



Article : Women Empowerment and Rural Development : Policies and Programmes in Gulbarga District

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Abstract:

In general, the paper described rural development, self-employment and women empowerment programmes initiated by the Central and the State Government. Of course, these schemes, policies and programmes are executed effectively, as the statistics revealed. But it is noted that still major portion of the rural population, especially women are unaware about these policies and programmes. Hence the present study was conducted to look into the awareness and knowledge of rural women on these women empowerment, employment and rural development policies. The paper is concluded with the remarks that the voluntary organizations and Non-Government Organization have to increase awareness among the rural women about the government policies.

Introduction:

Women comprise nearly half of the national population of a country. Of Course, the

Globalization provided opportunities of education and employment to urban women and helped them to develop and possess all the rights equally with men. But the problem is that the women in rural areas are still backward in education, social status, economic background, political matters, etc. Hence, the development of the country is inescapably

linked with the status of development of rural women. Economic empowerment is one approach to enable women to realize their inherent knowledge, skills and competences for creation of small business enterprises. There are shining examples

from the developing countries to illustrate women entrepreneurs who started small and grew to large enterprises.

Women are considered as a focal point and the unifying force in the family. While their contribution to the family an society is considerable, they are subjected to

numerous constraint undermining their potentials. They receive only small share in development opportunities and are often excluded from education, better jobs, participation in political system and better health care, decision making, etc. Besides, they suffer from physiological, physiological, social and cultural barriers, which hinder their empowerment. In rural areas, women are preoccupied with mostly household work-

including the bearing and rearing of children. Accordingly, the opportunities for improving their conditions are limited. The Government of India and state governments have already been formulated social welfare, women empowerment and rural development policies for the betterment of women, backward classes and vulnerable groups. These schemes are discussed as under.

Welfare Schemes of Government:

Following are a few Government Schemes, which aimed at empowerment of women, social welfare and rural development in different aspects:

1.Integrated development programme (IRDP)

Various kinds of agencies are carrying on the task of providing rural employment. They include, Employment Guarantee Scheme, Food for Work Programme, small Farmers Development Agency, Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers, Drought prone Areas Development Proramme, Desert Development Programme, Command Area Development Programme, etc. The

Sixth plan (1980-85) proposed that such multiplicity of programmes for the rural poor operated through a multiplicity of agencies should be ended and replaced by one single integrated programme operative throughout the country. This programme was named the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), which was initiated on 2nd October 1980 in all the 5011 blocks in India. The IRDP aims at providing self employment opportunities to the rural poor through assistance in the form of subsidy and bank credit to enable them acquire productive assets and appropriate skills to cross the poverty line.

2. Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWRCA)

DWRCA is a sub-scheme of IRDP and was started in 1982-83 on a pilot basis in

50 districts but has now been extended to all districts of the country. The basic objective of the programme is to provide income generating skills and activities to poor women in rural areas, thereby improving their economic status.

3. Training of Rural Youth for self-Employment (TRYSEM):

TRYSEM is centrally sponsored scheme. It started functioning since 15th August 1979. It aimed at providing basic technical and entrepreneurial skills to the rural youth from families below the poverty line to enable them to take up self-employment in the broad fields of agriculture and allied sectors, industries, services and business activities.

4. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY):

On 28th April 1989, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi launched the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and the primary objective which is general of gainful employment for the unemployed and underemployed, men and women in the rural areas.

5. Professional women's Development Network (PWDN):

PWDN was established in 1992 in order to offer a comprehensive service of women's development and training to both employers and individuals in areas of consultancy, research training, development, monitoring and such other training programmes.

6. Karnataka Mahila Abhivarudhi Yojne (KMAY):

Karnataka has been the first states in the country to introduce a scheme of intersectoral allocations for women. The strategy of the scheme is to earmark 1/3rd of resources for women in individual beneficiary oriented schemes and labour intensive schemes of the various Department of the Government. The Department of Women and Child Development launched Karnataka Mahila Abhivrudhi Yojne during 1995-96 to

Ensure gender equality and to integrate women in the mainstream of development. It was a landmark Government Order as it was for the first time that a conscious and positive attempt was made by Government to address gender issues.

7. Streeshkti Programme:

Project Stree Shakti is an attempt of the Government of N.C.T. of Delhi to empower women, especially those belonging to the economically weaker section of the society. This project is launched in Karnataka by Shri. S.M Krishna, Former Chief Minister of Karnataka in 2001. It is an integrated capacity building project through 'Partnership' with NGOs to strengthen the ability of women to participate equally in the mainstream of society. The project aimed mainly on the improvement of the women's health, education income generation of the rural women through the development of self-help Groups.

8. NREGA:

The National Employment Guarantee Act was notified on 7th September, 2005, aims at enhancing live hood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a

financial year to every household whose adult member's volunteers to do unskilled manual work.

The NREGA Act which came into existence on Feb 2,2006 was initially implemented into 200 districts of the country in the I Phase. In the II Phase beginning 2007-08, it was further extended to 130 more districts for implementation. From April 2008, it extended across the country.

Over the three years since it became operational, NREGA (2005) has had a positive impact on the lives of millions of people across the poorest district in the country. In particular, it holds the powerful prospect of bringing major changes in the lives of women. It is rechristened as MAHATHMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS) on the occasion of 140th Birth of Mahatma Gandhi.

9.Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY):

Launched in December 2000 as a 100 percent CSS, PMGSY aims to provide all wearer connectivity to all the eligible unconnected rural habitations. Bharat Nirman emerges connectivity by 2009 to all the habitations with a population of 1000 or more in the plains of 500 or more in the hilly, desert and tribal areas.

10. Indira Awas Yojana (IAY):

Indira Awas Yojana was implemented since 1985-86 under the Rural Landless

Employment Guarantee Scheme (RLEGP).Indira Awas Yojana aims to provide dwelling units free of cost – sharing basis in the rates of 75:25 between the Center and the States.

11. Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY):

SGSY, launched in april 1999 after restructuring the integrated Rural Development Programme and allied schemes, is the only self-employment programme for the

rural poor. The objective is to bring the self-employed above the poverty line by providing them income-generating assets through bank credit and Government subsidy.

12.Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)

SGRY launched on September 25, 2001 to provide additional wage employment in the rural areas, has cash and food grains component and the Centre bears 75 percent and 100 percent of the cost of the two with the balance borne by the States/Union Territories.

13.National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP):

The NFFWP Was launched as a CSS in November 2004 in the 150 most backward districts to generate additional supplementary wage employment with food security. States receive food grains under NFFWP free of cost. The focus of the programme is on works relating to water conservation, drought proofing (including drainage in waterlogged areas and connectivity in terms of all- weather roads.

14. Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY):

In December 1997, the Urban Self-Employment Programme (USEP) and the Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP), Which are the two special components of SJSRY, substitute for various programmes operated earlier for urban poverty alleviation. The SJSRY is founded on a 75:25 basis between the Center and States.

15. Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY):

VAMBAY launched in December 2001 facilitates the construction and upgradation of dwelling units for the slum dwellers and provides a healthy enabling urban environment through community toilets under Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, a component of the balance provided by the State Government.

As discussed above, there are innumerable social welfare policies were formulated

for the empowerment of women and rural employment and development. But it is noted that due to lack of awareness, these programmes and policies are not popular among the rural people especially rural women. The present study was conducted to assess the awareness of rural women on social welfare and rural development programmes in Gulbarga district.

Objectives:

The present study was made:

1. To assess the awareness of rural women empowerment, social welfare and rural development policies;
2. To know whether these schemes are beneficial to the rural people; and
3. To collect the feedback from the rural women on the social welfare programmes.

Methodology:

As discussed above, the present study was made in rural areas of Gulbarga district. It

is noted that majority of the rural development programmes are aimed at women empowerment. Hence, rural women were selected to collect the information. The information is collected through interview schedule. As the geographical territory of Gulbarga district is vast to cover, 12 villages are covered from Gulbarga taluka. Further, 120 rural women, who are engaged in informal sector employment, members of self-help groups are selected. The collected data is tabulated and discussed as under.

Gulbarga District:

Gulbarga is not only the headquarters of the district but also division, comprising the six district of Bidar, Gulbarga Yadgir, Koppal, Raichur and Bellary and both the district and the division are called by its name. The district is situated in the northern part of Karnataka state. Among the three district of the former Hyderabad Karataka area, which after reorganization of States in 1956, formed part of Mysore state, Gulbarga occupies central place with Bidar to its north and Raichur to its south. The district has total area of 61674 Sq. Kms. This constitutes 5.93% of the area of the state. Gulbarga District has been experiencing rapid growth of population since 1951. The decimal growth rate has increased from 14.5 percent to 15.3 percent between 1951-61 to 24.2 percent between 1981 to 1991 and has slightly come down to 21 percent between 1999-2001. The population of the district as per 2001 census is 31,30,922 of which male population is 15, 92,789 and female population is 15, 38,133 The sex ratio

is 966 per 1000 male persons. This is slightly above the state average of 965 and well above the national average of 933.72% of the population lives in rural areas. The population is spread over the geographical area and the density of population is 192 per Sq.km.

Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion of Primary Data:

The collected data was analyzed, interpreted and discussed as under.

1. Knowledge about Self-employment and Women Empowerment Schemes:

There are many self-employment schemes for both men and women and also women empowerment schemes, which helped both men and women in rural areas to engage themselves in active income generation activities. The awareness of respondents on self-employment and women employment schemes was collected and presented in the following table.

Table No.1 Knowledge about Self-employment and Women Empowerment Scheme

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
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Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarazgar Yojana (SGSY)	94	78.33
Indira Awas Yojana (IAY)	47	39.17
Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana	45	37.50
Ashraya Yojana	66	55.00
Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana(PMRY)	34	28.33
Navagram Yojana	28	23.33
Kuligagi Kalu Yojana	91	75.83
Stree Shakti Yojana	114	95.00
National Rural Employee Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)	21	17.50
Others	--	--
Total	120	100

As the respondents are rural women, as such, Stree Shakti Yojana is the most popular and NREGS is a less popular scheme.

2. Benfit Gained from Self-Employment and Women Empowerment Schemes:

After collecting information on awareness on the rural development, self – employment and women empowerment schemes, the respondents were asked on whether

They have got benefit from these schemes. The collected information is tabulated as under.

Table No. 2 Benefit from Self-employment and women Empowerment Scheme

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarazgar Yojana (SGSY)	61	50.83
Indira Awas Yojana (IAY)	33	27.50
Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana	29	24.16
Ashraya Yojana	48	40.00
Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana(PMRY)	34	28.33

Navagram Yojana	21	17.50
Kuligagi Kalu Yojana	72	60.00
Stree Shakti Yojana	114	95.00
National Rural Employee Guarantee Scheme (NGEGS)	14	11.67
Others	--	--
Total	120	100

As discussed above, Stree Shakti Yojana is very beneficial to all women and NREGS is less popular scheme.

3. Greater and Regular Benefit to Rural People from Government Employment Schemes:

It was discussed above that majority of the employment schemes of the government are known to the rural women covered under the present study. Further, even though there are many schemes, there is need to know on whether the rural people are really benefited from these schemes or not. On a question to respondents about whether they feel that is greater and regular benefit to rural people from these government schemes, the collected responses are tabulated as under.

Table No.3 Greater and Regular Benefit to Rural Women
From Government Employment Schemes

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	79	65.83
No	41	34.17
Total	120	100

It is surprising to note that even though there are innumerable number of schemes aiming towards rural development, employment and rural women empowerment, more

Then one third of the respondents have not agreed that there are no regular and greater benefits from these schemes.

4. Increase in income due to Utilization of SGSY:

Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) is basically aims to provide employment to rural youth both male and females. Now most of the villages in Karnataka state have benefited from this scheme. As such it was asked to the respondents that whether there is increase in income due to utilization of SGSY in their villages and the collected information is shown as under.

Table No. 4. Increase in Income due to Utilization of SGSY

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Fully Agreed	31	25.83
Agreed to Greater Extent	52	43.33
Not Agreed	37	30.33
Total	120	100

It is emphasized that to a greater extent or full extent the Swarna Jayanti Gramswarojgar Yojana is Successful in achieving its aims.

5. Government is Formulating Policies to solve problems of Rural Areas and Rural Women:

Of course, government formulated many policies and schemes to promote employment of the rural people in general and rural women in particular. But still many of the women in rural areas are not aware about these programmes and schemes. Being pachayat members, whether the respondents agreed to that

government is formulating policies to solve problems of rural areas in general and rural women in particular was shown as under.

Table NO. 5 Government is Formulating Policies to solve
Problems of Rural Areas and Rural Women

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	76	63.33
No	31	25.83
Don't know/Can't Say	13	10.83
Total	120	100

It is satisfactory to note that as agreed by majority of the respondents, government is formulating policies to solve the problems of rural areas and rural women.

Suggestions:

Following suggestions may be given from the present study.

- Need to increase awareness about self-employment, rural development and women empowerment programmes among rural women.
- It is suggested to increase the financial outlay for encouraging employment opportunities in rural areas.
- It is highly recommended to encourage the small scale and cottage industries in the rural areas for the betterment and welfare of rural women.

Conclusion:

Due to the globalization the rural areas are with unemployed people. As such there was employment –gap among the rural people, as many of the small scale

industries, cottage industries and handicrafts are ended. Further, even though women constitute half of the population, they have no adequate representation in education and employment, especially in rural areas. The rural development, women empowerment and employment generation policies discussed above are of immense help for the rural women so as to start income generating activities independently or give at least 100 days of employment for the rural women. But it is emphasized that still there is no or less awareness about the government policies among the rural people and particularly among rural women. Hence, the voluntary organization and Non-Governmental Organizations have to act to increase the awareness among the rural women on the government policies.

3.5. Reference:

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