
FEMPOWERMENT OF BEEDI WORKERS THROUGH PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

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ABSTRACT

*“In order to awaken the people it is the women who have to be awakened.
Once she is on move, the family moves, the village moves and the nation move”.*

Pandit Nehru

All round development and harmonious growth of a nation also happens only when women are considered as equal partners in progress with men. In any society the status of women is an indicator of the level of its development. In the words of Gandhiji, “A woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. Beedi work has given ample opportunity for women to work when at home without disturbing from their routine work.

Beedi Manufacturing is one of the largest informal sector activities in India in which a large number of home based women workers are employed. The labour Ministry estimates about five million workers in the Beedi industry. Unofficially, however, the trade unions and NGOs say the actual number of Beedi rollers could be much higher since most Beedi workers do not have identity cards. A rising concern is also the involvement of children, particularly girls, in the process of Beedi rolling. It appears that the home based nature of work and piece rate system of payment creates conditions for the involvement of family labour, including that of children. Thus, this paper makes an attempt to understand the livelihood of Women Beedi Workers who constitute one of the major

junk in total working population in Karnataka. Generally these women work at home attending to their routine household chores and it is shattering to know that hardly their share in economic activities goes disregarded and unrecognized. The objective of this paper is to understand the working and living conditions of the Beedi workers and the impact of the personality development programmes through Self Help Groups. The data are collected through Structured Interview Schedule in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka State. The paper also analysis the role of SHGs in empowering of women beedi workers. Thus one can understand the magnitude of participation of women in participating in the personality development programmes and income generating activities. Thus this paper makes an attempt to understand the impact of beedi work towards empowerment of women based on primary study and the result reveals that there is a positive impact.

KEY WORDS: Fempowerment, livelihood, Beedi, Impact.

INTRODUCTION

The fempowerment of women can be referred here as empowerment of women. The economic empowerment approach has relied on improving women's control over economic resources and strengthening women's economic security. Sociological empowerment often addresses members of groups that social discrimination processes have excluded from decision-making processes. Political empowerment involves the ability to analyze one's world and to recognize and mobilize for social change

The trade unions have been striving to improve the conditions of work for the Beedi women workers for many years but with varying degrees of success. Being in the informal unorganized sector, it has been very difficult to organize the workers, with the result that the majority of Beedi women work and live in extremely unable conditions. This is due to multiple subcontracting of work by the employers/contractors, often under exploitative conditions, high mobility of the Beedi rolling activities, non-issuance of identity cards to home based Beedi women, Poverty, illiteracy and lack of awareness among Beedi women.

MAJOR ISSUES RELATING TO BEEDI WORKER

- The systematic identification of beedi workers, especially home based workers, this is important if the benefits under the beedi workers welfare fund are to be availed. The access to and improvement of benefits under beedi worker welfare fund needs to be insured.
- State government is the appropriate authority for notifying the minimum wages, minimum wages are revisions are often delayed. Moreover, a significant difference exists in minimum wage rates across different states, which can trigger shifting the industry to lower wage areas.
- Arbitrary rejection of finished beedies on the ground of quality, which leads to the changing of the home based women workers.
- Issue of poor quality and inadequate quantities of raw material.
- Lack of information on the provisions of the Beedi acts among workers, the majority of them is poor and illiterate.

- Occupational health problem and inadequate health care services
- Low level of organization of the beedi workers and high dependency on the middlemen.

INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN TYING A BEEDI

Beedi tying, which begins from the childhood of a girl, continues till her death. When she is married to, a man her occupation is transferred from her parent's house to the husband's house. When she becomes pregnant, according to the law, she is not supposed to work after 7 months till her delivery, but all these are not applicable for a woman whose work is necessary for her livelihood. The continuation, working whole day, results in ill health of the woman. This also led to serious diseases like tuberculosis, blindness, backache, cancer etc. This is all about physical disabilities. The tensions, the torture in the family due to heavy load of responsibilities has resulted in mental disabilities that result in the end of a woman's life in tragedy.

Who are the Beedi Workers?

According to the survey report of International Labour Organization, which was formulated to promote the living condition of beedi rollers, has stated that about 90% of women have chosen the hazardous occupation this occupation not because the occupation is pleasant but helplessness of women forced her to embrace this occupation. This occupation enabled women to stay in her home maintaining the family affairs, looking after her children along with beedi rolling activities.

Problems faced by the women beedi workers in Mangalore:

- ✘ Lack of regular employment
- ✘ Poor quality and inadequate quantities of raw material issued by the contractors.
- ✘ Wage cuts and non-payment.
- ✘ Minimum wages, non-issuance of identity cards by contractors.
- ✘ Sexual and other harassment, health problems, lack of social security from the workers welfare Fund (BWFF) and lack of alternative means of livelihood.

The decline of the beedi industry has rendered a large number of women in this region unemployed and led to economic crises in beedi workers' households, since there are at present no occupational alternatives in this area. It is important to assist the beedi woman promoting supplemental means of employment for the beedi woman workers.

METHODOLOGY

Problem Formulation:-

Beedi worker accounts for 60% of total working population in Karnataka. Generally, they thought they were working many a times their share in economic aspects in the household goes unnoticed. Besides these are the people who are prone to various problems, like getting wages on time, allotment of work, the supply of the raw material act. So this study focuses on the problem faced by the Female Beedi worker's.

Scope of the study:

The scope of the study covers only the SHGs members of Female Beedi worker's in the area of Mangalore and Bantwal rural area.

Aim of the Study:

The aim of the study is to have a deeper understanding of the impact of SHGs, related indicators politically, economically, educationally among Female Beedi worker in different villages in Bantwal and Mangalore Rural area.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the study are;

- ⊙ To know, the demographic profile of the respondent.
- ⊙ To know, the working and living conditions of Female Beedi worker'.
- ⊙ To find out the involvement in SHGs of the Female Beedi worker's
- ⊙ To understand the impact of SHGs on the Female beedi worker's.

Universe of the Study:

The Geographical universe of the study covers in Bantwal and Mangalore rural area.

Sampling:

150 female Beedi workers from the 7 SHGs were selected randomly for the present investigation.

Inclusion Criteria:

- * Only women SHGs are selected.

- * The members who have joined before 1 year in SHGs.

Tool of data Collection

In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire and interview as the tool for data collection.

Data collection:-

The actual data was collected by the means of the questionnaire and interview from the SHGs member of female beedi workers. The data were collected during November 2013. Thus 150 respondents are taken for this study.

Data Analysis:-

The important part of the research is Data Analysis. After the collection of data, it may be analyzed by means of Editing, Coding, Tabulation and Interpretation will be done. So the data collected were later edited and tabulated using the SPSS package.

Ethical issues:-

In each and every study, there will be ethical issues. The following are some of the ethical principles followed in the study.

- The questionnaire was made as simple as possible.
- Before giving the questionnaire, the purpose was made clear and confidentiality was assured and maintained.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study are:

The chapter is a summary of the data analyzed and presented in the previous chapter. The summary of major findings is given below.

- ★ The study shows that the majority of the respondent belongs to the age group of 31-40. 36% of the respondents having the educational qualification up to 1-7th standard.
- ★ The 82% of the respondents belonged to Hindu religion. Most of the respondents (42%) from the general category. The 58% of the respondents are married.
- ★ The 84% of the respondents are engaged in Beedi work. 54% of the respondents are responding that, the husband is the head of the family.
- ★ The 40% of the respondents said that, participated in a SHGs activity due to the encouragement of their friends. The 72% of the respondents are regularly attending the SHGs meetings.
- ★ The 66% of the respondents getting the government facilities available for Beedi workers.
- ★ The majority of the respondents (42%) engaged in Beedi rolling from their childhood.
- ★ The majority (58%) of the respondents getting the Beedi work 3 days in weekly.
- ★ The 54% of the respondents replied that, their children getting the facility of Beedi scholarship.
- ★ The majority (76%) of the respondents said that, their children not willing to continue the work of Beedi rolling.
- ★ The 60% of the respondents are responding that, Beedi work do not disturb the other activities.

- ★ The majority (54%) of the respondents said that, Beedi work is the backbone of their family.

SUGGESSTION

- ✓ Building-up group cohesion and fostering decision-making and action among woman.
- ✓ Income Generating Activities or training programs are to be imparted to all the members.
- ✓ The focus should be towards the development of the collective leadership of women politically conscious women leaders.
- ✓ The SHGs meeting should be organized in weekly and all members should be participating.
- ✓ Should organize some powerful campaign on the rights of the Beedi workers.
- ✓ Creating a positive and dignified self-image and self-confidence in dealing with all matters and all relationships.
- ✓ Should be organizing some training programs for the SHGs members.

CONCLUSION

Socio-economic advancement of country can be best judged by the status and position which it can bestow on its woman. Through woman play a major role in agriculture and allied a sector, their contribution is hardly recognized. Concerted efforts will be made to ensure that benefits of training, extension, and various programs will reach them to make effective in their own area in focus are education, health, nutrition, drinking water.

From the analysis it is found that, there is a development of rural poor, particularly rural female Beedi worker's in terms of income. Generating activities like some self-employment's are large animal production, goat production, dairy cooperative ect.

It is again said that, because of SHGs it affects the development of the rural poor, implication on rural employment, implication for education, implication on the empowerment of woman implication on community development and also the implication on the position of Beedi workers.

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