



## IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN- A SELECT STUDY

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### Abstract

The study examines the empowerment of rural women through entrepreneurial activities and examines the concept of empowerment under social and economic dimensions. The study was conducted on rural self employed women of Khammam district in the state of Telangana. The sample size is 135. Descriptive research design was adopted utilizing both primary and secondary data. Statistical tools like chi-square test was applied to test the statistical significance of the proposed hypothesis. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the aspects of income, expenditure and saving levels of the respondents before and after starting the entrepreneurial activities. The implications of this findings and the importance of this study are discussed.

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship, Economic Empowerment, Social Empowerment, Rural Women.*

### Introduction

The dynamic nature of small business calls for innovative approaches to entrepreneurship training and improved management techniques. Dissemination of innovative approaches and new knowledge developed is also extremely important in furthering the cause of entrepreneurship. Economic growth and revitalization of nation are propelled best by "Entrepreneurs". Small business and entrepreneurship in India are the prime – force in generating productive employment and ensuring a more equitable distribution of income in the process of economic development of the country.

It facilitates effective mobilization of resources, like capital and skill and helps reduce poverty and unemployment. Entrepreneurs rationally combined the forces of production into a new production organization. "Schumpeter" states that entrepreneurial behavior covers the introduction of a new good, a new method of production, a new market, a new source of supply of raw materials or half manufactured goods and a new organization of any industry for creation of a monopoly position or breaking it. In this way, entrepreneur initiates necessary action to reform or revolutionize the pattern of production.

To empower women and attain economic independence, development of women entrepreneurship becomes essential. Gainful employment has been viewed as a critical entry point for women's integration in development. Women's participation in income generating activities is believed to increase their status and decision making power. With employment, women do not remain as objects of social change but become agents of it. They cease to be "consumers" of economic goods and services and turn in to "producers". They participate in social reproduction as well as reproduction of labour for the next generation.

### Significance of the Study

The study aims at assessing the aspect of women empowerment by self employment of rural women. The study covers the aspect of women empowerment by equating the factors of socio-economic nature and there by measures the extent of empowerment process and verifies the empowerment Index of rural women entrepreneurs in the study area. For the purpose of present study, the rural areas identified in the Khammam district of the Telangana state were selected. Women entrepreneurs in the select rural areas were interviewed and their responses were recorded through which the present study reveals the empirical findings based on primary data. The study brings out the socio-economic conditions of the women entrepreneurs, improvement in their status before and after starting the enterprise and the study tests the relationship between the factors of income, expenditure and savings. The study further depicts the empowerment index of rural women entrepreneurs by analyzing the various dimensions of social empowerment.

### Review of Literature

**Margaret Meaning and Anne Jardim (1979)** Conducted the study of women at managerial position by analyzing the life and career history of twenty five women at the top management position in business and industry. The study reveals that women can build extremely successful management careers even without legal pressures to aid them. The study further reveals the price they paid their personal lives were mortgaged to pay for their careers. Maintain work life balance is on of the most important traits for women intrapreneurs as they also have a family to run, kid to be looked after. The concept of intrapreneurs are the people who do not own the business but run the business for someone with same zest and sincerity.



**Aruna shree P Rao (1981)** made a study on the level of organization involvement of women in development projects. The study recommends that project personnel should train participants in the skills necessary for planning and implementing project activities and project should concentrate on activities designed to raise the income of the participants. The need for competencies for project development is to be honed and the policies of the government help to do the same through various agencies like Mitcon for development of entrepreneurial project ventures.

**Mayers (1981)** conducted a research study to analyze the effect of economic pressure on employment of married women. The study reveals those married woman with comparatively low economic background and having more financial burdens are coming for wage employment and undertaking other economic activities. Women who cannot be employed, due to other responsibilities, can be encouraged to use their skills by availing the policies of the government. The policies are run through a network of schemes that help them to financially support themselves as well as add up to the economy.

**Lehrer Sara (1981)** studied the effects of a women's conference on participants' attitude towards women's role in society. It was observed that the conference did not make much effect on changing the attitude of participants towards women's role in development of society. The perception about women in the past has cajoled them to think in the direction of other people. Women have realized their own potentials as entrepreneurs but they need the encouragement from the state. The environment for women entrepreneurs to bloom can be created by the government through polices designed for women entrepreneurs.

**Alman Aisha Mohammed (1981)** the study was undertaken to explore the level of economic development attained by Saudi Arabia from its oil resources and its impact on the socio economic status of women. The study showed that economic contributions of women in the agricultural sector, in animal husbandry and in home were undervalued and their participation rate was very low. The culture in and around women is one of the factors that underrates their hand in prosperity. In countries of the Middle East the situation of women has still not changed though there is a change in the world sees the women. The governance should realize that the development of its wards will lead to the development of the state; women need to come out of their shells and face the challenges of business and economy.

**Annie Phizakka (1988)** Entrepreneurship can be seen as a form of disguised unemployment. It was pointed out that self employment is not necessarily synonymous with entrepreneurship. In many self employment units the "boss" manages and controls the affairs with no paid employees, very often, family members constitute the work force, without having the status of an employer.

**Masao Kikuchi(1998)** Made some case studies to analyze and examine how the new export market and subcontracting system resulted in the emergence of a "new generation of rural entrepreneurs" in Philippines. The study found that sub contracting in the export garment sector is not limited to sewing, but also for other related service. Because of the technology used in the garment industry is labour intensive, the spread of garment sub contracting in rural areas has created employment opportunities with low opportunity costs. Most fundamentally, the rise of the export garment sector gives as opportunity for new rural entrepreneurs to create a new rural industry.

**Mote Shige and Masayuki (1998)** have made a study on the working and development of the "putting cut system" in Japan. The study shows how rural labour force with a very low opportunity cost can be capitalized by promoting rural entrepreneurship. The study exposed the alternative route of economic development which there is movement of the modern production base into the rural sector, rather than migration of the rural labour force into the urban sector. The study support a way of development in which widespread industrial activities could be organized in a decentralized manner by exploiting not only the physical labour bat also the entrepreneurial ability of the rural people – the two important resources that were under utilized in the past.

**Laoyan Chen 91999)** the study shows that Chinees women in rural areas have increasingly adopted co-operatives as a form of organization in their effort to address the problem for their lack of access to resources including land, credit, jobs, training and information and to participate in the main stream economy as an organized force.

**Dr. Vandan dave (2012)** made an attempt to understand the socioeconomic condition of women laborers, nature of their work, their working condition, wage pattern, wage discrimination and other difficulties face by them at their work place. It was carried out with 350 respondents including women construction workers, agriculture laborers and domestic helpers working in the unorganized sector. The results showed that majority of the migrant women were engaged in the construction industry and were only employed in unskilled and low paying jobs as coolies, laborers and helpers and women were exploited nature of work and hours spent on work. The conditions of work in the unorganized sector were unsatisfactory and

the problems confronted by them were acute. And that their illiteracy, poverty and indebtedness forced them to work for lower wages and under unjust conditions.

**Anthony P. D'souza (2013)** focused the status and contribution of unorganized sector focused more on the challenges and problems faced by the youth in selecting job as self employment. It is found that larger number of workers was getting their livelihood from this sector and entrepreneur plays a vital role in bringing up unorganized sector at the better position in the country.

#### objectives of the study

1. To study the demographic and business profile of the rural women entrepreneurs (self – employed women).
2. To analyze the socio-economic empowerment of rural women entrepreneurs.
3. To offer suggestions based on the empirical findings of the study.

#### Hypothesis

##### $H_0$ (Null Hypothesis)

There is no significant relationship that exists between income and expenditure, Income and savings and expenditure and savings of the respondents before and after self employment.

##### $H_a$ (Alternate Hypothesis)

There is a significant relationship that exists between income and expenditure, income and savings and expenditure and savings of the respondents before and after self employment.

#### Research Methodology

For the purpose of present study, descriptive research design was adopted. The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Data was collected through schedule method ( interview + Questionnaire ) and the respondents from rural areas of Khammam district were selected for the study. The sample size is 135. Statistical tools like percentage analysis, ranking technique and chi-square test were used to validate the empirical findings.

#### Data Analysis and Interpretation

**Table 1, Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Dimension	Socio –Economic Profile	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age ( in years)	Below 30	30	22.22
	30 -40	48	35.56
	40 – 50	39	28.89
	50 and above	18	13.33
Educational Qualification	Illiterate	8	5.56
	Primary	13	10
	Secondary	24	17.78
	Higher Secondary	63	46.67
	Graduate and above	27	20
Marital Status	Unmarried	32	23.7
	Married	103	76.3
	Widow	0	0
	Divorce	0	0
Type of family	Nuclear	120	88.88
	Joint	15	11.12
No.of Members	Less than 3	25	18.51
	3- 5	90	66.66
	5 and above	20	14.83

The table no.1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents. It shows that majority of the respondents are with in the age group of 30-40 years comprising 35.56% of the total respondents. The table further shows that majority of the respondents have the education qualification with higher secondary level comprising 46.67% of the total respondents. The table depicts that majority of the respondents are married comprising 76.3% of the total respondents and majority of the

respondents have nuclear type of family structure comprising 88.88% of the total respondents and the majority of the respondents have the family members with 3-5 in number comprising 66.66% of the total respondents.

**Table 2, Business Profile of the Respondents**

Dimension	Business Profile	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Nature of Self-employment	vendors	26	19.26
	Shop owners	17	12.60
	Tailoring	35	25.92
	Hotel/Restaurant	14	10.37
	Services	6	4.45
	Food preparations & Processing	9	6.66
	Others	28	20.74
Previous Experience	Yes	22	16.30
	No	113	83.70
Skill Oriented Training	Yes	40	29.62
	No	95	70.38
Amount Invested in Rs	Less than 2500	60	44.44
	2500 – 5000	43	31.85
	5000 – 7500	30	22.22
	7500 and above	2	1.49
Business Lifetime	Less than 5	17	12.59
	5 – 10	82	60.74
	10 and more	36	26.67
No.of hours devoted for business	Less than 4	5	3.71
	4- 6	71	52.59
	More than 6	59	43.70

The table no.2 presents the business profile of the respondents. It depicts that with regard to the nature of self employment, majority of the respondents belong to tailoring activities comprising 25.92% of the total respondents, with regard to the previous experience, majority of the respondents do not have any previous experience comprising 83.70% of the total respondents, with regard to skill oriented training, majority of the respondents did not received such training comprising 70.38% of the total respondents. The table further shows that with regard to the amount invested in the business activity shows that majority of the respondents had invested less than Rs.2500 comprising 44.44% of the total respondents and majority of the respondents' business lifetime is 5-10 years comprising 60.74% of the total respondents and with regard to the no.of hours devoted for business activities by the majority of the respondents are 4-6 hours comprising 52.59% of the total respondents.

**Table 3, Economic Conditions of the Respondents**

Economic Conditions		Before Self Employment		After Self Employment	
		No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Monthly Family Income (in Rs.)	Less than 2000	33	24.44	8	5.92
	2000 – 3000	55	40.74	50	37.03
	3000 – 4000	29	21.48	43	31.85
	4000 – 5000	11	8.14	22	16.29
	5000 and above	7	5.10	12	5.91
Expenditure (in Rs)	Less than 1500	19	14.07	16	11.85
	1500 – 2000	53	39.25	42	31.12
	2000 – 2500	35	25.92	39	28.88
	2500 – 3000	15	11.11	21	15.55
	3000 and above	13	9.65	17	12.60
Savings (in Rs.)	Less than 500	7	5.18	4	2.96
	500 – 1000	70	51.85	53	39.25
	1000 – 1500	38	28.14	45	33.33
	1500 – 2000	14	10.37	21	15.55
	2000 and above	6	4.46	12	8.91

Source: Primary Data

The table no.3 shows the economic conditions of the respondents in the select study area. It shows the improvement of economic conditions before and after commencement of the self employment. With regard to the aspect the monthly family income, before the commencement of self employment the respondents with 3000-4000 rupees income group were 21.48% and after the commencement of self employment the percentage has increased to 31.85%, before the commencement of self employment the respondents with 4000-5000 rupees income group were 8.14% and after the commencement of the self employment the percentage increased to 16.29%. Likewise, the respondents in the 5000 rupees and above category were 5.10% previously and after the commencement of self employment they had increased to 5.91%.

Similarly the expenditure patterns before and self employment program had also increased to a sizable extent. With regard to the aspect of savings, the respondents in 1000-1500 rupees category were 28.14% before self employment and after the self employment they had increased to 33.33%.

The respondents in the 1500-2000 rupees category had increased from 10.37% to 15.55%. and the respondents in the 2000 rupees and above category had increased from 4.46% to 8.91%. This clearly shows that the economic conditions of the respondents after the commencement of self employment program had increased to an notable extent.

**Table 4,Improvement In Economic Conditions**

Factors	Improved		Not Improved		Total
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage	
Income	107	79.25	28	20.75	135
Expenditure	113	83.70	22	16.30	135
Savings	87	64.44	48	35.56	135

Source: Primary Data

The table no.4 shows the improvement in economic conditions of the respondents. With regard to aspect of income, 79.25% of the respondents had agreed that their income level was increased and with regard to the aspect of expenditure 83.70% of the respondents had agreed that their expenditure patterns were changed and 64.44% of the total respondents had agreed that their saving levels were increased.

**Table 5,Result of chi-Square Test**

Between	$\chi^2$	Table value @ 5% Level	Inference
Income & Expenditure	9.183	0.025	Significant
Income & Savings	7.532	0.052	Significant
Expenditure & Savings	4.716	0.178	Significant

Source : Computed Data.

The table no.5 shows the association between the factors of income, expenditure and savings before and after self employment programs. The chi-square test result shows that there is a significant association between income and expenditure, income and savings and expenditure and savings and they are statistically significant. Therefore income, expenditure and savings of the respondents before and after starting their own enterprise differ significant. Thus the Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted.

**Table 6,Empowerment Index**

Social Empowerment	No. of Respondents					Total	Total Score	Rank
	SA	A	N	D	SDA			
Status	48	38	24	17	8	135	548	IV
Independence and Autonomy	45	56	26	8	0	135	585	III
Confidence	68	40	12	7	8	135	601	I
Decision Making	39	18	7	43	28	135	443	V
Self Determination	62	59	6	5	3	135	598	II

Source: Computed Data

The table no.6 shows the empowerment index of the rural women entrepreneurs. It shows that the aspects like confidence level, self determination, independence and autonomy, status and decision making among them had increased to a greater extent paving the way for women empowerment.



### Conclusion and Suggestions

Rural India plays an important role in raising the economic status of the individual the nation, wherein the aspect of rural entrepreneurship has a significant role in generating rural employment and promoting the living conditions of the people in the society. The concept of women empowerment is an never ending debate as the status of women in any society is an index of its civilization. But, women have not been allowed to actively participated in the main stream of the development even though they represent equal proportion of the population and labour force. Thus, a change has to be brought about not only in the status of women but in the attitude of the society toward them. Basically , the rural women are having basic indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish an enterprise. The results from the study had clearly indicated the fact that the aspect of entrepreneurship among the rural women had clearly changed their income, expenditure and saving levels. Thus in order to empower the rural women further it is suggested that the literacy levels among the rural women should be increased and awareness levels among them are to be increased by way of training on self employment and vocational training to acquire practical knowledge and the rural women entrepreneurs are to be provided better loans and assistance in acquiring raw materials and marketing their products. These acts if followed will certainly lead to the effective women empowerment in the society.

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