

## Trade-Wise Economic Empowerment of Women

K. Venkatesan, Ph.D. Research Scholar and Dr. K. S. Pushpa

### Abstract

Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. Women empowerment involves the building up of a society, a political environment, wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being a woman in a traditionally male dominated structure. The core belief of National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is that the poor have innate capabilities and a strong desire to come out of poverty. The challenge is to unleash their capabilities to generate meaningful livelihoods and enable them to come out of poverty. Empowering women through NRLM is a need for an hour. The main objective of the study is to elicit the socio-economic status of Beneficiaries and analyse trade wise economic empowerment of the Beneficiaries. The area selected for the present study is South Andaman. 400 samples were selected by using stratified random sampling method. An interview schedule was used to elicit the socio-economic status of NRLM beneficiaries; a five-point empowerment scale was developed and used by the researcher to assess the level of economic empowerment of the respondents. Both primary and secondary data were collected for the study. The collected data were statistically analysed and interpreted by using appropriate statistical tool. NRLM may act as a engine for eradication of poverty and empowering women in Andaman. The present study concludes that the respondents are economically empowered through NRLM trainings. Factors such as Age, Education, Marital status and economic status are highly influence the study.

**Keywords: NRLM, Women Empowerment, South Andaman and Economic Empowerment**

### Introduction

*“It is impossible to think about the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is impossible for a bird to fly on only one wing.” — Swami Vivekananda*

Women in rural India generate income in various ways women are highly involved in small scale enterprises. Women have extensive workload with dual responsibility for farm and household production. Rural women in India feel the weight of poverty percentage of female are more than

male to die as infants and children. India is the world's tenth largest economy. In rural areas, women are generally not provided to have any meaningful income generation capacity. Without the power to work and earn a good income, their voices are silent (Vasuki, 2011). Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. Women empowerment involves the building up of a society, a political environment, wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being a woman in a traditionally male dominated structure (Rajeshwari, 2015). The Government of India established the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) in June 2010 to implement the new strategy of poverty alleviation woven around community-based institutions. The Mission's primary objective is to reduce poverty by promoting diversified and gainful self-employment and wage employment opportunities for sustainable increase in incomes (Government of India, 2015). The mission statement of NRLM is "to reduce poverty by enabling the poor households to access gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities, resulting in appreciable increase in their incomes, on a sustainable basis through building strong grassroots institutions of the poor. These institutions enable and empower the poor households to build-up their human, social, financial and other resources, solidarity, voice and bargaining power. They, in turn, enable them to access their rights, entitlements and opportunities" (Government of India, 2016). The core belief of National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is that the poor have innate capabilities and a strong desire to come out of poverty. The challenge is to unleash their capabilities to generate meaningful livelihoods and enable them to come out of poverty, (NIRD, 2014). Empowering women through NRLM is a need for an hour.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To elicit the socio-economic status of Beneficiaries.
2. To analyse trade wise economic empowerment of the Beneficiaries.

### **Methodology**

The area selected for the present study is South Andaman, is the third largest island in the island group. It is located immediately south of Middle Andaman Island and Baratang, from which it is separated only by a narrow channel, a few hundred meters wide. The island is 83 kilometres (52 miles) long and 28 kilometres (17 miles) at its widest part. South Andaman is less mountainous than the more northerly of the Andaman Islands. Geographical area covered by 1,262 KM<sup>2</sup>, with a total population of 20,9602. From that 11,1980 (Male) and 97,622 (Female) in 2011 census. The addresses of Village wise SHGs in South Andaman were obtained from the SHGs directory, head office and also from the websites. Area wise lists of SHGs were obtained from the Tehsil office. From the list 16 villages were selected randomly. From that 400 samples were selected by using stratified random sampling method. One of the criteria for selecting the respondents is that they must be the member of SHGs at least three or five years in order to get valid and reliable information. An interview schedule was used to elicit the socio-economic status of NRLM beneficiaries; a five point empowerment scale was developed and used by the researcher to assess the level of economic empowerment of the respondents. Both primary and

secondary data were collected for the study. The collected data were statistically analysed and interpreted by using appropriate statistical tools.

## Results

### A. Socio-economic status of Beneficiaries

Table 1  
Personal Background of the Beneficiaries

| Variables                      | Beneficiaries (N=400) |       |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
|                                | No.                   | %     |
| <b>Age (in Years)</b>          |                       |       |
| 18-25                          | 93                    | 23.3  |
| 26-35                          | 122                   | 30.5  |
| 36-45                          | 134                   | 33.5  |
| Above 45                       | 51                    | 12.8  |
| Total                          | 400                   | 100.0 |
| <b>Educational Level</b>       |                       |       |
| Illiterate                     | 27                    | 6.8   |
| Primary                        | 73                    | 18.3  |
| Upper Primary                  | 93                    | 23.3  |
| Higher Secondary               | 115                   | 28.8  |
| Graduate and above             | 92                    | 23.0  |
| Total                          | 400                   | 100.0 |
| <b>Marital status</b>          |                       |       |
| Married                        | 267                   | 66.8  |
| Unmarried                      | 69                    | 17.3  |
| Widow                          | 64                    | 16.0  |
| Total                          | 400                   | 100.0 |
| <b>Employment Categories</b>   |                       |       |
| Agricultural Labourer          | 109                   | 27.3  |
| Landless Agricultural Labourer | 87                    | 21.8  |
| Private Worker                 | 64                    | 16.0  |
| Self Employed                  | 59                    | 14.8  |
| No Specific Job                | 81                    | 20.3  |
| Total                          | 400                   | 100.0 |

The personal background of the selected beneficiaries shows that 23.3 per cent of them were in the age group of 18-25 years and 30.5 per cent in age group of 26-35. Around 33.5 per cent of them were in the age group of 36-45 years and 12.8 % of them were above 45 years. Regarding the educational level 6.8 per cent of them were illiterate, 18.3 per cent were

primary, 23.3 per cent were upper primary, 28.8 per cent were higher secondary and 23 per cent were graduate and above. The marital status of the beneficiaries shows that 66.8 per cent of them are married, 17.3 per cent of them unmarried and 16 per cent of them are widows. Under the employment categories 27.3 per cent of them were agricultural labourer, 21.8 per cent of them were landless agricultural labourer. Around sixteen per cent of them were private worker, 14.8 per cent of them were self employed and 20.3 per cent of them were have no specific job.

Table 2  
Family Background of the Beneficiaries

| Variables              | Beneficiaries (N=400) |       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
|                        | No.                   | %     |
| <b>Family Type</b>     |                       |       |
| Nuclear Family         | 283                   | 70.8  |
| Joint Family           | 117                   | 29.3  |
| Total                  | 400                   | 100.0 |
| <b>Family Size</b>     |                       |       |
| Below 5 members        | 297                   | 74.3  |
| Above 5 members        | 103                   | 25.8  |
| Total                  | 400                   | 100.0 |
| <b>No. of Children</b> |                       |       |
| One                    | 36                    | 9.0   |
| Two                    | 118                   | 29.5  |
| Three                  | 139                   | 34.8  |
| More than Three        | 85                    | 21.3  |
| No Children            | 22                    | 5.5   |
| Total                  | 400                   | 100.0 |

Around 70.8 per cent of the respondents were from nuclear family and 29.3 per cent of them were from joint families. Regarding the size of the family below 5 members (74.3 %) and above 5 members (25.8 %). with reference to the number of children, one (9 %), two (29.5 %), three (34.8 %), more than three (21.3 %) and no children (5.5 %).

Table 3  
Economic background of the Beneficiaries

| Variables                | Beneficiaries (N=400) |       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
|                          | No.                   | %     |
| <b>Economic Status</b>   |                       |       |
| Below Poverty Line (BPL) | 103                   | 25.8  |
| Above Poverty Line (APL) | 297                   | 74.3  |
| Total                    | 400                   | 100.0 |

| Socio Economic Class       |     |      |
|----------------------------|-----|------|
| Upper class (26-29)        | 0   | 0    |
| Upper middle class (16-25) | 36  | 9.0  |
| Lower middle class (11-15) | 140 | 35.0 |
| Upper lower class (5-10)   | 211 | 52.7 |
| Lower class (<5)           | 13  | 3.3  |
| Total                      | 400 | 100  |

The Below Poverty Line (BPL) category of the respondents were 25.8 per cent and Above Poverty Line (APL) were 74.3 per cent. As per Kuppusamy's modified socio economic rating scale (Kumar et al., 2013), nearly 52.7 per cent of the respondents belonged to the upper lower class and around 35 per cent to the lower middle class, 9 per cent belonged to the upper middle and none belonged upper class.

### B. Trade wise Economic Empowerment.

Table 4  
Grouping of Trade of Training

| Economic Activity                 | Beneficiaries (N=400) |       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
|                                   | No.                   | %     |
| Agriculture and Allied Sector     | 71                    | 17.8  |
| Fisheries and related Sector      | 60                    | 15.0  |
| Tourism Sector                    | 48                    | 12.0  |
| Production / Manufacturing Sector | 147                   | 36.8  |
| Service Sector                    | 74                    | 18.5  |
| Total                             | 400                   | 100.0 |

Regarding Grouping of trade training shows that 36.8 per cent of the respondents reported that they obtained training in production/ Manufacturing sector, 18.5 per cent of the respondents reported Service sector, 17.8 per cent were obtained training from Agriculture and allied sector and remaining 15 per cent of the respondent reported fisheries and related sector, 12 per cent were reported Tourism sector.

Table 5  
Distribution of Economic Status and Income Generation Activities

| IGA | Economic Status          |   |                          |   |       |   |
|-----|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|-------|---|
|     | Below Poverty Line (BPL) |   | Above Poverty Line (APL) |   | Total |   |
|     | No.                      | % | No.                      | % | No.   | % |
|     |                          |   |                          |   |       |   |

|                                   |     |      |     |      |     |       |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-------|
| Agriculture and Allied Sector     | 20  | 5.0  | 51  | 12.8 | 71  | 17.8  |
| Fisheries and related Sector      | 14  | 3.5  | 46  | 11.5 | 60  | 15.0  |
| Tourism Sector                    | 12  | 3.0  | 36  | 9.0  | 48  | 12.0  |
| Production / Manufacturing Sector | 38  | 9.5  | 109 | 27.3 | 147 | 36.8  |
| Service Sector                    | 19  | 4.8  | 55  | 13.8 | 74  | 18.5  |
| Total                             | 103 | 25.8 | 297 | 74.3 | 400 | 100.0 |

While comparing economic status and IGAs there is significant difference between BPL and APL in Agriculture and Allied Sector, Fisheries and related Sector, Tourism Sector, Production / Manufacturing Sector, Service Sector. Out of which production and manufacturing sector stands high (27.3 %).

Table 6  
**Marital status and Income Generation Activities**

| IGA                               | Marital status |      |           |      |       |      |       |       |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|------|-----------|------|-------|------|-------|-------|
|                                   | Married        |      | Unmarried |      | Widow |      | Total |       |
|                                   | No.            | %    | No.       | %    | No.   | %    | No.   | %     |
| Agriculture and Allied Sector     | 52             | 13.0 | 12        | 3.0  | 7     | 1.8  | 71    | 17.8  |
| Fisheries and related Sector      | 43             | 10.8 | 9         | 2.3  | 8     | 2.0  | 60    | 15.0  |
| Tourism Sector                    | 33             | 8.3  | 3         | 0.8  | 12    | 3.0  | 48    | 12.0  |
| Production / Manufacturing Sector | 99             | 24.8 | 24        | 6.0  | 24    | 6.0  | 147   | 36.8  |
| Service Sector                    | 40             | 10.0 | 21        | 5.3  | 13    | 3.3  | 74    | 18.5  |
| Total                             | 267            | 66.8 | 69        | 17.3 | 64    | 16.0 | 400   | 100.0 |

The Table 6 reveals that more than half of the beneficiaries (66.8 %) are married and into the five sectors and the highest contribution (24.0%) was in production / manufacturing sector followed by unmarried (17.3 %) and widow (16.0 %).

Table 7  
**Age wise distribution of the Beneficiaries and Income Generation Activities**

| IGA | Age wise distribution of the Beneficiaries |   |       |   |       |   |          |   |       |   |
|-----|--|---|-------|---|-------|---|----------|---|-------|---|
|     | Upto 25                                    |   | 26-35 |   | 36-45 |   | Above 45 |   | Total |   |
|     | No.  | % | No.   | % | No.   | % | No.      | % | No.   | % |

|                                   |    |      |     |      |     |      |    |      |     |       |
|-----------------------------------|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|----|------|-----|-------|
| Agriculture and Allied Sector     | 18 | 4.5% | 23  | 5.8  | 23  | 5.8  | 7  | 1.8  | 71  | 17.8  |
| Fisheries and related Sector      | 12 | 3.0  | 18  | 4.5  | 22  | 5.5  | 8  | 2.0  | 60  | 15.0  |
| Tourism Sector                    | 7  | 1.8  | 20  | 5.0  | 13  | 3.3  | 8  | 2.0  | 48  | 12.0  |
| Production / Manufacturing Sector | 36 | 9.0  | 40  | 10.0 | 55  | 13.8 | 16 | 4.0  | 147 | 36.8  |
| Service Sector                    | 20 | 5.0  | 21  | 5.3  | 21  | 5.3  | 12 | 3.0  | 74  | 18.5  |
| Total                             | 93 | 23.3 | 122 | 30.5 | 134 | 33.5 | 51 | 12.8 | 400 | 100.0 |

The Table 7 indicates that there is significant difference between age and IGAs, especially around 13.8 per cent of the women were undertaking the IGAs in Production / Manufacturing sector between the age of 36-45 years.

Table 8  
**Educational Status of the Beneficiaries and Income Generation Activities**

| IGA                               | Educational Status of Beneficiaries |         |               |                  |                    |      | Total |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|------|-------|
|                                   | Illiterate                          | Primary | Upper Primary | Higher Secondary | Graduate and above |      |       |
| Agriculture and Allied Sector     | No.                                 | 7       | 12            | 17               | 18                 | 17   | 71    |
|                                   | %                                   | 1.8     | 3.0           | 4.3              | 4.5                | 4.3  | 17.8  |
| Fisheries and related Sector      | No.                                 | 7       | 11            | 22               | 11                 | 9    | 60    |
|                                   | %                                   | 1.8     | 2.8           | 5.5              | 2.8                | 2.3  | 15.0  |
| Tourism Sector                    | No.                                 | 3       | 11            | 11               | 11                 | 12   | 48    |
|                                   | %                                   | 0.8     | 2.8           | 2.8              | 2.8                | 3.0  | 12.0  |
| Production / Manufacturing Sector | No.                                 | 8       | 25            | 26               | 46                 | 42   | 147   |
|                                   | %                                   | 2.0     | 6.3           | 6.5              | 11.5               | 10.5 | 36.8  |
| Service Sector                    | No.                                 | 2       | 14            | 17               | 29                 | 12   | 74    |
|                                   | %                                   | 0.5     | 3.5           | 4.3              | 7.3                | 3.0  | 18.5  |
| Total                             | No.                                 | 27      | 73            | 93               | 115                | 92   | 400   |
|                                   | %                                   | 6.8     | 18.3          | 23.3             | 28.8               | 23.0 | 100.0 |

While analyzing the educational status of the beneficiaries in respect of Production / Manufacturing sector it is reported that 11.5 % of them were from higher secondary followed by 10.5 per cent of them graduate and above. However, in the agriculture and allied sector as well as fisheries sector the illiterate persons altogether 3.6 per cent (1.8 % each). Overall the beneficiaries having the higher secondary level were high (28.8 %) followed by upper primary (23.3 %), graduate (23.0 %) and primary (18.2%).

## Conclusion

NRLM trainings are playing vital role in not only improving the quality of life of women but also the economy at large. The role of NRLM is multi-dimensional. Therefore, this must encouraged further and faster to improve the economic status of the society in general rural women for in particular. NRLM may act as a engine for eradication of poverty and empowering women in Andaman. The economic empowerment of the rural women is a priority under the NRLM scheme of the government of India. The growth of NRLM is essential for the beneficiaries as they ensure better standards of living and their individual, family and social empowerment. Hence the economic empowerment by the beneficiaries is high. Empowering women is pre-requisite for creating a good nation, when they are empowered society with stability assured. Empowering of women is entailing as their thoughts and their value system leads the development of a good family and good society and ultimately a good nation.

The present study concludes that the respondents are economically empowered through NRLM trainings. Factors such as Age, Education, Marital status and economic status are highly influence the study.

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**K. Venkatesan**, Ph.D. Research Scholar  
Department of Home Science  
Gandhigram Rural Institute  
(Deemed to be University)  
Tamilnadu  
India

**Dr. K. S. Pushpa**  
Professor  
Department of Home Science  
Gandhigram Rural Institute  
(Deemed to be University), Tamilnadu, India

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