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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

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FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A STUDY ON WOMEN'S PERCEPTION OF EAST GODAVARI DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

Empowerment means moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power. The authentic connotation of empowerment becomes apparent when the social status of women is raised in everyday life – in their interaction with the society and family. The study concentrates in finding the correlation between women's financial inclusion as a contributing factor towards the decision making power in the family. Women constitute half of the population, contribute more than half of the duties and responsibilities of the family but are hardly empowered to participate in decision making. They were not given any rights, they are supposed to do domestic work and look after the children.

KEYWORDS

financial inclusion, women empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

The women of India are all part of the long march for freedom. Whenever they are given an opportunity and whenever they can take this opportunity they prove to the world that they are second to none. In ancient India, **Shakti** was manifest and recognized, her many forms were worshipped and her multitudes of skills and weapons were common place. But from traditional societies, women were confined to the four walls of houses performing household activities. In modern societies they have come out of the four walls to participate in all sorts of activities. The global evidences buttress the fact that women have been performing exceedingly well in different spheres of activities like academics, politics, administration, social work and so on. Hence we can say that Shakti has reincarnated herself and is manifest today in the face of the working women of India. Now the revolution for freedom is widespread and from every village town and city, from the fields and factories the imprint of **Shakti** becomes stronger and stronger. Women in slums are the worst sufferers as they are engulfed in variety of health, economic and social problems.

Participation of women for day to day activities for both economic and non-economic activities is a common phenomenon. Women are involved in a number of activities. For example inter alia, maintaining of children, caring of in-laws in the house, cooking and other domestic duties like animal husbandry, kitchen garden etc. According to Second Citizen's Report on the Environment may be quoted "probably no other group is more affected by environmental destruction than poor village women. Every dawn brings with it a new march in search of fuel, fodder and water. It does not matter if the women are old, young or pregnant. Crucial household needs have to meet day after weary day". According to National Sample Survey Organization:

1. Five years age onwards females are involved in various domestic duties.
2. The common activities of women, both in rural and urban areas are – dairy, poultry, other animal husbandry, food processing, spinning, weaving etc.
3. Majority of the females engaged in domestic duties.

In so many parts of the world social reformers recognized the significance of women empowerment and now the entire world is concentrating on this issue. The fifth five year plan replaced the social welfare approach with development approach and recognized women's productive role and her contribution in the national economy. The sixth five year plan concentrated on health education and employment. In the seventh five year plan priority was given for women status, awareness of their rights, employment etc. The ninth five year plan main objective is women empowerment and 2001 announced as women empowerment year. There is lot of gender inequality which has been a major issue in so many national and international conferences. Our constitution presented with so many fundamental rights to women. Separate commissions for women have been established national wide and state wide for the well being of women. Government reserved 1/3rd of panchayats seats for the betterment of women economically, socially and politically. There are separate schemes like Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, Indira Mahila Yojana, Mahila Samridhi Yojana etc. for their development.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Financial inclusion is all about providing banking services to underprivileged segment and low income people with reasonable cost. In a competent society public goods and services are for all. Hence banking services too should be for all the people without any bias. It is the duty of regulating authority to see the banking services should be offered to all people. So Reserve Bank of India is giving importance to finance inclusion. At present in India it is confined to only savings account but world wide financial inclusion have a vast scope.

Having a current account / savings account on its own, is not regarded as an accurate indicator of financial inclusion. There could be multiple levels of financial inclusion and exclusion. At one extreme, it is possible to identify the 'super-included', i.e., those customers who are actively and persistently courted by the financial services industry, and who have at their disposal a wide range of financial services and products. At the other extreme, we may have the financially excluded, who are denied access to even the most basic of financial products. In between are those who use the banking services only for deposits and withdrawals of money. But these persons may have only restricted access to the financial system, and may not enjoy the flexibility of access offered to more affluent customers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the relation between education and women empowerment.
- To study the level of decision making among working women and non-working women.
- To know the level of financial inclusion and women empowerment.
- To know the level of freedom of women on the financial resources of the family.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This research is embodied with both primary and secondary data. As far as secondary data is concerned they were sought from various books, journals, magazines, news papers, periodicals, unpublished sources, internet etc. The study also embodied a sizeable primary data, which was collected by way of canvassing a questionnaire amongst selected sample of respondents through personal interviews. The data was collected in Rajahmundry city of East Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh. The selection criterion is based upon the data availability, convenience to access and the level of participation.

The respondents were interviewed in person and were asked to respond to the questionnaire. The field survey for primary data collection was conducted through questionnaire from the sample respondents. Besides field survey for primary data, literature surveys were also conducted simultaneously along with field surveys and there by sought required secondary data. For the present study a total sample size of 300 was taken in which, 150 respondents were covered

from working women and 150 respondents covered from non-working women. The area of the study is Rajahmundry city of East Godavri District, Andhra Pradesh and the universe of the study is women. The unit of analysis is working and non-working women. The sampling procedure used for selecting the respondents is systematic random sampling. The selection criteria is the both working and non-working women from the same socio-economic status.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Ho₁: There is a relation between education and women empowerment.

Ho₂: There is relation between earnings of the women and the decision making power.

Ho₃: The non-working women also have the freedom on financial resources of the family.

Ho₄: The financial inclusion empowers the women.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr. Shankar Chatterjee reveals that due to participation of women in domestic activities, the family is benefited. The women members are not only carrying out household works but they are taking care of their children, old in-laws, parents and others. Many a times, it was reported that husbands in the morning go out for the works and evening they come in the house after taking local made drinks, folly boozed. After coming house, many start beating to their wives and children. Even few women committed suicide also. However situation improved to a great extent after intervention of an organization i.e. Social Mobilization Experimentation and Learning Centre, popularly known as SMELC. It established a Bank and named Mahila Bank. This is benefited to poor and women. Once women are economically empowered, they can stand in their own way.

According to Parul Gaur education alone is a weak attribute unless it is linked with employment. The educated women who are employed are significantly higher with respect of social awareness, independence and decision making as compared to those educated women who are not employed. He defined working woman – A woman who is paid by working outside, and non-working woman – A woman who does not get paid for her work.

Empowerment is an all-around and profound thought where women will have majority share in all possessions. The resources include men, material, information, knowledge, ideas intellectuals and money. Possession of money will give the power in decision making in all aspects. *"Empowerment means moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power"*.

Microfinance in India has emerged as a powerful tool for financial inclusion. The 'SHG – Bank Linkage' programme plays a predominant role in the financial inclusion of poor. The programme is coming up well and being implemented widely across the country. But there is a need to strengthen the SHG-Bank Linkage Programme to fully mainstream it with the commercial banking system. The programme is scaling up at a rapid pace in South India, while the progress in other regions is slow.

INDIAN SCENARIO

The banking model was changed from class to mass banking after bank nationalization. In order to reach under privileged population regional rural banks were set up. The commercial banks branches were increased abnormally between 1969 and 2010 from 8321 to more than 68, 282. At the same time still there are under bank states in the country like Chattisgar, Rajasthan, Orissa, Bihar and so on. The Reserve Bank of India made a policy to encourage banks to establish branches in the states where there are under banks. RBI has set up a target to measure the reach of their financial services by comparing the deposit accounts against the adult population. The ratio of deposit accounts as on March 31, 2004 to the total adult population was only 59%. If we observe the percentages of different states there are lot of variations. Kerala state stood first with 89 percent, Delhi has 84 percent, Bihar has 33 percent, Manipur 21 percent, and Nagaland has 27 percent. When we compare the financial services of India with the developed world it is not upto the mark.

MEASURES TO IMPROVE FINANCIAL INCLUSION

There are so many proposals to develop and offer banking services to under privileged people till 1980s. Some of the initiatives are increase in bank branches, more concentration on credit than other services like insurance and savings. Even though it is not profitable, the priority was given in lending money to agriculture and weaker population. Government initiated subsidies through cooperative societies and banks. Reserve Bank of India had taken positive measures to increase the financial inclusion. It facilitated people with basic banking with minimum balances and charges. All banks are asked to promote no frills accounts to improve financial inclusion.

GOVERNMENT'S MEASURES TO EMPOWER WOMEN

Lack of education and poverty are observed as significant factors for the powerlessness of women. Government has considered these factors and took so many measures to eliminate poverty and to offer education.

- Under Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana it is stipulated that 30 per cent of the employment opportunities should be reserved for women.
- House Under Indira Awas Yojana are to be allotted in the name of women members of the households or alternatively in the joint names of wife and husband.
- 50 per cent of Self Helping Groups in each block should be exclusively reserved for women. Women are encouraged to thrift and credit to make them self reliant.
- Up to 10 per cent of the allocated funds can be utilized for construction and maintenance of public latrines for women under restricted Central Rural Sanitation Programme.
- Under Accelerated Rural Water Supply programme training is being offered to women in using and maintenance of hand pumps. They are actively involved in the selection of sites for hand pump and other source.

WOMEN EDUCATION FREE COACHING

Education found to be the dominant tool to eliminate disparity and to bring change in the lives. Government has taken so many supporting measures to offer education especially to women. It is providing books, uniforms, by-cycles etc. at free of cost. There are many provisions to educate girls and women from marginalized below poverty line. Government started two free coaching centers for women to materialize exams of IAS and IPS. Banking industry is developed in all ways by improving its profits, competency, competitiveness, financial viability and so on to all classes of population. *"The reasons may vary from country to country and hence the strategy could also vary but all out efforts are being made as financial inclusion can truly lift the financial condition and standards of life of the poor and the disadvantaged."*

TABLE-1: SHOWS THE EDUCATION LEVEL OF WORKING AND NON-WORKING WOMEN

Particulars	Non-working women	Working women
Un educated	30 (20)	0
Primary Education	70 (35)	20 (13.33)
SSC	10 (6.66)	20 (13.33)
Intermediate	10 (6.66)	10 (13.33)
Graduation	30 (20)	10 (6.66)
Post Graduation	0	50 (33.33)
Others	0	40 (26.66)
Total	150 (100)	15 (100)

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-1 reveals the educational level of working and non-working women. Among the non-working women 35 per cent have Primary Education, 20 per cent are uneducated and 20 per cent have graduation. Whereas in working women 33.33 per cent have Post Graduation and 26.66 per cent are Doctorates. It shows that educated women have employment.

TABLE-2: SHOWS THE WORKING WOMEN INDEPENDENCE ON THEIR SALARY

Particulars	No	Yes
Respondent is having independence on her salary	140 (93.34)	10 (6.66)

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-2 shows the particulars of working women independence on their salary. 93.34 per cent of respondents don't have independence on their salary. Whereas 6.66 per cent of working women have independence on their salary also.

TABLE-3: SHOWS THE NON-WORKING WOMEN INDEPENDENCE ON THE FAMILY INCOME

Particulars	Yes	No
Respondent is having independence on the family income	40 (26.66)	110 (73.34)

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-3 reveals the independence of non-working women on the family income. Among non-working women 73.34 per cent of respondents didn't have independence on their family income. The personal interview of the author reveals that most of their husbands have second family, boozing, etc, and they live for their self, and they even don't treat them as human beings.

Ho₂: There is relation between earnings of the women and the decision making power.

TABLE-4: SHOWS THE DECISION LEVEL OF WORKING AND NON-WORKING WOMEN

Type of activity	Major		Equal		Minor		Nil	
	Emp	Unempl	Emp	Unempl	Emp	Unempl	Emp	Unempl
Minor Purchase	20 (13.3)	10 (6.6)	120 (80)	60 (40)	10 (6.6)	30 (20)	0	50 (33.3)
Major Purchase	20 (13.3)	10 (6.6)	120 (80)	60 (40)	10 (6.6)	30 (20)	0	50 (33.3)
Entertainment	20 (13.3)	10 (6.6)	120 (80)	60 (40)	10 (6.6)	30 (20)	0	50 (33.3)
Social Ceremonies	30 (20)	10 (6.6)	110 (73.3)	60 (40)	10 (6.6)	30 (20)	0	50 (33.3)
Savings	20 (13.3)	10 (6.6)	110 (73.3)	60 (40)	10 (6.6)	30 (20)	0	50 (33.3)
Children's Edu. & Marriage	30 (20)	10 (6.6)	110 (73.3)	60 (40)	10 (6.6)	30 (20)	10 (6.6)	50 (33.3)
Medical Consultation	30 (20)	10 (6.6)	110 (73.3)	60 (40)	10 (6.6)	30 (20)	0	50 (33.3)
Family Planning	20 (13.3)	10 (6.6)	110 (73.3)	60 (40)	20 (13.3)	30 (20)	0	50 (33.3)
Chi-square value	2.220*		0.562*		4.813*		59.792*	

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-4 reveals the decision level of working and non-working women. Among the working women 80 per cent to 73.33 per cent have equal decision making power. Whereas among the non-working women only 40 per cent have equal decision power and 33.33 per cent have nil decision power. It shows the importance of financial inclusion and its impact on the women empowerment.

The calculated chi-square values for major, equal, minor and nil decision inclusion of working and non working women respondents are 2.220, .562, 4.813 and 59.792 respectively. Out of the total respondents most of the working women have participation in family decision. The values are significant at 0.01 levels.

Hence the hypothesis is accepted in urban and tribal areas and rejected in rural area.

TABLE-5: SHOWS THE BANK ACCOUNTS PARTICULARS OF WORKING AND NON-WORKING WOMEN

Particulars	Yes		No	
	Emp.	Unemp.	Emp.	Unemp.
Do you have bank account	140 (93.34)	70 (46.67)	10 (6.66)	80 (53.33)

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-5 shows the bank accounts particulars of working and non-working women. Among the working women 93.34 per cent have bank accounts and among non-working women 53.33 per cent didn't have bank accounts. Some of the non-working respondents asked that, what the purpose of having a bank account? And some told that my husband didn't opened, till today no need of bank account etc.

TABLE-6: SHOWS THE PARTICULARS OF BANK LOANS OF WORKING AND NON-WORKING WOMEN

Particulars	Yes		No	
	Emp.	Unemp.	Emp.	Unemp.
Do you had any bank loan for self employment	50 (33.33)	70 (46.67)	100 (66.67)	80 (53.33)

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-6 shows the particulars of bank loans of working and non-working women. Among the working women 33.33 per cent have bank loan for further education. Whereas the non-working women had bank loans for self employment i.e. to purchase sewing machines, grinders, buffalos etc. The non-working

women feel that if they should earn to get equal importance in the family. Some others self employed as the husband is not working hence they became the bread winner.

TABLE-7: SHOWS THE MEMBERSHIP PARTICULARS OF SELF HELPING GROUP OF WORKING AND NON-WORKING WOMEN

Particulars	Yes		No	
	Emp.	Unemp.	Emp.	Unemp.
Are you a member of Self Helping Group	70 (46.67)	50 (33.33)	80 (53.33)	100 (66.67)

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-7 shows the membership particulars of Self Helping Group of working and non-working women. Among working women 46.67 per cent have membership in Self Helping Groups. These respondents have membership before they were employed, some of them are continuing and some of them quitted from the group. Whereas among non-working women 33.33 per cent have membership in Self Helping Groups and the remaining 66.67 per cent didn't have the knowledge of Self Helping Groups.

TABLE-8 (a): SHOWS THE WORKING WOMEN PRIORITY FOR HAVING MEMBERSHIP IN SELF HELPING GROUP

Rank	Financial Support	Purchasing Power	Low interest	Income generation
1	20 (13.33)	0	30 (20)	20 (13.33)
2	50 (33.33)	0	10 (6.66)	10 (6.66)
3	0	30 (20)	20 (13.33)	20 (13.33)
4	0	40 (26.66)	10 (6.66)	20 (13.33)
Correlation values	0.601	0.939	-0.674	0.258

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-8(a) shows the reasons for having membership in Self Helping Group. Among the working women 20 per cent gave priority to low interest, 13.33 per cent for financial support and 13.33 per cent for income generation.

The generated correlation values for the above four factors for which the working women had membership in the Self Helping groups are .601, .939, -0.674 and 0.258 respectively. Majority of the respondents had membership due to low rate of interest. According the correlation values the **hypothesis is accepted as the respondents ranked first for the factor low interest, income generation and so on.**

TABLE-8 (b): SHOWS THE NON-WORKING WOMEN PRIORITY FOR HAVING MEMBERSHIP IN SELF HELPING GROUP

Rank	Financial Support	Purchasing Power	Low interest	Income generation
1	20 (13.3)	0	30 (20)	0
2	30 (20)	0	20 (13.3)	0
3	0	30 (20)	0	20 (13.3)
4	0	20 (13.3)	0	30 (20)
Correlation values	0.77	0.8	0.94	0.9

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-8(b) shows the reasons for having membership in Self Helping Group. Among the non- working women 20 per cent gave priority to low interest and 13.33 per cent for financial support.

The generated correlation values for the above four factors for which the non-working women had membership in the Self Helping groups are .77, .80, .94 and 0.90 respectively. Majority of the respondents had membership to have financial support. According the correlation values the **hypothesis is accepted as the respondents ranked as financial support, purchasing power, income generation and low interest.**

TABLE-9: OPINION OF WORKING AND NON-WORKING WOMEN ON FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Particulars	Emp.	Unemp.
Strongly Agree	110 (73.34)	95 (63.34)
Agree	18 (12)	10 (6.67)
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10 (6.67)	20 (13.34)
Disagree	8 (5.34)	15 (10)
Strongly Disagree	4 (2.67)	10 (6.67)

Source: Survey report

Numbers in the parentheses are percentages

Table-9 reveals the opinion of working and non working women on a given statement i.e. financial inclusion empowers the women. Among the working women cent per cent strongly agreed with the statement and 66.67 per cent of non-working women strongly agreed and 13.33 agreed with the statement. Hence it is evident that women were feeling the essence of financial inclusion in empowerment.

GROUP STATISTICS OF TABLE – 9 (a)

	Source	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Employability	1	5	30.0	45.011	20.130
	2	5	30.0	38.572	16.355

Table-9 (a) explains the mean differences of between the working and non-working women opinion. The mean score of working women is 30.0 and the standard deviation is 45.011. The mean and standard deviations of non working women are 30.0 and 38.572. The standard error means are 20.130 and 16.355.

INDEPENDENT SAMPLE TEST OF TABLE - 9

INDEPENDENT SAMPLE TEST OF TABLE-9										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df.	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	95 % Confidence Interval of the Diff.	
									Lower	Upper
Employability	Equal variances assumed	.145	.713	.000	8	1.000	.00	25.936	-59.81	59.81
	Equal variances not assumed			.000	7.68	1.000	.00	25.936	-60.25	60.25

The generated t-value is .000 and significant at the 0.05 level because there is no significant difference in the mean scores of working and non working women and both the respondents opined that employability will empower the women.

FINDINGS

- Among the non-working women 35 per cent have Primary Education. Where as in working women 33.33 per cent have Post Graduation and 26.66 per cent are Doctorates. It shows that educated women have employment.
- 93.34 per cent of working women have independence on their salary
- Among non-working women 73.34 per cent of respondents didn't have independence on their family income. The personal interview of the author reveals that most of their husbands have second family, boozing, etc, and they live for their self, and they even don't treat them as human beings.
- Among the working women 80 per cent to 73.33 per cent have equal decision making power. Whereas among the non-working women only 40 per cent have equal decision power and 33.33 per cent have nil decision power. It shows the importance of financial inclusion and its impact on the women empowerment.
- Among the working women 93.34 per cent have bank accounts and among non-working women 53.33 per cent didn't have bank accounts. Some of the non-working respondents asked that, what the purpose of having a bank account? And some told that my husband didn't opened, till today no need of bank account etc.
- Among the working women 33.33 per cent have bank loan for further education. Whereas the non-working women had bank loans for self employment i.e. to purchase sewing machines, grinders, buffalos etc. The non-working women feel that if they should earn to get equal importance in the family. Some others self employed as the husband is not working hence they became the bread winner.
- Among the working women 20 per cent gave priority to low interest, 13.33 per cent for financial support and 13.33 per cent for income generation and among the non- working women 20 per cent gave priority to low interest and 13.33 per cent for financial support.
- Cent per cent of working women and 66.67 per cent of non-working women strongly feel that the financial inclusion empowers the women. Even the remaining per cent of non-working also feel the same but at a lower extent when compared.

SUGGESTIONS

- Education to women is the most powerful instrument of changing their position in the society.
- All the women should be informed regarding the Self Helping Groups.
- All the educated women should try for the employment.
- All women should inform regarding the banking services and the benefits.

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