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ROLE OF SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract:

The Government of India had ushered in the new millennium by declaring the year 2001 as women's Empowerment year to focus on a vision where women are equal partners like men. The most common explanation of women's empowerment is the ability to exercise full control over one's actions.

The present paper studied role of Sc women in public administration is based on a sample survey. That is the researcher visited all the self help groups Run by Sc women in Gulbarga city. It is noted that about 10 self–help Groups were formed by the women in this city .approximately 150 schedule caste women members of these groups who are actively participating in the different activities. Considering the time and cast effect the beneficiary's point of view. It was decided to have a small sample size but ideal to be analyzed from .thus the 150 scheduled caste women .were surveyed thorough interview schedule considering them as an study sample unit. Education is the most important instrument for bring awareness about their rights, social status, as a prime element to maximize participation in different kinds of productive employment. Of course generally women were benefited from these opportunities. But the schedule caste women are not benefited completely from these kinds of privileges and opportunities. For this purpose, there was need to frame policies for the empowerment of the SC women, thus Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations, and Mahila Mandals playing an important role in empowering the women .

KEYWORDS:

Administration , Scheduled , Empowerment , Considering.

INTRODUCTION:

In fact, two powerful approaches to empower women and rural entrepreneurship have emerged during the last decade: formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) especially among women; and, clusters among similar or mutually related enterprises. Self Help Groups are small homogenous groups consisting of 12- 20 women from Below Poverty Line families voluntarily organised to promote savings. They are self-managed groups of poor women which primarily came into existence to mobilise financial resources through their own savings and lend the same amongst themselves to meet the credit needs of their members. The SHG movement has emerged as a powerful and 'brant moment cad of the length and breadth of the State.

The Self-Help Group approach has come a long way in India, from 1974, when SEWA started mobilizing poor women based on their respective trade. The women's movement in the west in the 1960s and 1970s influenced many countries, India being one of them. The main aims of SHG concept is to improve the economic develo9pment of women and to create a facilitating environment for their social transformation, in the light of gender based discrimination in work and the household. Perhaps the first

concerted effort to form women's groups in Karnataka was when DWCRA scheme was introduced in the mid-eighties. But earlier to it, an NGO called MYRADA had initiated the concept by forming women's groups in some of its project sites. The reasons lie in the realization that women's development is an essential prerequisite for overall development.

The Central Government launched the Swarna Jayanthi Gram Swarojgar Yojana on April 1, 1999 emphasizing the integrated upliftment of rural households that fall under the BPL line in a span of five years. Even here the SHG approach has been upheld.

The scheme was the result of merger of all the direct anti-poverty programmes like IRDP, DWRC, TRYSEM, etc into one single programme in order to promote holistic self-employment among men and women. A review of the programme has indicated that women form nearly 50 percent of the total persons assisted in the programme. The programme sought to take assistance of several institutions like the line departments of the government, NGUs, other local organizations and the Panchayat bodies. Besides these governmental efforts to provide sustained development to women, a number of NGOs have also initiated programme that encourage SHGs of women and men to be formed. The discussion on the operational part of SHGs in Karnataka is divided into three parts, to fall into the stage of preparation or formation of SHGs; stabilization stage and the functional stage. The first stage is one that includes the processes of dissemination of information, motivation to join the groups, selection of members and the representatives and laying down the rules. Stage two is when the group stabilizes itself by following rules of working, like meetings, savings and identifying IGA. Finally, the stage when the group is performing well by carrying on the IGA and achieves wider goals like bank linkage, etc. is when it is successfully functioning (Planning Commission: 2007).

The specific objectives of SHGs are as follows improve saving habits among women, self-employment of women, utilize bank loan and government welfare schemes; SHG the members to escape from the clutches of moneylenders; and mobilise financial resources.

The formation of SHGs among women has fetched noticeable results in many developing countries. The SHG approach has proved successful not only in improving the economic conditions through income generation but in creating awareness about health and hygiene, sanitation and cleanliness. environmental protection importance of education and better response for development schemes. Similarly, cluster approach for promotion of rural enterprises has also been very effective and used in handicrafts, handlooms, forest based enterprises and so on.

In Karnataka, there were about 99052 Self-Help Groups operating in Karnataka, of which 6500 were in Gulbarga district in March 2004 under the Stree Shakti Programme. The membership to these groups was up to 1479794 members across the Karnataka and the membership to the SHGs in Gulbarga district was up to 87121, which included women members from all the groups such as SCs, STs, Minorities and others (Planning Commission: 2007).

The SHGs represent an opportunity for social action and empowerment through women's involvement in considering, addressing and participating in issues that affect their members and their communities, including issues that affect women in particular. The extent to which this happening is perhaps less than hoped for although a beginning is being made. One reason is the huge challenge involved in women having the right to speak out and take a stand in still very traditional, patriarchal, societies. The related reason is that social objectives too require a strategic approach, persistence and follow-up.

SHGs who have social objectives, need to do more about them specifically and strategically picking up problems, addressing them as they arise, using them as issues/examples for discussion with other groups whether issues of social harmony, injustice or mobilising for community development. SHG support and guidance seems critical and mobilising across groups seems most effective. Clustering of SHGs may have strong social potential, as in federations, though this builds in another level of capacity level and financing still to be established as sustainable. There may be a question of time available for women. This did not come up as an issue in groups where such actions were taken, though we did notice that better-off women are more likely to be involved.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bakhtari (1988) discussed on a 6 year action research project is described that explored women's role in development in Pakistan. Originally the study began as a sanitation experiment in Baldia Town – one of the largest slatter settlements in Karachi it evolved into participatory action programs that were planned, implemented, managed, and financed by the poor, young, and literate women of the community to improve the education of girls and women. The creation of a home school program, which also offered preventive health care, is described, and its results are evaluated.

Bruchhaus,-Eva-Maria (1988) An examination of women's self-help groups in West Africa, focusing on their controversial role in development politics. Existing traditional forms of cooperation facilitate foundation & functioning of the groups, as the women show remarkable ability in organization, flexibility, purpose, & discipline. M attitudes vacillate between admiration & contempt, though there is some indication that the enhanced status of women has a positive effect on family & community self-esteem. However, whatever the benefits of self-help programs, they cannot compensate for the larger problems of developmental economics.

Jandhyala,-kameshwari (1998)Addresses the place of the empowerment of women on the official agenda of the Indian state, with focus on the experience of the Mahila Samakhya program, a centrally sponsored program with the explicit agenda of women's education & empowerment, primarily in Andhra Pradesh. Described is how this program has attempted to create the same space & opportunity for growth & empowerment of women in the organization as for the rural women it works with. The program's strategy of enabling women to raise questions about problems, consider various ways of dealing with them, & acting on them has resulted in a wide array of issues being addressed, through the structure of sanghams, or collectives. 7 References. Adapted from the source document.

Jarochovska (1996) reviews recent research to summarize the plight of Indian women in agriculture, where housewives and girls are increasingly asked to perform more labor but are still denied property ownership and access to higher paying positions. Malikit Kaur's (1988) study of females in agriculture in the state of Haryana details the arduous roles and extensive expectations demanded of farm women who must perform all domestic duties, field labor, and fuel collecting. Kumud Sharm's (1985) official report on women amid rural development claims that the traditional views of village more are supported by the tendency of policymakers to ignore reform attempts. Hope is seen in the emergence and growth of mahila mandals and panchayats, the former being local clubs designed to educate women on new farming techniques and technology, the latter described as local organizations that encourage women to participate in policy matters.

NEED OF THE STUDY:

After the independence, provisions were made in the Indian Constitution to provide equal rights and opportunities of socio-economic development and betterment of living for men and women, including different disadvantaged segments of population to establish an egalitarian and prosperous society. In view of grinning improvements in the socio-economic condition of women efforts were made to maximize the participation of women in different educational levels, with the notion that education is the most important instrument for bring awareness about their rights, social status, as a prime element to maximize participation in different kinds of productive employment. Of course generally women were benefited from these opportunities. But the schedule caste women are not benefited completely from these kinds of privileges and opportunities. For this purpose, there was need to frame policies for the empowerment of the SC women, thus Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations, and Mahila Mandals playing an important role in empowering the women . There is need to know about the women empowerment activities in under developed city areas and the role of these self-help groups and NGOs in assisting women empowerment. Hence an attempt was made in the present study about to know real beneficiaries of the women empowerment under various projects pipelined by the central and state Government..

METHODOLOGY.

However, considering the objectives of the study, the current research is based on a sample survey. That is the researcher visited all the self help groups Run by Sc women in Gulbarga city. It is noted that about 10 self –help Groups were formed by the women in this city .approximately 150 schedule caste women members of these groups who are actively participating in the different activities. Considering the time and cast effect the beneficiary's point of view. It was decided to have a small sample size but ideal to be analyzed from .thus the 150 scheduled caste women .were surveyed thorough interview schedule considering them as an study sample unit.

Data for the study was collected in phase wise During the first stage all the SHG in the study area were listed in order to collect basic data such as SHG address location and members strength. In the course of listing care was taken to identify all SC women members. The second stage of data collection involved visits to respective SHG where there were SC women available for conducting detailed interviews about the research study purpose. The data was collected during the months of November and December in the year 2009. Throughout the period of data collection, the researcher spend full day in the SHG and had the opportunity to have a first –hand experience of living and working with the respondents.

The data collected data was coded, verified and processed on the personal computer at the University. A single frequency distribution of each variable was generated to validate that data socio-economic variables such as religion, reasons for joining SHG on members and the type of residence. The dependent variable was cross-tabulated with each of the societal variables, an analysis of covariance (chi square X2 text) was used to see the type of effect and significant level.

RESULTS AND DISUSSION

Table No. 1 : Nature of your participation in the meetings

	Frequency	Percent
Listening to others	25	16.7
Quiet sitting	26	17.3
Discuss with other members	69	46.0
Give opinions, comments	20	13.3
Give guidance suggestions	10	6.7
Total	150	100.0

Participation and discussion in the self-Help group meetings play an important role in activities of every self-help groups. In this respect, it is needed on the part of every SC urban women, who is member of self-help groups ,to participate actively ;and discuss the various issues related to the groups. A question was asked to the respondents about the extent of participation of the members of the self-help groups in meetings. The collected data is presented in the following table. It is revealed from the above table about (46.0%) of the respondents discuss with other members, followed by (17.3%) of the respondents are sitting quietly, about (16.7%) of the respondents become a participated returns to others, about (6.7%) of the respondents gives guidance and suggestions and the remaining (19.3%) of the respondent give opinions and comments

Table No. 2 : How your Influence on the decisions

	Frequency	Percent
1) Much	16	10.6
Somewhat	82	54.7
Little	28	18.7
	24	16.0
Total	150	100.0

Active participation of the SC urban women in meetings of the self-Help groups helps to influence on the decisions of the group. In the sense, it is noted that whether all the members are getting equal rights on influence of the decisions. The responses of the members of the self-help groups on whether they influence on the decisions of the group, are presented in the following table. The above table revealed that majority that is (54.7%) of the respondents somewhat influence on the decisions in the self-Help groups, followed by (18.7%) influence little and the remaining (10.6%) influence much more on the decisions of the self-Help groups.

Table No. 3. Regularly in the meetings

	Frequency	Percent
Highly irregular	13	8.7
Rarely	35	23.3
When convenient	26	17.3
Regular	67	44.7
Highly regular	9	6.0
Total	150	100.0

Attending the meetings regularly shows the interest and efficient management of the self-Help Groups. Further, this will help each member to know about the activities of the self-Help Groups clearly. In this respect, on the regularity in attending the meetings, the members of the self-Help groups are responded as under. It is clear from the above table that about (44.7%) of the respondents regularly attending the meetings, followed by about (23.3%) of the respondents are rarely irregular in attending the meetings, about (17.3%) of the respondents attend the meetings when convenient, about (8.7%) of the respondents are highly irregular and only (6.0%) of the respondents are highly regular in attending the meetings.

Table No. 4 : Percentage of attendance.

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 25%	15	10.0
25% to 50%	24	16.0
50% to 75/	84	56.0
More than 75/	18	12.0
As it is	9	6.0
Total	150	100.0

The purposes of the Self-Help groups serve better, if all or majority of the members of the groups attend the meetings and participate in the decision making process of the self-help Groups. The following table presented the percentage of attendance of the members in the meetings of the Groups. It is observed from the above table that (10.0%) of the respondents stated that there is less than 25% of attendance, followed by another (16.0%) of the respondents stated that there is 25% to 50% attendance, about (56.0%) of the respondents stated that there is 50% to 75% of attendance and the remaining (18.0%) of the respondents stated that there is more than 75% of the attendance in meetings of self –Help groups.

Table No. 5: Have you ever undergone training

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	83	55.3
No	52	34.7
Not remembering	15	10.0
Total	150	100.0

Many of the training programmes are available that are sponsored by the government policies and Non-governmental Organizations to train the Sc women in various kinds of skills to undertake income generating activities. These include tailoring, Embroidery, preparing Bakery Items, Agrabatti making Mushroom cultivation etc. the information on whether the respondents have undergone such kinds of training is depicted in the following table. The above table clearly shows that about (55.3%) of the respondents have undergone training in different occupations and the remaining only (34.7%) of the respondents have not undergone any kind of training .however, (10.0%) of the respondents women were such they are not at all remembering whether they have undergone any type of training or not.

Table No. 6 : Name the training programmes attended

	Frequency	Percent
Tailoring	40	26.6
Embroidery	30	20.0
Bakery items	8	5.3
Mushroom cultivate	5	3.3
Total	83	55.3

It is observed that many of the respondents attended the different training programmes. These training programmes include the enhancement of the skills in attended by these respondents are shown in the following table .it is observed from the above table that about (26.6%) of the respondents have undergone training of tailoring, followed by about (20.0%) of the respondents have got training in Embroidery, about (5.3%) of the respondents expressed that they took training in making of bakery items and about (3.3%) of the respondents got training in Mushroom Cultivation.

CONCLUSION:

Women's Empowerment is critical to ensure the socio-economic development of any community. To bring women into the mainstream and to encourage their participation in the process of national development has, therefore, been a major concern of the Government. Despite all legislations, planning and developmental government schemes women remain a vulnerable group. The policy makers have to go in for a more broad based approach that addresses planning, adequate resource allocation, programme design and formulation, targeted intervention and implementation based upon the requirement of women residing at the field level with their participation. Gender mainstreaming has to be a guiding force in all these activities to maximize outreach of public expenditure and benefits for women. Further universalizing access is very important for meaningful outcomes. Inter-state and intra- state imbalances have persisted for a long time and need to be addressed more forcefully. Some overlap of gender and developmental issues will take place- this is inevitable given the wide gap in availability and requirement of socioeconomic infrastructure in the country.

The Self-Help Groups are aimed for women economic empowerment in Kamataka. To achieve their purpose, the women have to start productive occupations. But the study revealed that the women are borrowing loan from the Self-help groups for domestic and unproductive use. But it is worth to note that majority of the Sc. women respondents agreed that the women should have to work outside the family, so as to get respect and status. Further, education to the women is emphasized by the backward women respondents. It is surprising to note that majority of the Sc women knows about the self-employment schemes of the government, but most of them have not got benefit from these schemes, Hence. There is need to increase awareness among the Sc women regarding these schemes and the Non-Govt mental Organizations have to play an important role in such activities. The majority of the respondents agreed that they are making decisions with their husbands in their family, which shows that the equal participation of the women in the family. Majority of the Sc women also agree that the women are equal with men in all respect. It shows that the present women are aware of their rights in the family and society. The women do not support intercaste marriage and love marriages, which show their narrow mind about the castes in the society. Such psychology of the rural women should need to be developed. The efforts of the Government are also appreciating, as majority of the women got seed money to form Self-Help Groups. It is also noted that majority of the women respondents stated that the Village Panchayats do not interfere and solve the problems of the women effectively. Many of the women respondents agreed that the Non-Governmental Organizations are also unable to push Sc women problems due to some reasons already stated in the eariel study. For this purpose, there is need for the Panchayats and Non-Governmental Organizations to look after the women empowerment activities so as to provide equal

status for the today's women.

SUGGESTIONS:

Following few suggestions and recommendations made from the analysis of present study: there is need to increase the banking attitude of the Self-Help Group Members.

- 2.The emphasis on the active participation of the members in meetings of the groups is essentially needed.
- 3.The decision making should be developed by all the members of the Self- Help Groups.
- 4.Increase in attendance to the meetings of the groups on the part of members is emphasized.
- 5.Regular training of the members of self-help groups for undertaking income generating activities is essential. For this purpose, new small scale occupations are discovered and in which the rural women must be trained.
- 6.Based on the findings it can be that SHG are expeted to extend financial services to the poor. Sc women and contribute to the alleviation of poverty.
- 7.Thirty percent of SHG in the sample have been involved in community actions. These involved improving community services.

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