

Role of Income Generation Programme in Women Empowerment

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Abstract

The connection between poverty and women's lack of power over resources and decision-making has now caught the attention of policymakers in government and mainstream development all over the world. Women empowerment issues perceived nationally or locally are being addressed by both state and non-state agencies. Beside the government intervention, NGOs are implementing various types of Women Empowerment Programmes including IG Programmes. Women Empowerment Programmes in India include livelihood support Programme, rehabilitation and job placement for rescued women, safe motherhood Programme and so forth. In spite of involvement of various NGOs in women empowerment through Income Generation and Skill Development Programmes, the status of women is still not satisfactory in India as various official as well as unofficial reports claim and the outcomes against the stated objectives of the NGOs' Women Empowerment Programmes are often questioned. Therefore, the present study is focused in assessing the impact of IG Programmes run by non-government organizations in empowering women. The researcher hypothesizes that IG Programme with its components viz., skill training, resource inputs of loan and equipment help to increase income to the women through independent business or work in the related field; the increased income lessens their dependence on family heads and enables to spend for personal expenses; gives them certain freedoms as individuals; enables them to contribute to family affairs financially, which creates an environment in the family in favor of the women to accept her views and participation in family matters like education, marriage, purchase etc.

Keywords: Empowerment, Women Empowerment, Income Generation Programme.

Introduction:

"Empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation, when women are empowered, society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their thoughts and their value systems lead to the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation."

-Former President of India Shri APJ Abdul Kalam

This stands truly valid in the global context – when women are empowered and can claim their rights and access to land, leadership opportunities – economies grow, food security is enhanced and prospects are improved for current and future generations. This can be seen from how the

developed nations have been able to move ahead - as they have taken the women force along.

The term 'empowerment' means to give somebody the power or authority to do something (Oxford Dictionary). Bennett (2002) as stated in Malik and Luqman (2005) describes empowerment as “the enhancement of assets and capabilities of diverse individuals and groups to engage, influence and hold accountable the institutions which affect them”. Bennet further says among the different disempowered groups like: poor, ethnic, minorities etc, women are one which is cross-cutting category with all these groups. Similarly, women empowerment implies that women have power and ability to do activities as like men counterpart but