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**NEW INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES FOR
SC WOMEN - A CASE STUDY
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

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Abstract

New Industrial Enterprises for SC women was a project implemented by Thiruananthapuram Corporation during the last year (2011-12) of XI Five Year Plan. The aim of the project is to remove poverty and improve the socio-economic status of the SC women living Below Poverty Line (BPL) by enhancing the income of beneficiaries. Three industrial units were formed for the creation of employment opportunities. They are (a) catering and traditional food processing unit, (b) production of bakery products and (c) readymade dress making unit. The analysis of the data reveals that the creation of employment opportunities helped to improve their daily life. Production has always increased. The beneficiaries expressed that, their standard of living has improved satisfactorily. In many of the poorest families, their income is very important. In some families they are the only earners. Others were depending upon their income.

Disclaimer

This working paper has been prepared by Smt. Beena. M, Research Assistant, District Planning Office, Thiruvananthapuram. The facts and figures in the report are based on quick field survey done by the author and do not reflect the views or policies of Kerala State Planning Board. The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive overview of the scheme/projects implemented by the Local Self Government during XI Five Year Plan.

Introduction

Women constitute half of the world's population but they continue to be the poorest of poor due to lack of control over resources and decision making. They play a vital role in every walk of life. But their abilities and willingness are underutilized or unutilised for the economic development. They continue to play their traditional roles in agricultural and industry. According to an estimate by National Commission on Self Employed Women, 94 per cent of female workforce operates within highly exploited unorganised sector (Kurukshehra, 2005).

But now the situation is changed. Many of the women are engaged in various economic activities for the improvement of their life. Government has also stressed the importance of the upliftment of marginalised sections. A large number of women oriented programmes were implemented through the Five Year Plan.

The project of "New Industrial Enterprises for SC Women" was implemented by Thiruvananthapuram Corporation during 2011-12, that is, last year of 11th Five Year Plan. The project was included in the production sector and the implementation was entrusted to the Industrial Extension Officer. The criteria for the selection of individuals were SC women living below poverty line.

The aim of this project is to remove poverty and improve the social and economic status of SC women living Below Poverty Line by enhancing the income of beneficiaries. The income is proposed to be increased by increasing production, increasing the value of the products, improving the quality of the products and by improving the marketing facilities.

Three Industrial Employment Enterprises were formed for the creation of employment opportunities for SC women. Each unit have 5 to 10 members. They are actively participating & co-operating in the production process. Major units are:

- (a) Catering and Traditional Food Processing Units.
- (b) Production of Bakery Products
- (c) Readymade Dressmaking Units.

Objectives of the Study

To examine whether the project has been successful in attaining its objectives

Importance of the Study

Employment of women is an index of their status in society. The empowerment and autonomy of women's social, economic and political status is essential for the achievement of life. To speed up economic development and to produce significant social gains women participation and their upliftment is essential.

In Kerala, women population is very high compared to men population. In this situation improvement of their status is very essential especially in the case of marginalised sections. Many of them are living in vulnerable situation. Creation of new employment opportunities is very helpful to improve their standard of living and removal of poverty.

Creation of employment opportunities → increase in production → increase the income of the individuals → improved status and standard of living → social & economic development of the individual in society.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary data are used for the study. Primary data are mainly collected with a structured interview schedule and discussion with members of the units. Secondary data are collected from Economic Review.

Organisation of the Report

The report is organised into three parts. First one is introductory part. Second section deals with data analysis and last one is major findings and suggestions.

Limitation of the Study

The major limitation of this study is time constraint. The fragmentary evidence and the tentative conclusions are expected to provide scope for deeper exploration at advance level.

Analysis of Primary Data

Primary data was collected from three units. Two groups were from Catering and Traditional Food Processing Unit and Production of Bakery Products & one group from Ready Made Dress Making Unit.

There are 59 groups in Catering and Traditional Food Processing unit. For the study two groups were selected from this unit. Each group contain 10 members. They were actively participating in their works. They are also provided outdoor services. It is very helpful to increase their income and improve their standard of living. They prepare different varieties food with taste, cleanliness and neatly. Each unit provides 100 to 125 meals in every day. The price is ₹ 15 to ₹ 30. The members expressed that, it is a major source of their family income.

There are 50 groups in production of bakery product units. They have produced various types of bakery products and distributed in their localities. Some members have collected the products and delivered to the homes. It is the main source of income of their family.

In Ready-made dress making units, 40 groups were formed. One group was selected for study. There are 8 members in this group. They have collected raw materials from various places at cheaper rate. They also expressed that, income from the unit is the primary source of their family income.

Age Group of Members

Age is one of the most important indicators of the development. In this analysis, we have seen that the age group between 40 to 50 years (40%) of SC women are actively participated in the Catering and Traditional Food processing units. In production

of bakery products, 47.37% in the age group between 20 to 30 years and in Ready Made Dressmaking Units, majority of them are between the age group 20to 40 years. Details are given in Table 1.

Table 1
Age Group of the Members (In per cent)

Age group	Catering and traditional food processing unit	Production of bakery products	Ready- made dress making units
Below 20	0	0	0
20-30	20	36.84	50
30-40	35	47.37	50
40-50	40	15.79	0
50 and above	5	0	0
Total	100	100	100

Source: Sample survey

Educational Status

Education plays a vital role in economic and social development of the country. The pattern of distribution of the educational qualification of the respondents of each units are given in Table 2.

Table 2
Educational Status of the Members (In %)

Qualification	Catering and food processing	Production of bakery products	Ready- made dress making
Below SSLC	30	0	0
SSLC	25	52.63	12.5
Pre Degree	35	47.37	87.5
Degree and above	10	0	0
Total	100	100	100

Source: Sample survey

Total Income of the Unit

(a) Catering and Traditional Food Processing Unit:

Each unit have obtained nearly ₹ 72,000 per month. Each member have earned between ₹ 4,000 to ₹ 6,000 per month. They pay ₹ 8,000 as loan ₹ 4,000 is kept aside to meet unprecedented expenses.

Production of Bakery Products:

The total income of the two groups is between ₹ 35,000 to ₹ 45,000. The individuals earned income between ₹ 3,500 to ₹ 4,000 per month.

(b) Ready Made Dress Making Unit:

The total income of this group is ₹ 59,000 and each Individual have obtained ₹ 5,000 per month.

Improvement of Standard of Living

The analysis shows that, their standard of living has improved, which is given in Table 3.

Table 3
Improvement of Standard of Living (In per cent)

Status	Catering and traditional food processing unit	Production of bakery products	Ready-made dress making units
Highly improved	0	0	0
Improved	100	100	100
Satisfactorily	0	0	0

Source: Sample survey

Infrastructure Facilities

The selected groups are informed that, there is no facility for transporting their products. Major portion of their profit is diverted for transportation.

They also reported that, there is no shelter for the production of products.

Findings and Suggestions

The contribution of women to the economy by and large remains unrecognized. In many of the poor families, their income is very important. In some families they are the only earners. Others were depending upon their income. In such a situation, new employment industrial enterprises for marginalised group are very important. This helps to create more self employment opportunities and also help to improve their standard of living.

Major Findings

- (a) There are 5 to 10 members in each group. They actively participate in the production of products.
- (b) The marital status shows that, the married women are highly concentrated in these groups. They are living Below Poverty Line (BPL) and their income is very important in their family.
- (c) In the primary data analysis, it is seen that 40 per cent of the women aged between 40 to 45 are engaged in the Catering and Traditional food processing unit, 47.37 per cent of the women aged between 20 to 30 years are engaged in the production of bakery products and in readymade dressmaking units' majority of them are between the age group of 20 to 40 years.
- (d) The educational status shows that most of them are above matriculation.
- (e) The total income of each group is above ₹ 50,000 except one group. In the initial stage, their total income is very less. Then

after a period of time, production increases and automatically their income also increase.

- (f) The minimum earning of an individual is ₹ 3,500 and the maximum is ₹ 6,000. The members expressed that this income is very essential for their daily life.
- (g) The members of the groups have reported that it is the major source of their family income.
- (h) The raw materials are collected at whole sale shops in the nearest localities. In the case of Ready-made dress making units, materials are collected from outside state at a cheaper rate.
- (i) They expressed that their standard of living has improved satisfactorily.
- (j) Production has always increased.
- (k) They can pay their bank loans without any delay. Catering units and production of bakery products paid ₹ 8,000 as loan in every month and readymade unit paid ₹ 6,000 in every month.
- (l) All groups expressed their dissatisfaction about the infrastructure facilities. Major portion of their profits are diverted for the transportation facilities. This is adversely affecting the development of the unit.
- (m) Another major finding is that there is no shelter for the production of the products.
- (n) Canvassing and other methods were taken for improving the marketing of their products. The implementing officer also helps to improve their marketing facilities.

Issues faced by the implementing stage and running stage of this project:

(a) Implementing stage:

The implementing officer had reported that during the implementing stage, the beneficiary had to face the problem of delay in submission of the documents like caste certificate, income certificate etc.

(b) Running stage:

Beneficiaries expressed that there is a tough competition in the open market. Therefore their existences depend on the knowledge about the market situations.

Suggestions

- (a) Improve the infrastructure facilities. If a project implemented, the authority should ensure the infrastructure facilities for the units or the group.
- (b) Quality products should be produced and distributed. It should be ensured.
- (c) Uniform is very essential. This helps to improve their identity.
- (d) Conduct effective training programme for the members of the units.
- (e) Create awareness about modern electronic facilities& also provide equipments to each group.
- (f) In the present situation, the prices of raw materials are very high. In such a situation, the Government should help the units to buy materials at cheaper rate. (i) Subsidy should be provided. For the smooth functioning of this process, government should provide identity card for the groups.
- (g) Cleanliness and neatness should be ensured.
- (h) Introduce better marketing facilities.
- (i) More financial support should be given to the units.

Conclusion

Women are the major source of labour force in almost all regions of world. Development can be achieved only through the maximum participation of men and women. But their contribution is continued to be undervalued and under estimated. Now the situation is changed. An increase in the cost of living, women are automatically opting for any type of job. The single income of the men in the family is no longer sufficient to make both ends meet. The new women employment unit are very helpful to the creation of employment opportunities. This will enhance their income and standard of living.

Appendix - 1
Population in India - Kerala & Thiruvananthapuram
(2001 & 2011)

Year	Male	Female	Total
INDIA			
2001	531277078 (51.73)*	495738169 (48.27)*	1027015247 (100)*
2011	623724248 (51.54)*	586469174 (48.46)*	1210193422 (100)*
KERALA			
2001	15468664 (48.59)*	16369955 (51.42)*	31838619 (100)*
2011	16621290 (49.78)*	17366387 (52.01)*	33387677 (100)*
TVPM			
2001	1569917 (48.54)*	1664439 (51.46)*	3234356 (100)*
2011	1584200 (47.90)*	1723084 (52.09)*	3307284 (100)*

Source: Economic Review 2010 & 2011

* Percentage to total population

Reference:

- (1) Dr. Dave Vandana, "Women workers in Unorganised Sector" Women's Link, 2012, Vol. 18, No. 3
- (2) Kerala State Planning Board, Economic Review, 2010 & 2011
- (3) Kurukshetra, 2005
- (4) Women in Kerala, 2001