

Chapter – VIII

Strategies for Educational and Economic Empowerment of Scheduled Caste Women

8.1 Introduction

Empowering women and encouraging gender equality within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the 2000's was enshrined as sustainable development activities. Women agency and independence are the key means of improving their growth. Education is one of the key factors for empowerment of women, development and welfare. Education plays a very significant role in the economic and social development of women and it shows that the women empowerment could only possible through educating women (Sundaram et. al., 2014). In recent time the popular notion is that education leads to the women towards empowerment but we still have to learn how education actually helps women empowerments (Stromquist, 2015; Da Costa, 2008; Murphy-Graham, 2008). In the last few decades the goal of women empowerment has received serious attention and it sometime linked with women's education. It gets funding from donors and various International organization (Unterhalter, 2007; Mosedale, 2005; Papart et al., 2002; Malhotra et al., 2002; Oxaal and Baden, 1997). Like education, economic development of women is closely related to women empowerment. Economic development plays a vital role in reducing the inequality between men and women. Economic development is related with the educational development (Bhoganadam et. al., 2014). Economic development is dependent on the available resource of the region and the skill of the women to use the resources. Moreover it depends on the women access or control over the resources and whether they have the opportunities to involve themselves in the economic activities. In the real world they faced various obstacles through the process of the economic empowerment. The women particularly for those who belongs to the weaker section including SC and ST, mainly the women who lived in the rural area and included in the informal and unorganized sector and are marginal worker they have limited access on the resources. Therefore they remained always marginalized, poor and socially excluded. Strategies should make to encounter the hindrances of educational and economic development of the SC women in the study area.

8.2 Strategies for Educational Empowerment

Education is the most important power that shapes the lives of humanity. It empowers with knowledge, awareness, and ability to think, reasons, take appropriate decisions and protect from oppression and abuse and provide adequate power to fight for the rights. Education considered as a vital instrument in empowering women, as it expands the freedom of choice and actions and provide strength and confidence to participate in different aspects of social, political and economic matters. Education and empowerment both are closely dependable to each other (Ahmed et al., 2006). Although both have their own individuality, although the education is considered as the most vital device for employment and most efficient component of women empowerment (Anju et al., 2002; Pandit, 1997). Education not only offers the knowledge and skill to improve health and livelihoods (Beena & Jothi, 2012), but it gives the power of fight to acquire her own place in society and the development process (Malhotra, 1997; Rafikul, 2010). An educated woman is more concerned about her family's dignity, health and hygiene. Better education does not means that it leads towards the better individual income but it is the precondition for the long term economic growth of individual as well as for the family. The research conducted by the World Bank and other International organization that increasing the women education boosting the wage which leads to the faster growth of the economy of the country or the region (Beena & Jothi, 2012) and moreover the money earn by the women is invested in their household mainly in the child education and enhancing the family well-being. Thus following Strategies are suggested for the schedule caste women and girls to achieve the goal of educational empowerment in the study area.

- Awareness is the best tool for the educational empowerment of the women. The awareness programs should be organized by the local government and the respected schools in their local area to create awareness amongst the women and girls specially the weaker section of the society like SC and ST, about the education and employment opportunities in the various effective ways like workshop, seminar and street drama or in the form of a play.
- Especially the schools have to divide their teachers in several groups and sent them to visit their local area in every week to aware the parents of the dropout girl students and discuss about various existing scholarship available for the girl child, to reduce the female dropout in the school level.

- The schools could start some specialized short term course on the women's development along with the formal teaching.
- Residential girls' schools should be open in every block especially for the backward classes and free education should be provided till higher secondary level to increase the level of education among the women of weaker section instead of increasing only the literacy level.
- Schools for girls should be at reachable distance and sufficient infrastructure facilities like toilets, fresh drinking water, and proper classrooms with digital equipment's, computer lab, and lab for practical based subject and adequate number of female teachers should be provided.
- The reward along with the scholarship should be given to each rank holder of every class, from primary to post graduation level for increasing the interest among the girls towards education which increase a healthy competition among the students. The scholarship should be in terms of cash which helps to meet their educational expenses and the reward should be like any kind of trophy, books, cycle, laptop etc. which increase the interest about the study.
- A Technical school and college should be open in every sub-division especially for Girl's with 50 percent reservation for the scheduled caste female for the improvement of the scheduled caste female in the technical education as their participation in the technical education is very low in the district.
- In every school the first class should be mandatory for yoga and meditation for better physical and physiological health of the students, specially the girl students.
- Involved the girl students in various activities in schools like gardening, kitchen gardening, beautification of school building or compound, keep exhibition in every week on their own model or poster subject wise which increase the interest among the girl students about the school and education system.
- The inscriptional and motivational stories and news of the various women celebrities like sports persons, or any other established female personal like BDO, SDO, DM, Police officer, female officers of any Indian armed forces and shared their struggling stories through the awareness Programs in the every

school monthly to motivate the girls to increase the interest in education and towards their goal which is empowerment and self-reliance.

- Along with the formal education various skill development courses should be run by the school for the girl students like tailoring, beautician, handloom like making various handmade home decors, mobile, television and computer repairing etc.
- The purpose of the education should be any kind of employment oriented not only Government job oriented as most of the respondents wanted that their children to become a Government servant. To solve the problem private firm and company should be open in the district and internship programs and composing should be started in the college level for the better employment to the educated people just after completion of their degree.

The road ahead for education of women is long and winding. Much needs to be accomplished, first to attract the girl child to enroll in schools and then to retain, train and educate them. Although structural issues may be easier to address with the commitment and will of the government and local bodies, the psychological and sociological barriers require long-term sustained efforts from all. Improving attitudes towards the girl child, challenging prevalent norms of society and countering gender stereotyping and segregation will require more than government engagement; it will take the concerted effort of civil society, institutes of higher learning, other stakeholders in education and, above all, the initiative and will of women themselves.

8.3 Strategies for Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment is nothing but making women aware about their role and importance in economic development, providing them space for attaining financial independence and accounting their significant contributions to the production process. It is a process of upgrading the position of women and make them self-dependent by providing economic opportunities, better jobs, better business climate and access to financial services. Various authors have studied about the women's economic empowerment in India. Pangannavar (2015) explained his holistic approach of the self help groups in generating employment opportunities among women and economically empowered women in rural India. In his study highlights his concept of "Self Reliant Village

Economy”, it could be only constituted if rural women are going to be economic empowered. Roopa et al. (2017) has expressed their deep concern on the economic empowerment of the rural women as it increases the equal opportunities for the women in household and community decision making. Wiklander (2010) discussed in his research work that women in rural India should be empowered economically then only the women will be free from domestic abuse and will get equal access to decision making process in households as well as in the society and get the property rights. Women entrepreneurs in rural areas must be supported through microfinance and their services and produces must be got into supply chains. In order to increase women's access to the new digital media, information and communication technologies, a combining market can be developed through link the women and their business with online platform which increases other business opportunities too.

- Most of the scheduled caste women (40.00 percent) are engaged in household work like taking care of the children and educate them, look after the older member of the family, cooking for the whole family, taking care of sick and along with all house hold work they work in the agricultural field (25.93 percent) but after all the work they are termed as unpaid worker and their work is not considered as economic activity and their work is not taken in to the measure of economic growth. The people and government should recognized self-less hard work of the women and calculate their working time with any other economic activity and included in the national economic growth.
- Among the respondents only 3.00 percent of the respondents have ownership of property in the district. Women’s should have equal rights and ownership on her father and husband’s property which gives the access and control over, assets and other resources which provide them power to participate in decision making in the household or outside as well as gives economic empowerment to the women.
- The Government should provide subsidiary loan for cultivation to the women who have own the agricultural land which encourage the men to give ownership of the land to women as well as it gives the women great access over resources which give them enough confident and freedom to make decision about their agricultural work.

- Among the paid worker most of the respondents are agricultural labour (19.00 percent) followed by daily labour or construction worker (7.00 percent). But unfortunately in both the sector the women get less wages than men for the same work. Where a male agricultural labour get Rs. 300 to Rs.350 but a female agricultural labour get Rs.200 to Rs.250 for the same work. In construction a woman get Rs. 300 but a man get Rs. 400 and more for the same work. So to eradicate the discrimination in the wage pattern the government have to implemented strict law and the police should have taken proper action if any female complain about the wage discrimination and more over a police helpline number should be given that the poor women could easily logged a complain.
- In the study area 9.00 percent women are engaged in the industry among them 60.00 percent engaged in brick kiln industry but they did not get any facility like maternity benefit, day care facility for the child or any kind of benefit related to their health care facility. They do not have any pension schemes or accidental benefit. So government authority should look into the matter with serious concern that the women get all the benefit in their work places which encourage them to engagement in the work with full satisfaction.
- In the district most of the scheduled caste women (4.00 percent) are engaged in the household industry. Among them majority are engaged with beedi industry. They make beedi after completing all their household work. In modern term we can say part time job. The beedi making or rolling rate is very low as compare to other work which is in between Rs. 110 to Rs.150 for rolling 1000 beedi. The rate varies company to company. So the Government concern authority should take proper step to fix the rate of beedi rolling with and monitor the beedi industry properly. Another important thing is there should be a health insurance facility for the beedi worker as beedi rolling has a serious negative impact on the health (Das et al, 2018), then only women can work happily in the beedi making and more number of women will be engaged with it and gives the employment to the rural women.
- Another occupation of the women in the district is small business like small grocery shop, fast food shop, tailoring shop, beauty parlor etc. so the Banks and other financial institutions should provide loan to the rural women on soft

terms and condition to support them economically as well as to empower them.

- As in the district maximum women are not engaged in the economic activity so to involve them in the economic activity a proper road map should be prepared. For this work the Government should introduce employment bank in every block and the bank should be collect the information from the interesting women who wanted to engaged themselves in the economic activity. After that the Government could easily give them employment based on their qualification and experience.
- Based on the employment bank data and their qualification the women should be categorized and proper training should be provided to the women which ensure the employment opportunity not only in the Government sector but in the private sector or encourage them to develop small entrepreneurship. Priority should be given to the scheduled caste women.
- The MGNREGA has a great impact on the rural employment and economic condition. The Government should do proper monitoring over the work, whether the rural poor people get the total 100 days work or not, whether they get the money on time or not and ensure their total 100 days work and payment on time. As in the study area most of the respondent are not satisfied with the scheme as most of them do not get total 100 days work in the year. Maximum they get 75 to 80 days in a year and money is not given on time.
- Job card of MGNREGA scheme should be issued for the every rural scheduled caste women as they are the weaker section of the society and with the guaranty employment they ensure the employments which provide them the economic independence.
- Encourage the women by modernization of technologies and up-gradation of skills in traditional arts and crafts sectors such as handlooms and handicrafts, like gamcha (towel) making, sitalpati (mat) making, glass work, metal work, katha stitching, making various crafts using bamboo and jute etc. and support them financially to empower the women.
- Self Help Groups (SHGs) has a great impact on the economic development of the rural women. So motivate the landless and agricultural laborers, especially scheduled caste women to form SHGs and development of small entrepreneurship with the support of bank and micro credit society. The SHGs

should be monitor properly by a monitoring body which can look after whether the women used the money properly, whether they used the money in the economic activity and the body should give the proper guidance to the women that they can utilized the money to improve their economic condition.

- In every gram panchayat level a multipurpose training center should be open for the interested rural poor women of the SHGs which increase the employability of the women but priority should be given to the scheduled caste women. Various type of training should be provided in the training center like tailoring, doll making, beautician, professional photographer, pickle making, tomato ketchup making, paneer making, cheese making, soya paneer making, mix farming, fish farming etc. The training should be provided by the expert within the gram panchayat and priority should be given to the women. So in this way the some women could enhanced their skilled and some skilled women get employment which leads them towards economic empowerment.
- Increasing women share in the governing bodies related to policy making or decision making which helps to facilitating women inclusion in the economic sphere.
- After the study the researcher has proposed a model where the Government and the SHGs together can work for the economic development of the rural scheduled caste the women in the district which leads to the economic empowerment of the women. The name of the proposed model is **Community Based Co-operative Network Business Model (CBCNBM)**. Under this model

i) One SHG has to be selected from each block on the basis of their performance and the member of the SHG should be sent for a skilled development training program which provides employment to the member of the SHG. Only one SHG should be selected at a time for a particular training for a month. The district has 12 blocks so 12 type of training should be given in a year. Some specific business model could be selected for this purpose like fish farming in bio-flux or bottom clean technique, color fish farming, poultry farming, dairy farming, dairy product making, pickle making, paper plate making, paper carry bag making, soya paneer making, various kind of handicraft making by using bamboo, jute, wood and clay, horticulture, plantation farming like banana, guava, apple kul, etc. and chips making

(potato, banana, radish), chanachur making, muri making, batasa (sweet) making, brown rice mill etc.

ii) After successfully completing the training the Government provides a loan with low interest rate with maximum 2 year time period and a governing body should be formed for monitor and proper guidance for setup the business with the money and for the SHG and the member are already trained for the business. The body properly guide them until they sale their finished product.

iii) When the SHG become success and independent they have to train the same business model at least two SHGs from any block within the district and after each successful competition of the training session the host SHG get 10 percent incentive on the loan amount of the trainee SHG.

iv) Same ways the network of the business model goes on form one SHG to other SHG and after a certain period of time every village will have a SHG with their business model which provide the job opportunity to the women which give them economic independence.

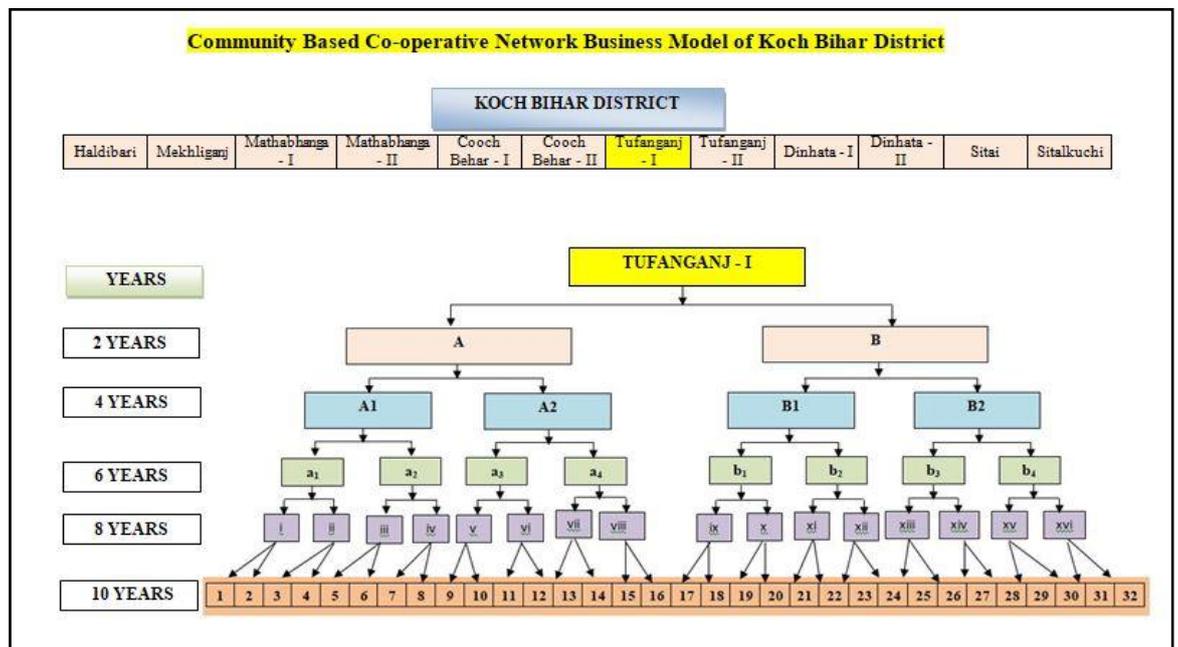


Figure 8.1 Community Based Co-operative Business Model (CBCBM).

First year 12 SHG from 12 blocks has been trained and setup their business model. After the next two year they trained 24 SHGs and after 4 year 48 new SHGs will be trained same way after 10 year the total trained SHGs will be 384 and the total Gram Panchayat of the district is 128, So after 10 years in every Gram Panchayat level the trained SHGs build 3 specific business model and this way all the rural women in the

district get employment through the Community Based Co-operative Network Business Model (CBCNBM) and then they could send their product to the outer district and even go online with better sale and economic growth for the business as well as their own.

To showing the ground reality of the model two examples have been given with a proper cost benefit analysis. As the most of the Scheduled Caste people are dependent on the cultivation and fishing activities so the example also given from the cultivation and fish farming activity with proper cost benefit analysis and the level of their profit.

Cost Benefit Analysis of Fish Farming Using Biofloc

Table 8.1 Variables Cost for Biofloc

Sl. no	Particulars	Amount in Rs.
1	Cost of Biofloc for 10,000 liter water capacity (Concrete)	30,000
2	Instrument for the Biofloc	
	2.1 Water Pump	2299
	2.2 Oxygen Machine	3300
	2.3 Water Testing kits	3150
	2.4 Pipes for oxygen pump	1250
	2.5 Pipes for water pump	750
3	Cost of fish seeds (6000pcs)	9000
4	Feeding Cost	
	4.1 First month (1kg per day)	2400
	4.2 Second month (1.5 kg per day)	3600
	4.3 Third month (2 kg per day)	3600
	4.4 Fourth month (2.5 kg per day)	4500
5	Electricity (1 unit per day for 4 months)	720
6	Transport Cost (estimated production 400 kg)	2400
Total Variable Cost		66969
Estimated Production and Market Price of the Fish		
On an average weight of per fish 75gm. Total 6000pcs, some fishes died, remain no of fishes 5500pcs. Total weight $5500 \times 75\text{gm} = 412.5 \text{ kg}$ Total income 412.5×180		Total Income in rs. 75870
Total Profit		$75870 - 66969 = 8901$

This model is possible in the Biofloc or bottom clean fish farming, which is most profitable small scale business which practiced in various part of the district. For this business model the cost benefit analysis has been done. Within first four months total profit is 8901 rupees. After the exclusion of the infrastructural cost, which is one time investment of 40000 rupees (approx.), the profit will be $75870 - 26969 = 48901$ rupees. Calculated for the year is $48901 \times 3 = 146703$ rupees. They can easily repay their loan of 80000 rupees within a year. So if they introduced this model in the district, the economic growth of the families will be huge and all the women get employment by various models and become self reliance.

Along with the Biofloc or bottom clean fish farming, poultry farming, paper plate and glass making, livestock farming, paper bag making, small brown rice mill, pickle making, paneer making and nursery etc. could be possible and profitable small scale business which easily could be established under the CBCNBM for overall economic empowerment of the women in the district.

Cost Benefit Analysis of Elephant Foot Yam Cultivation

Table 8.2 variable cost of Yam cultivation

Sl. no	Particulars	Amount in Rs.
1	Cost Structure	
1.1	Land Rent for one year time period	6000
1.2	Cost of Seeds (800 kg × Rs. 40)	32000
1.3	Organic Manure (20 Cart × Rs. 300)	6000
1.4	DAP Fertilizer (160 kg × Rs. 24)	3840
1.5	Other Chemical Fertilizers and Pesticides (estimated maximum)	5000
1.6	Labour Cost (estimated maximum)	10500
1.7	Irrigation Cost (estimated maximum)	1000
1.8	Transport Cost (estimated maximum)	5000
2	Total Cost	69340
Estimated Production and Market of price Elephant foot yam		
On an average weight of per Elephant foot yam 3kg. for 1600 saplings (1600×3kg)		Total Income in Rs.
Total 4800 kg Elephant foot yam cultivated (estimated)		
Market Price per kg of Elephant foot yam – Rs. 25 (Minimum estimated price)		
Total income 4800× Rs. 25		
Total Profit		120000 – 69340 = 50660 Rupees

Most of the Scheduled Caste women in the district are engaged in agricultural activity as a cultivator and as an agriculture labour. So the main focus should be on the cultivation, in the study the researcher has tried to find out a suitable but profitable crop for the women in the study area who can easily do cultivate this cash crop with less labour force and less afford along with their all household work which is Elephant foot yam cultivation. But for this little training is needed to know the land quality, proper proportion of fertilizer, time and amount of water etc. The Yam is cultivated within six month and it gives more profit than other crops but for cultivation of the Yam huge money is required as the price of Yam seeds are too costly and it has been imported from Andhra Pradesh. It required high land sandy loam soil and required less irrigation. Only very few people of the district are cultivated this cash crops. If the women of the SHGs take loan from bank for one year they can easily repayment their loan within one year by cultivating this crop.

In the above table the total cost benefit analysis has been done for the Yam cultivation for a bigha of land. As the costing is high for Yam cultivation first time they should cultivate for one bigha land. 1bigha land means 14400 sq. feet. So the length of a side will be 120 feet. A seed has to be sown atleast 3 feet distance, so one line it should be 40 and for the one bigha the number of seeds required $40 \times 40 = 1600$. The size of one Yam seed at least half kilogram so the total required Yam seed is $1600 \div 2 = 800$ kilogram. The price of one kilogram Yam seed is Rs. 40, so total cost for the seed only $800 \times 40 = 32000$ rupees and other variable cost has been shown in the table. If the production of Yam after six month atleast 3 kilogram each so the total production will be $1600 \times 3 = 4800$ kilogram from 1 bigha land and 3 kilogram is the estimated minimum size and the estimated minimum market price of the Yam is Rs. 25 per kilogram. So the total price of the Yam will be $4800 \times 25 = 120000$ rupees and the profit will be Rs.50660. Even after the six month they can use the land for cultivation of vegetables or Potato. They can reduce the cost of the farming if the work done by them then the labour cost will be reduced and profit will increased. This is another proposal from the researcher which could be done by using the proposed model.

8.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher discuss about various strategies for educational and economic empowerment of the women of the study area. But for overall empowerment of the women the education and economic empowerment is not sufficient although the economic empowerment always gives the higher priority as the decision making within the household and outside the household is depends on the economic status of the women. But for overall empowerment of the women the focused should be on the all the five aspect of the women empowerment like social, educational, economic, political and cultural. Without fulfilling all the aspect it is impossible to propose fruitful development strategies. Thus it could be said that the women empowerment is the subsequent development and it is a continuous process of engagement, involvement and improvement the economic and social status of the women through the awareness and skill development which create better society for tomorrow and more over buildup the self confidence among the women from the powerlessness to the powerfulness. The women have to understand that empowerment could not possible form the outside by any kind of strategies and programs until and unless they empower themselves through participating in every decision making process within the house, society and political activities with full confidence and with equal opportunity to the men in every aspect.

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