



EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN THROUGH TRAINING PROGRAMMES: A STUDY CONDUCTED IN KADAPA DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

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Cite This Article: Shaik Ghousinnisa, "Empowerment of Rural Women through Training Programmes: A Study Conducted in Kadapa District of Andhra Pradesh, India", *International Journal of Current Research and Modern Education*, Volume 3, Issue 1, Page Number 53-55, 2018.

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Abstract:

In recent years, development of women emphasizes on providing equal opportunities to men and women; it also helps them to be empowered and self-reliant. When the women get trained, they acquire the ability to improve their standard of living, which is one of the indicators of women empowerment. Training programmes have the potential to ignite the socio economic revolution in rural India. The main objective of training was the empowerment and self-reliance of women. Training also helps the weaker sections, to acquire skills, to initiate businesses, to get employment opportunities and also to increase their self-confidence and made them assertive in facing social evils. Hence, appropriate training must be provided to rural women in different skills for their empowerment. A descriptive study was conducted selecting 100 respondents who had attended the training programmes. The present study focuses on empowerment of rural women through training programmes in Kadapa District. The main objective of the study is to assess the opinions of respondents on use of training programmes in improving their standard of living.

Key Words: Empowerment, Rural Women & Training Programmes

1. Introduction:

Empowerment of different sections of the societies is a serious concern and to address it, planners, managers, social scientists all over the world have started considering and devising way out like anything. The present consideration will go textual with the realm of women's empowerment. There is a need to assure that women enjoy the minimum privileges. There has been increasing awareness and significance of the extent of women's activities. Most of the countries have now started training rural women and these rural women share information, knowledge and training activities take place.

Women have a degraded status by the reason of widespread of various factors such as illiteracy, exploitation, unemployment, female infanticide, child marriage, dowry, prostitution, rape, widowhood, wife beating and purdah system. Women's status is not just a matter of social and cultural history of traditions but its roots are from the political and economic structure of society which requires to be changed.

In India, rural women suffer the dual oppression of being economically and socially invisible. Economic invisibility is that, they are inappropriate to the market economy; social invisibility is because of degraded position of women in the society. Women play several distinct roles in the society that of wife, mother, daughter, home maker, worker and citizen. These roles of women make several demands on her time and energy. The social system of India recognizes the roles of wife, mother and home maker as paramount. In rural areas, the majority of women do not have a distinct quality and personality. Even in this age, this discrimination of rural women is perpetuated in spite of the spread of education and participation in social, economic and political issues of the country.

This discriminate state of affairs is also observed in Andhra Pradesh, which has literacy rate of 67.02% as per 2011 census. The state stood fourth in sex ratio, which is favorable to women (993 females per 1000 males). Child sex ratio is 939 females per 1000 males. Coming to the Kadapa District, the literacy rate is 67.88%, sex ratio is 985 females per 1000 males and child sex ratio is 918 females per 1000 males, as per 2011 census. If this situation is allowed to continue, it not only restricts the development of women but also affect the growth and progress of nation. Therefore, in order to have more progressive future of the country, it is essential for women, to rise from shackles and become empowered. This makes women able to contribute constructively and significantly to the society.

Empowerment of Rural Women through Training Programmes:

Empowerment of rural women can be viewed as a continuous extent of various interrelated and mutually reinforcing components. Empowerment is a multidimensional process, which enables women to realize their full identity and potential in every sphere of life. Women's empowerment allows women to be appreciated and acknowledged for who they are and what they do. It is not specifically the ideology of feminism that empowers women, but rather their capacities to face bravely the individual and social facts of their actual situations.

In most of the rural areas, women are not allowed to think for themselves or to make their own choices. Women must be convinced of their innate right to equality, dignity and justice. A process of empowerment is one which tackles the status of women, also a process which questions about the power structures and gender subordination. This empowerment process however may furthermost efficiently be initiated through implementing appropriate training programmes for the selected section of women.

The major objective of conducting training programmes among rural women is to ascertain a change in the behavior of trainees and also to equip them with the basic knowledge, skills and attitude, to play effective roles in promoting the process of development. Training of rural women is a significant issue for the rural development. While the basic concepts of training such as transfer of knowledge, skills, change of attitudes would remain same for any training programme. There is a need to identify the training needs of rural women and to monitor and evaluate such training is more important. In training, the focus is on learning behavior of the trainee, his/her new ways of performing things. Training structural and organized efforts through which an atmosphere of learning, sharing and synthesizing of information, knowledge and skills are transmitted to the trainees with the help of trainers.

Training can be used as an agent of basic change in the status of rural women. Training brings about a change in the self-image of rural women, awareness of their inner strength, helps them in making valuable contributions to society and enables them to take on new roles, and to develop the use of questioning and enhances their decision making skills. Training for empowerment of rural women places great stress in the creation of an atmosphere of learning. It helps them to plan out their objectives and action programmes and also to identify the need to bring a change in their lives by improving standards of living. Thus training becomes the most vibrant component of human resource development programmes.

2. Objective of the Study:

The objective of this study is to study the characteristics such as age, religion, education, family type, family size, occupation, annual income of the family and to assess whether training programmes conducted among rural women helped them to improve their standard of living in Kadapa District of Andhra Pradesh.

The following null (H_0) and alternate hypothesis (H_1) is formulated to study this objective

H_0 : There is no significant difference between the opinions of respondents on use of training in improving their standard of living.

H_1 : There is significant difference between the opinions of respondents on use of training in improving their standard of living.

3. Methodology:

The rural women trained in different training institutes in Kadapa District were selected for the study, the different training programmes conducted in the district are Phenyl preparation, Candle making, Tailoring, Weaving, home foods making, etc. A total of 100 women, who were trained in different training programmes were selected for the study, hence the sample of the study is 100 respondents. The data were collected from the selected sample through a field survey based on a structured questionnaire and interview techniques. The data were collected during November-December 2017.

In order to know the opinion of the respondents towards use of training in improving standard of living, Likert's scaling technique has been adopted. This is one of the significant techniques used to ascertain which one has most positive outlook. The weightage is given for each column ranging from five to one point (Strongly Agree-5, Agree-4, No Opinion-3, Disagree-2 and Strongly Disagree-1) in order to find the intensity value. Where Intensity value = $(S A * 5) + (A * 4) + (N O * 3) + (D A * 2) + (S D A * 1)$

Using this formula, the scores of the respondents were calculated based on their responses for each factor of standard of living and then total scores and mean scores were calculated. Mean scores were compared with overall mean score. If mean score is greater than overall mean score, the null hypothesis is accepted otherwise rejected.

4. Results and Discussion:

Keeping in view the objective, the results of the study are discussed below.

Profile of the Respondents: The profile characteristics such as age, religion, education, family type, family size, occupation and annual income of the family were studied.

Age Group: The respondents are grouped into three kinds i.e. young (<35), middle aged (35-55) and old (>55). 54 respondents fall in the middle aged category followed by young members (43). Only three persons are in the above 55 age group.

Religious Status: Majority (48) of the respondents belongs to Hindu religion, 33 respondents are Muslims and only 19 respondents belong to Christian religion.

Educational Status: Among the sample, 21 respondents are illiterate. 32 respondents have primary education and 35 members have secondary education. 12 members have college education.

Family Type and Size: Out of the 100 families, 68 families are single families. 32 families are found to be joint families. The average family size of the respondents is found to be 5.

Annual Income of the Family: The average annual income of the family is assessed to be Rs.12, 500. 63 families are found to be below poverty line i.e. having an annual income.

Opinion Score on use of Training in Improving Standard of Living:

S.No	Particulars	S. A	A	N	D. A	S. D. A	Total Score	Mean Score
1	Household Income	235	108	48	4	8	403	4.03
2	Availability of Housing	25	28	48	40	52	193	1.93
3	Decrease in Level of Crime	35	116	69	18	32	270	2.70
4	Access to Health Care	50	216	81	14	2	363	3.63
5	Access to Education	210	56	12	74	3	355	3.55
6	Involvement in Social Services	150	152	72	6	5	385	3.85
7	Political Freedom	200	100	75	8	6	389	3.89
8	Social Freedom	245	100	48	16	2	411	4.11
9	Employment	225	124	36	16	4	405	4.05
		Overall Mean=3.53						

From the above table, it is understood that Overall Mean for the statements regarding score on opinion of respondents, on use of training in improving standard of living is **3.53**. The means of the first, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth statements are higher than the overall mean (3.53). Respondents views on use of training in improving standards of living, revealed that, there is significant difference between training and improving household income, having greater access to health care and education, involving in social services, having political freedom and social freedom and also increasing the level of employment and there is no significant difference between training and availability of housing and decreasing the level of crime.

5. Conclusion:

The process of women’s empowerment begins with change of women’s consciousness. It involves not just an enhancement in physical and social conditions, but also ensures equal participation in decision making process, control over resources and mechanisms for sustaining these gains. The findings of the study show that training programmes helped the rural women to improve their standard of living at a greater extent. There were remarkable changes in the opinions of rural women regarding use of training in improving standard of living. It is strongly suggested that Government and Non-governmental organisations could implement similar training programmes for the empowerment of women. From this study, it is concluded that training helps women to improve their standard of living.

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