



Employment Constraints of Self Employed Women

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Abstract

Workers in the informal sector typically earn less income, have unstable income, and don't have access to basic protections and services, at least which seems to be the overall conclusion of research in development and transition economies. Informal businesses also lack the potential for growth, trapping employees in menial jobs indefinitely. On the other hand the informal sector can allow a large proportion of the population to escape extreme poverty and earn an income that is satisfactory for survival. This paper highlights the hurdles faced by the self employed women in the work place. The study which has been conducted in Tirunelveli district among 500 self employed women who work in both farm and non farm sector has encountered certain problems in the work place. The researcher used percentage analysis and Factor analysis to interpret the results. The work place

constraints are located on the basis of factor analysis and it is found that the major constraints are Infrastructure Constraint (41.16%), Knowledge Constraint (32.52%), Employment constraint (13.88%) and financial constraint (12.43%). It is inferred that the infrastructure is the basic need while finance is a manageable constraints as far as the self employed women are concerned. It is noted that the self employed women need to put lot of efforts and work for long times to be successful in their venture. Anemia is the major health problem which prevails among the self employed women that needs to be eradicated by giving proper awareness along with health measures. The economic status of the women is now accepted as an indicator of a society's stage of development and therefore it becomes imperative for the government to frame policies for development of entrepreneurship among women.

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Key Words: Constraints, Employment, Health, Problems, Women, Work place

Introduction

Poverty and unemployment are the major problems of any under developed country, to which India is no exception. At the end of ninth plan various schemes were implemented to reduce poverty and to promote gainful employment. But the more attractive scheme with less effort is of self help groups. They have been recognized as a useful tool to help the poor and as an alternative mechanism to meet the urgent credit needs of the poor through thrift. SHG is medium for promoting the habit of saving among the women and to enhance the equality of status of women as participant, decision makers and beneficiaries in the democratic, economic, social and cultural spheres of life. Unemployment and temporary work are more common among women than among men. Most women workers do not have any social security or access to health care benefits. As a result, the work-related illnesses, like mental pressure and other health problems, remain hidden. As per available research, a large

number of women workers complain of frequent headaches, back pain, circulatory disorders, fatigue, and emotional and mental disorders resulting from performing various activities at the workplace. Women working in some industries, factories, banks, hospitals and the like complain that they do not get time to look after and give care to their babies. The efficiency of a working woman is always suspected and questioned by most people, especially their male counterparts. Even though women prove they are efficient, authorities think twice before promoting them and even if women are given the chance, there is always a remark that they were given the position because they were women. Women tend to hold lower-level positions than men even when they have sufficient skills to perform higher-level jobs. Women, although they constitute half of humanity, are socially, economically and politically marginalized. This paper highlights the Work related Problems for the Self Employed Women along with the health problems of self employed women in Tirunelveli District by taking a sample of 500 women both from farm sector and non farm sector.

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Work related Problems for the Self Employed Women in Tirunelveli District

Workers in the informal sector typically earn less income, have unstable income, and don't have access to basic protections and services, at least which seems to be the overall conclusion of research in development and transition economies. Informal businesses also lack the potential for growth, trapping employees in menial jobs indefinitely. On the other hand the informal sector can allow a large proportion of the population to escape extreme poverty and earn an income that is satisfactory for survival. Also, in developed countries, some people who are formally employed may choose to perform part of their work outside of the formal economy, exactly because it delivers them more advantages. This is called 'moonlighting'.

They derive social protection, pension and child benefits and the like, from their formal employment, and at the same time have tax and other advantages from working on the side. From the viewpoint of governments, the informal sector can create a vicious cycle. Being unable to collect taxes from the informal sector, the government may be hindered in financing public services, which in turn makes the sector more attractive. Conversely, some governments view informality as a benefit, enabling excess labor to be absorbed, mitigating unemployment issues. But the real problems faced by the workers are entirely different from what is written in the form of text. Hence a direct interview has been conducted from among the women who are working in the self employed workers will bring to light the inherent problems they are faced in the work place.

Table 1 Work related Problems for the Self Employed Women in Tirunelveli District

Variables	Farm Sector	Non Farm Sector	Average	Rank
Untime work	599	594	597	1
Seasonal Work	578	570	574	2
Irregular income	433	624	529	3
Hard work	641	365	503	4
Marketing difficulties	364	581	473	5
Inadequate Facilities	563	362	463	6
Non Cooperation	436	429	433	7
Health problem	420	438	429	8
Lack of Technological knowledge	408	448	428	9
Interference of spouse	405	407	406	10
No job Security	418	377	398	11
Irregular employment	400	391	396	12
Lack of financial support	381	404	393	13
Low income	389	367	378	14
Average	460	454	457	

Source: Primary Survey

As per weighted average ranking, it is noted that untime work (597) is the major problem reported by the sample respondents which is followed by seasonal work (574), Irregular income (529), Hard work (503), Marketing difficulties (473), Inadequate Facilities (463), Non Cooperation (433), Health problem (429), Lack of Technological

knowledge (428), Interference of spouse (406), No job Security (398), Irregular employment (396), Lack of financial support (393) and Low income (378). It is noted that the self employed women need to put lot of efforts and work for long times to be successful in their venture.

Table 2 Factor Analysis for the Problems in the Work Place of Self employed

Variables	1	2	3	4
Timeless work	.831	.265	.215	-.202
Seasonal Work	.844	.316	.010	.037
Irregular income	-.805	.178	-.233	.027
Marketing difficulties	.757	.513	-.002	.031
Hard work	-.728	-.583	.112	-.228
Inadequate Facilities	-.703	-.614	-.012	-.246
Non Cooperation	.647	.583	.353	-.275
Health problem	.639	.301	.106	.580
Lack of Technological knowledge	.063	.903	.132	.114
Interference of spouse	.255	.740	-.487	-.020
No job Security	-.534	-.755	-.114	-.061
Irregular employment	.151	-.032	.863	.158
Lack of financial support	-.234	-.580	-.619	.034
Low income	-.089	.029	.107	.934
Variance	35.09	27.72	11.83	10.60
Cumulative %	35.09	62.81	74.65	85.24
Total %	41.16	32.52	13.88	12.43

Source: Derived

Infrastructure Constraint: The variables which come under this head are Health problem, hard work, untimed work, Non-cooperation, inadequate facilities, Seasonal work, Irregular payment and Partiality. This factor has a Variance of 35.09 percent and form 41.16 percent of the total.

Knowledge Constraint: Lack of Technological knowledge, Interference of spouse and No job Security naturally affect the women workers to find the employment a bit difficult one. This factor has a Variance

of 27.72 percent and form 32.52 percent of the total.

Employment constraint: Irregular employment and Lack of financial support have direct link with the employment in their hands. However, this factor has a Variance of 11.83 percent and form 13.88 percent of the total.

Financial constraint: The variable Low income affects the women workers in getting setbacks in employment. This factor has a Variance of 10.60 percent and form 12.43 percent of the total.

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Health Problems of Self Employed Women in Tirunelveli District

People face different risks at different stages of the life cycle, and are placed in a different relationship to the labour market at different stages of their lives as well. Here we identify just three broad stages: preparation for employment, being in employment, and life after employment. It is clear that low cost, quality and trusted health care provided at the level of community helps to ensure that health services are affordable and accessible to working women, especially given the

reduced lost working time in seeking medical attention. As such, women are more likely to seek health services for all health problems earlier and more regularly. Not only will this likely include care for occupational injuries and illnesses but it also helps to mitigate the increased risk of occupational injury and illness presented by other health problems that cause fatigue and weakness and also those that reduce immunity. The general health problems faced by women due to their occupation is briefly discussed and analysed in the following table.

Table 3 Health Problems of Working Women in Tirunelveli District

Diseases	Farm Sector		Non Farm Sector		Average	
	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	%
Anemic	250	100	56	30	153	61
Breathing problem	250	100	23	5	137	55
Itching	210	84	59	22	135	54
Irritation	197	79	74	14	136	54
Kidney Problem	250	100	9	5	130	52
Asthma	135	54	32	0	84	33
Heart problems	121	48	29	13	75	30
Body pain	87	35	59	29	73	29
Back pain	36	14	91	34	64	25
Stomach ache	18	7	84	16	51	20
Frequent Fever	57	23	39	16	48	19
Ulcer	0	0	49	9	25	10
Skin diseases	0	0	39	24	20	8
Eye problems	0	0	36	20	18	7
Sores	0	0	13	12	7	3
Allergy	0	0	12	4	6	2
Average	101	40	44	16	73	29

Source: Primary Survey

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Though diseases are common to everyone, the employment also causes diseases and so the survey is narrowed on the diseases suffered by the women in the self employed sector due to employment and the results obtained thus are presented in the above table. The survey reveals that many of the women suffer from Anemic (61%) which is followed by Breathing problem (55%), Itching (54%), Irritation (54%), Kidney Problem (52%), Asthma (33%), Heart problems (30%), Body pain (29%), Back pain (25%), Stomach ache (20%), Frequent Fever (19%), Ulcer (10%), Skin diseases (8%), Eye problems (7%), Sores (3%) and Allergy (2%). Hence it is concluded that anemia is the major problem among women that needs to be eradicated by giving proper awareness along with health measures.

Conclusion

Employment is critical for poverty reduction and for enhancing women's status. However, it is potentially empowering and liberating only if it provides women an opportunity to improve their well being and enhance their capabilities. On the other

hand, if it is driven by distress and is low-paying then it may only increase a woman's drudgery. The small and medium enterprises have been believed as very important in accelerating the economic development of a country. That is why its role is becoming increasingly prominent throughout the world. The study which has been conducted in Tirunelveli district among 500 self employed women who work in both farm and non farm sector has encountered certain problems in the work place. The work place constraints are located on the basis of factor analysis and it is found that the major constraints are Infrastructure Constraint (41.16%), Knowledge Constraint (32.52%), Employment constraint (13.88%) and financial constraint (12.43%). It is inferred that the infrastructure is the basic need while finance is a manageable constraints as far as the self employed women are concerned. It is noted that the self employed women need to put lot of efforts and work for long times to be successful in their venture. Anemia is the major health problem which prevails among the self employed women that needs to be eradicated by giving proper awareness



along with health measures. Indian women had undergone a long way and are becoming increasingly visible and successful in all spheres and have shifted from kitchen to higher level of professional activities. The country needs to mobilize and utilize fully all its resources including human resources. The participation of women in economic activities is necessary not only from a human resource point of view but also is essential even from the objective of raising the status of women in the society. The economic status of the women is now accepted as an indicator of a society's stage of development and therefore it becomes imperative for the government to frame policies for development of entrepreneurship among women.

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