

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION (With special Reference to Pudhu Vaazhvu Project in Tamilnadu)



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Abstract:-This study aims to develop a poverty reduction strategy for Tamil Nadu. Eradication of poverty in India is generally only considered to be a long-term goal. Poverty alleviation is expected to make better progress in the next 50 years than in the past, as a trickle-down effect of the growing middle class. Increasing stress on education, reservation of seats in government jobs and the increasing empowerment of women and the economically weaker sections of society, are also expected to contribute to the alleviation of poverty. It is incorrect to say that all poverty reduction programmes have failed. The growth of the middle class indicates that economic prosperity has indeed been very impressive in India, but the distribution of wealth is not at all even. Tamil Nadu faces the longer-term challenge of reform for accelerating economic growth and reducing poverty. Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in recent times. The economic empowerment of women is being regarded these days as a sine-quo-non of progress for a country; hence the issue of economic empowerment of women is of paramount importance to political thinkers, social scientist and reformer. The self help groups (SHGs) have paved the way for economic independence of rural women. This article deals with empowerment of women through entrepreneurship development with special reference to pudhu vaazhvu project in Tamilnadu.

Keywords: Women Empowerment , Entrepreneurial Development , Poverty Alleviation .

INTRODUCTION

Tamilnadu is considered as one of the well-developed States in the country. It has recorded a robust growth all through and has also attracted considerable level of foreign investments. Industries have prospered and the service sector is booming. Apart from the booming economy, the state also has an impressive record in terms of social sector achievements. It is the first state in the country that has successfully fed the school children for over a decade. Public Distribution System is one among the best in the country and so on and so forth. However, the state is the poorest among its neighbors in South India. It has a large population suffering below the poverty line. Though it has managed to reduce the number of poor people over time, it still has a considerable number of poor. The Conventional notion that the growth in the economy powered by secondary and tertiary sector would generate sufficient employment so as to absorb the surplus labour from the primary sector has not happened in the state like many other states in the country. While the conventional indicators of economic growth like the rate of growth of the economy suggests that it has maintained a scorching pace, the growth process has completely left behind a vast majority of its population. To add to their woes, the primary sector, the largest employer of the rural people and the provider of livelihood, has either stagnated or declined over time. There are very many reasons for such a decline and stagnation. Such a poor performance of the primary sector has a direct bearing on the livelihood of the people.

Reduction in rural poverty in Tamil Nadu accelerated after 1983. During the period from 1983 to 2004-05, rural poverty head count ratio in Tamil Nadu fell by nearly 30 percentage points whereas the corresponding reduction in the all-India rural head count ratio was only 17 percentage points.

Poverty is viewed not only in terms of lack of adequate income or consumption, but as a state of deprivation covering socio-economic aspects of life. The use of a single indicator for "Poor" is inadequate to capture the conditions of poverty.

It is a well known fact that poverty reduction requires sustainable economic growth. Almost everyone agrees that poverty alleviation should be the paramount goal of development assistance. This points out the implicit trade-offs between tackling current and future poverty, between helping as many poor people as possible versus focusing on those in chronic poverty, and between measures that tackle the causes of poverty and those which deal with the symptoms. In fact, notes the author, "poverty reduction actually encompasses many goals, some of which are contradictory." If donor agencies do not explicitly recognize and account for these differences at the outset – unless it's clear what measure for poverty reduction is going to be employed – confusion and disillusionment can and does ensue. The Millennium Development Goal of "halving poverty" is a case in point. The primary standard by which progress is measured is the percentage of the population below the World Bank's poverty line of \$1.25/day. But that is a static measure – it says nothing about further poverty reduction over time. A large-scale redistribution effort could, theoretically, help countries meet the goal without really laying the conditions for long-term poverty alleviation. The author observes a strong institutional preference among donors (and their political leadership) for describing development assistance as a temporary measure aimed at catalyzing economic growth. This leads to pressure to design programs which can be presented as "transformational" or "financially sustainable" within a relatively short time horizon. Even the U.K.'s focus on poverty alleviation as the overarching goal for development assistance and fairly precise definition of terms masks a complex set of choices and trade-offs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Evidence from studying the 'financial diaries' of poor people reinforces the idea that the poor have complex financial behaviors, and utilize "portfolio" of financial tools to meet their needs (Collins et al 2009). Unlike traditional 'snapshot' studies of the poor, which tend to underestimate cash flows in a household over a period of time, this seminal research demonstrates how the poor cope with the "triple whammy" of irregular, unpredictable incomes and a lack of appropriate financial instruments to manage uncertain cash flows. The poor take advantage of an array of informal (e.g. family, moneylenders, etc.) Semi-formal (e.g. savings clubs, burial societies, etc.) and formal (e.g. microfinance) financial tools to meet their needs. This study echoed findings of other research that determined that the poor need access to microcredit for needs that extend far beyond microenterprises. They need access to "accelerators" such as loans that bring in cash immediately and "accumulators" such as savings clubs that bring in money over a period of time (Collins et al 2009).

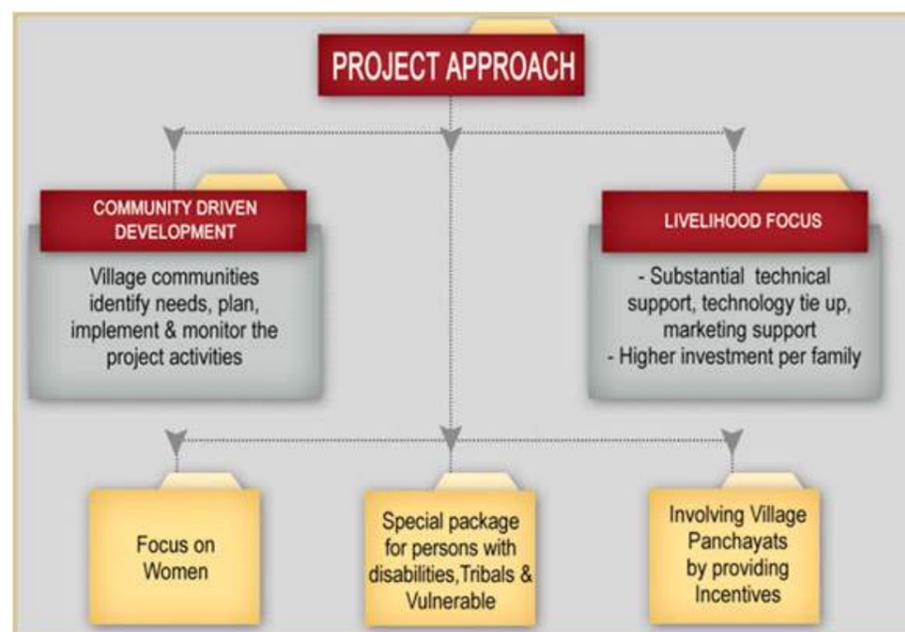
Schmitz (1989) presents a model in which entrepreneurial activity is a key determinant of productivity growth. In his model Schmitz focuses in particular on the role of imitative activities of entrepreneurs in economic growth. This focus is motivated by the growth experience of numerous

economies, suggesting that it is less the innovating entrepreneur la Schumpeter than the imitating entrepreneur who contributes to growth. Imitating entrepreneurs are entrepreneurs who imitate existing activities and put them into practice, thereby often creating knowledge through a process that Schmitz characterizes as learning by implementing.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN PUDHU VAAZHUVU PROJECT

Pudhu Vaazhvu Project is an empowerment and poverty alleviation project implemented by the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj department of Government of Tamilnadu with World Bank assistance. The project is implemented over a 6 year period extended up to September 2014 at an outlay of Rs 717 crores. The Project covers 2509 village panchayats in 70 Backward Blocks in 16 districts. Though the project was launched in November 2005, effective implementation has commenced only from August 2006. Now with additional financing, the project has expanded its operations to 10 more addition districts covers 1661 VPs in 50 backward blocks for a period of 3 years till September 2014 with an outlay of Rs.950 crores.

The target population of this Project is the poor households, the most vulnerable sections including the physically challenged and the marginalized communities. The project follows the CDD approach wherein village communities identify their own needs, design and plan interventions and implement and monitor them by adopting key nonnegotiable principles of the project. There is a strong sense of ownership of the project among the community members.



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT:

This project is mainly concentrated in the women empowerment with economically. To improve the micro finance in the self half group and reduce the poverty in rural area of Tamilnadu. Main objective of this project to empower the poor by improving their livelihoods and reducing poverty by Developing, strengthening pro-poor local institutions at the village level. Building the skills and capacities of the poor. Enhancing their livelihoods by financing demand driven sub project investments. The rural women to start the business and improve the financial status to help this project.

Entrepreneurship Development Training Programme for Women

EDP training is conducted by Pudhu Vaazhvu Project to expose the SHG women to various business opportunities and to motivate them to start economic activities. by Pudhu Vaazhvu Project Women's Entrepreneurship Development programme is part of the Small Enterprise Development Programme by Pudhu Vaazhvu Project works on enhancing economic opportunities for women by carrying out affirmative action's in support of women starting, formalizing and growing their enterprises, and by mainstreaming gender equality issues into by Pudhu Vaazhvu Project work in enterprise development.

The Pudhu Vaazhvu Project approach is threefold, working with governments, employers' organizations, trade unions, and local community-based organizations to: create an enabling environment for WED that generates quality jobs; build institutional capacity in WED; and development of tools and support services for women entrepreneurs. It does so both through targeted approaches and gender mainstreaming, with a clear objective to contribute towards gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

Institutional Building

Developing Pro-poor, autonomous and accountable institutions with target people's representation to implement the project at the village level. The Project forms Community Based Organisations like VPRCs, SACs, SHGs, PLFs, EAFs from among the poor.

The Village Poverty Reduction Committee (VPRC)

The Village Poverty Reduction Committee (VPRC) is a community organisation formed under the project predominantly with the representatives of the target population. Each hamlet of the Panchayat is represented by a woman SGH member from the target population. A PLF office bearer a representative of the differently abled, 2 member from youth are also nominated to VPRC by Grama Sabha. The Village Panchayat is the EX-officio Chairperson of the VPRC.

Social Audit Committee (SAC)

Social Audit Committee(SAC) is constituted by Grama Sabha which plays the role of guardian of project principles during the project principles during project implementation. The committee of accountable to Grama Sabha and reports to Grama Sabha on regular basis.

Self Help Groups(SHG)

Self Help Groups (SHG) the left out target poor, and persons with disability are formed into self help groups with 10-20 in a group or 5 - 10 in the case of persons with disabilities. The Members in the SHG are given training, to build their capacities and encouraged to save money. They are then linked to banks, Government Schemes and access funds to start livelihood activities. Sufficient hand holding support is given to the SHGs and are monitored by CSTs (Community SGH trainers) who have been developed by the project

Panchayat Level Federation (PLF)

All SHGs in a Village Panchayat form a federation. The Panchayat level Federation of SHGs is a forum to share their experience and to voice their problems. PLFs provide sustainability and self reliance to the SHGs.

Advantages of Entrepreneurship among Rural Women

Empowering women particularly rural women is a challenge. Micro enterprises in rural area can help to meet these challenges. Micro – enterprises not only enhance national productivity, generate employment but also help to develop economic independence, personal and social capabilities among rural women. Following are some of the personal and social capabilities, which were developed as result of taking up enterprise among rural women.

Economic Empowerment
Improved Standard of living
Self Confidence
Enhance awareness
Sense of achievement
Increased social interaction
Engaged in political activities
Increased participation level in gram sabha meeting
Improvement in solving problems related to women community
Decision making capacity in family and community

CONCLUSION

This scheme supported women below the poverty line and it provides financial assistance to them to become as best business women in the field of entrepreneur. Women entrepreneurship is both about women's position in society and about the role of entrepreneurship in the same society. This will motivate other rural women to engage in micro entrepreneurship with the right assistance and they can strengthen their capacities besides adding to the family income and national productivity. An entrepreneurial economy, whether on the national, regional or community level, differs significantly from a non-entrepreneurial economy in many respects, not only by its economic structure and its economic vigorousness, but also by the social vitality and quality of life which it offers with a consequent attractiveness to people. Economic structure is very dynamic and extremely competitive due to the rapid creation of new firms and the exit of 'old' stagnant and declining firms. This is why entrepreneurship is considered to be a prime mover in development and why nations, regions and communities that actively promote entrepreneurship development, demonstrate much higher growth rates and consequently higher levels of development than nations, regions and communities whose institutions, politics and culture hinders entrepreneurship.\

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