increasing migration towards cities as it provides wide range of employment opportunities to the women in the rural areas.

Key words: *Entrepreneurship, development, women, self-help groups,*

Introduction

Women entrepreneurship involves women empowerment (Oluwamimo, 2011) by which women raises the awareness and consciousness towards act and law that determine their progress and survival to participate in developmental process without interference. Women empowerment

involves strengthening their existing skills and capacities, equal access to participation and decision making in social, political and economic life of the society including means to equal access to health care, quality education, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office among others. Further it is described as process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation in decision making process, control and transformation actions, so as to enable them perform better towards improving themselves, their families and society as a whole (Lamidi, 2006, p. 109). Thus the women empowerment contributes in strengthening their skills and capabilities to participate in the process of decision to enhance sustainable development in the family and community. And the entrepreneurship is one of the important components to produce efficiency and effectively increase the income and well-being of their families for development.

Background of the study

Saheli SHG is a group of 20 (twenty) women members involved in Ready To Eat (nutrition dietary supplements) manufacturing which is funded by Govt. of Chhattisgarh under the scheme of Ministry of ICDS Govt. of India and it is supplied to 3 sectors of covering 120 Anganwadis across Bagicha Block of Jashpur District Chhattisgarh, India. The methodology of the Saheli SHG is based on the making of Ready to Eat to supplying to the Anganwadi Centres every month. In this process, women are taking important position and new partnership about fundamental changes. The researcher analyses and seeks to find out the comprehensive, multilevel process by which the stakeholders or partners in the development especially women develop, leverage and manage the partnership. In the sample area three cases, the partnership of women was happened because they found the professed needs significantly contributing quality of life in the family and community. All these three case studied in the areas that known for their patriarchal system, caste system and socially and economically backward in nature.

The initiative has been taken by the Government of Chhattisgarh to empower women organizing them in Self Help Groups (SHGs). The initiatives have proved a success in making them self-reliant in their families, communities to discharge economic problems. Besides this the SHGs are also engaged in preparation of school uniform, mushroom production, production of papad, badi, murabba, daliya, bamboo craft, woodcraft, animal husbandry as poultry farming etc. income generating works. The women SHGs also play an important role in the campaign against malnutrition. Apart from becoming independent and organized, the women of the study area are gradually raising their voice against social evils. To encourage women and to provide financial assistance for entrepreneurs the Chhattisgarh Mahila Kosh is running schemes like loan scheme, Swavlamban scheme, skill development scheme, entrepreneurship awareness scheme.¹

Methods and materials

The researcher has taken three cases of exemplary changes occurred as part of a participatory development programme. Descriptive design is applied using case study method to do in-depth analysis of the cases. The primary data has collected through interview schedule and FGD with shortlisted cases and secondary sources such as case studies and annual and bi-annual reports, articles, journals and government reports related to SHG.

Major findings

The researcher observed the development of perceived need into felt need where the people especially women get involved into the village issue and the spirit that takes them into transformative leadership and partners in development. The benefits of development of the state were not reaching to the study area or target area/ communities for their backwardness. So they were dissatisfied with the prevailing process of the governance. So the SHGs played a vital role in bridging as a platform for women to achieve their apparent needs of family and communities.

In the first case study members of the SHG discharged the problems and difficulties of the poverty. Tribal women joining in SHG saving their resources primarily empowered in the process of poverty alleviation. Members of the SHG took initiative in opening a small petty shop, broom selling, bangles selling, bamboo basket selling and other types of business in a micro level initiative encouraged them to save money for their future in the bank account. Now the members of the SHG have experienced in an entrepreneurship models and started tailoring school dress for the respective clusters of the block. Now the each and every member of the SHG has their own motor vehicle, steel almirah and other non-consumable goods which is the gift of women entrepreneurship.

The second case study an idea of mind blowing come-up that the SHG took initiatives in preparation of 'Ready to Eat' for providing supplementary nutritional foods to the children between 0-59 months and for adolescence girl children. Through the initiatives of Ready to Eat (nutrition dietary supplements) manufacturing members of the SHG are empowered economically, socially, politically in the process of development. Each and every members of SHG has their bank account and bank balance enough to alleviate the poverty from family. And Children of the SHG members going to school regularly and attending the class regularly. Ready To Eat (nutrition dietary supplements) manufacturing has given the members of SHG an employment. The members daily engaged in Ready To Eat (nutrition dietary supplements) manufacturing and in return they get Rs.20/- per hour. Thus members of the SHG is earning their salary approximately Rs.3000/- to Rs. 4000/- per month.

“Chhattisgarh, State Election Commission has been established on 28th September 2002. After 73rd and 74th constitutional Amendments, the responsibility of conducting free and fair elections of Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies in the state has been vested in the State Election commission under article 243K and 243ZA of the Constitution of India”ⁱⁱ. Thus, in the last case study it illustrated that a member of the SHG contested for the post of Sarpanch during January-February 2015 for Gudlu Gram Pachayat of Bagicha block of Jashpur; Chhattisgarh. With the help and support of SHG members could stand firm in the election and she won successively. Thus the result of women SHG raised the confidence, will power to fight for the same during election. Thus the members of the SHG entered into the process of planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the developmental projects and schemes to community in the future.

It is observed that the when women gets resources to overcome the binding chains, they came out of the culture of silence and they move far ahead in achieving the hierarchy of needs which consequently improves their quality of life at personal and community level. Partnership with women has substantially influenced the gender relations in the villages and power dynamics between male and female. Also partnership has given legitimacy of the role and positions of women in public sphere including social, economic and political realms.

Conclusion

The partnership of women in exhorting to developmental process through micro, mezzo and macro level is all inclusive in nature. Thus the SHG took initiative in small scale entrepreneurship at micro level primarily to alleviate poverty among their families. Later it took a shape of economic empowerment and opened and petty shop and took part in Ready to Eat (nutrition dietary supplements) manufacturing at a larger level so as to say mezzo level of their skills and capacity and lastly realizing the need of partnership in developmental process now interestingly seeking collaboration with the stakeholders including SHGs to planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the projects / programmes or schemes for their development contesting for Panchayat election and ruling the community with the objective to meet the quality of life in the well-being approach method.

End Notes

ⁱ Women SHGs Now Handle ‘Ready To Eat’ Meal for Anganwadis.

<http://mail.dailypioneer.com/stateeditions/raipur/womenshgsnowhandlereadytoeatmealforanganwadi.s.html> Retrieved on Friday, 06 February 2015 16:41:27.

ⁱⁱ <http://cgsec.gov.in> Retrieved on Friday, 06 February 2016 14:06.

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