

Research Paper



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DERIVING RELATIVE WORTH OF PARAMETERS OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Women's Economic empowerment is one of the big problems in Indian economic system because overall development cannot be achieved unless and until women's have their equal right and place in every sphere in the society. Women population comprises major segment in Indian population there development issue is the major for govt. and country as a whole. Govt has to look after each and everything possible ways and means to change their present vulnerability. With the help of different poverty eradication programme/rural development programme such as IRDP, NREP, JRY, NSAP etc but these all are not so fruitful. Women's Economic empowerment is one of the most important parameters of the overall empowerment which includes social, psychological and political aspects of empowerment. Since the Indian government has taken many initiatives to remove the poverty and vulnerability for women by implementing many programme and schemes but all are in vein. One such programme i.e. SHG-Bank linkage programme is still functioning till today. So through this scheme the economic empowerment of rural people is taking place or not it is to be determining because many research was done on this scheme.

KEY WORDS: Relative Worth, Economic Empowerment, SHG, and Discourse Analysis

INTRODUCTION

The extent of empowerment of women in the national hierarchy is determined largely by three factors: their economic, social and political identity. These factors are deeply intertwined and interlinked with many cross cutting linkages. However, if the efforts in even one dimension remain absent or weak, outcomes generated by the other components are adversely affected. Women can be truly empowered only when the three factors are simultaneously addressed and made compatible with each other. In other words, for holistic empowerment of women to happen, economic, social and political aspects impacting women's life must converge effectively.

It is a well-acknowledged fact that the thrust on social and human development is an important plank of next generation policy reforms. The efforts are being complemented by a steep jump in budgetary outlays for social sectors, along with dedicated initiatives for removing poverty and increasing employment. Participation of women in productive activities reduces poverty, enhances economic growth and hence benefits society at large.

Women contribution to the economy remains significantly invisible in national accounts. Although a certain degree of statistical invisibility of women in the economy is a global phenomenon, it is particularly predominant in India and other South Asian nations due to their orthodox socio-cultural milieu. The United Nations Statistical Division has been active in extending the production boundary of the of the Systems of National Accounts (SNA), 1993 and this has led to the national accounting system as satellite accounts. This extended production boundary of SNA, 1993 provides a better understanding of women's contribution to the economy.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Different organizations, researchers, institutions and people working in different institution studied SHGs from different angles, perspective and agenda. A lot of research persuaded to access the socio-economic condition of women and other aspects. All the studies basically deal with the socio-economic empowerment of rural women and no such studies deal with the economic empowerment of women after taking into consideration the parameters of economic empowerment. So, the thrust area of this study is to find out



the various parameters of economic empowerment and to measure their impact on economic upliftment and the long term sustainability of the same with the help of identified Parameters of economic empowerment. For proper understanding of the term economic empowerment there must be some specific studies on economic empowerment the aspects like women empowerment and empowerment alone may not be sufficient for people/researcher to understand the economic aspects and position of the rural women. Not to say that the study on economic empowerment is not done but very rare. To find out the relative worth of parameters of economic empowerment of women is not so easy, so the thrust area of this study to identify the relative worth of parameters of economic empowerment from various national and international study.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To Identify the Parameters of Economic Empowerment.
- To Study the Relative worth of Identified Parameters Specific to Women's Economic Empowerment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to attain the objectives of the study thorough review of related literature was carried out to identify the various parameters of economic empowerment. The next exercise, therefore, was to find out the relative worth of identified parameters from national and international literature which are related with economic empowerment. For this purpose some scores will be assigned to the parameters of economic empowerment based on related literature and based on this, relative worth will be measured. The third step is to eliminate those parameters which were not related to economic aspects of empowerment. This exercise though was not very difficult yet time consuming.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

It is neither possible, nor desirable for a researcher to cover the whole related literature of economic empowerment of national and international level by the study in a particular time frame and the cost involvement in collecting literature is also too high.

IDENTIFICATION OF PARAMETERS OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

On the basis of literature review we could identify some of the parameters of economic empowerment listed below:

1. Savings
2. Income generation
3. Wealth creation
4. Thrift (diversification towards higher income activities).
5. Reducing burden of debt
6. Repayment of loan
7. Investment in skill development
8. Investment in health protection.
9. Investment in education
10. Insurance
11. Freedom to make financial decision
12. Freedom to participate in household decision making
13. Contribution to household income.
14. Access to resources.
15. Ownership of assets.
16. Access to professional training and higher education,
17. Employment.
18. Work division in household.
19. Access to market.
20. Making small and large purchases.

Table Showing Relative Worth of Parameters of Economic Empowerment

PARAMETERS OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT	SCHOLARS	NUMBER OF REFERENCES	RANKING
1. SAVINGS	Girija 1995, Srinivasa 1996, Zaman H 1999, Kumaran 1997, Puhazhendi and Jayaraman 1999, Sahoo R K 2006, Ghosh Madusudan 2012, Puhazhendi and Satyasai 2000, Puhazhendi V and Badatya K C 2002, Manimikalai & Rajeswari 2000, Yamuna 2007, Sinha 2008, Barman et al 2009, Borbora and Mahanta 2008, Reji EM 2010, Chatterjee T B 2009	16	III
2. INCOME GENERATION	Kumaran 1997, Sahoo BK 2000, Meyer 2001, Sahoo R K 2006, Ghosh Madusudan 2012, Puhazhendi V and Badatya K C 2002, Sarangi 2007, NCAER 2008, Samanta 2009, Manimikalai & Rajeswari 2001, Sharma 2001, Prem chander & Venguri 2007, Yamuna 2007, Devi et al 2007, Sinha 2008, Borbora and Mahanta 2008, Reji EM 2011, Chatterjee T B 2009	18	I
3. WEALTH CREATION	Sahoo BK 2000, Ghosh Madusudan 2012, Puhazhendi and Satyasai 2000, Puhazhendi V and Badatya K C 2002, Pitt & Khandkar 1998, BK Singh 2006.	05	IX
4. THRIFT	Sahoo R K 2006	01	XIII
5. REDUCING BURDEN OF DEBT	Ghosh Madusudan 2012, Gaonkar 2001, Barman et al 2009	03	XI
6. REPAYMENT LOAN	Girija 1995, Kumaran 1997, Puhazhendi and Jayaraman 1999, Ghosh Madusudan 2012, Reji EM 2010	05	IX
7. INVESTMENT IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT	MYRADA 2002, Mayoux 2000, B K Singh 2006, Human Development Report 1995	04	X

8. INVESTMENT IN HEALTH PROTECTION	Pitt &Khandkar 1998, Manimikalai & Rajeswari 2001, Kabeer 2001, Prem chander &Venguri 2007, Yamuna 2007 Kumar 2009, Mehta et al 2011, Deininger & Liu 2009	08	VII
9. INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION	Roy &Niranjan 2004, Sen 1999, Malhotra, Schuler & Boender 2002, Zaman H 1999, Pitt &Khandkar 1998, Manimikalai & Rajeswari 2001, Prem chander &Venguri 2007, Kumar 2009,Choudhury 2008, Soroushmer et al 2008, Banerjee 2009	12	V
10. INSURANCE	Girija 1995, Zaman H 1999.	02	XII
11. FREEDOM TO MAKE FINANCIAL DECISION	Roy &Niranjan 2004, Manimikalai & Rajeswari 2001, Prem chander &Venguri 2007, Kumar 2009,Choudhury 2008, Soroushmer et al 2012, Banerjee 2009, Kishore 2008, Kabeer 2001,UNDP 2008, Tornqvist & Schmitz 2000, Golla et al 2011, Francnberg & Thomas 2001, Hashemi et al 1996.	15	IV
12. FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKING	Okaley 2001,Parveen & Leonhauser 2004, Roy &Niranjan 2004, Sen 1999, Kishore 2008 ,MYRADA 2002, Kabeer 2001, Manimikalai & Rajeswari 2001, Prem chander &Venguri 2007, Kumar 2009,Banerjee 2009, Soroushmehr et al. 2012, Reji EM 2011, UDR 1995, Acharya & Bennett 1983, Choudhury 2008.	16	VI
13. CONTRIBUTION TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Parveen & Leonhauser 2004, Sen 1999, Reji EM 2011, MYRADA 2002, Chatterjee TB 2009.	05	IX
14. ACCESS TO RESOURCES	Roy &Niranjan 2004, Sen 1999, Malhotra, Schuler & Boender 2002, Zaman H 1999, Mayoux 2000, B K singh 2006, Reji EM 2010, Tornqvist & Schmitz 2000,Acharya & Bennett 1983.	09	VI
15. OWNERSHIP OF ASSETS	Parveen & Leonhauser 2004, Sen 1999.	02	XII
16. ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION	Sen 1999, MYRADA 2002,Sahoo RK 2006, Mayoux 2000, B K singh 2006, Human Development Report 995.	06	VIII
17. EMPLOYMENT	Roy &Niranjan 2004, Sen 1999,Kishore 2008,Eyben,kabeer & Cornwells 2008, Malhotra, Schuler & Boender 2002, Puhazendi and Satyasai 2000, Manimikalai & Rajeswari 2001,Sharma 2001, Prem chander &Venguri 2007, Yamuna 2007,Devi et al 2007,Borbora and Mahanta 2008, Gladis 2008,Kabeer &Noponen 2005, Samanta 2009,Afrane 2002,Nath Sharma et al 2012,Chatterjee TB 2009.	18	I
18. WORK DIVISION IN HOUSEHOLD	Okaley 2001, Sen 1999.	02	XII
19. ACCESS TO MARKET	Eyben,kabeer & Cornwells 2008, Malhotra, Schuler & Boender 2002, Manimikalai & Rajeswari 2001,Sharma 2001, Prem chander &Venguri 2007, Yamuna 2007,Kumar 2009, Mehta et al 2011, World Bank 2006, Tornqvist & Schmitz 2000,Acharya & Bennett 1983,Ackerly 1993	12	V
20.MAKING SMALL AND LARGE PURCHASE	Schular &Hashemi 1994	01	XII

This table consists parameters of economic empowerment and their relative worth based on extensive literature review on this topic. The scholars emphasis on the parameters of economic empowerment and number of references included in these studies are used to develop the ranking of parameters relating to economic empowerment.

DISCUSSION

The top five parameters identified on the basis of the ranking given in the table above are: income generations, employment, saving, freedom to make financial decision and

access to market and investment in education. It appears normal and enforcing as theories of economic development have narrated and advocated the same list of parameters in their models. However the bottom five parameters shown in the table are bit surprising when the list includes the parameters namely wealth creation, reducing debt burden, thrift and insurance are surprising because the literature on economic empowerment because these are crucial elements of reducing financial dependency and economic empowerment.

On deeper analysis of the table it was found that, majority of the studies invariably examined economic empowerment and highlighted others parameters above the just mentioned bottom four parameters. However economic logic and empowerment imperatives demands these bottom four parameters as important top five parameters mentioned in the same table which can be listed in studies devoted to economic empowerment of the rural people if so warranted.

CONCLUSION

If empowerment encompasses independence as the most vivid sign of empowerment then anything that sustained or increase dependency should be seen as detrimental to the goal of empowerment. Conversely anything adds independency and sustainability of this independency must foster empowerment.

In this light four bottom parameters namely wealth creation, reducing debt burden, thrift and insurance definitely helps to move on economic and financial independency. Scale must go to join top five parameters of economic empowerment subject to verification by some empirical research to support this hypothesis.

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