EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN ARTISANS THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING

Ph.D. THESIS

by

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by

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CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the work which is being presented in the thesis entitled "**Empowerment of Women Artisans through Capacity Building Training"** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and submitted in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee, is an authentic record of my own work carried out during a period from December, 2009 to July, 2013 under the supervision of Dr. Binod Mishra, Associate Professor and Prof. Pashupati Jha, Professor, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee.

The matter presented in this thesis has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other institute.

(JAYA KRITIKA OJHA)

This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of our knowledge.

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The Ph.D. Viva-Voice Examination of **Ms. Jaya Kritika Ojha**, Research Scholar, has been held on…….**.....**

Signature of Supervisor (s) **Chairman, SRC** **Signature of External Examiner**

Head of the Dept. /Chairman, ODC

ABSTRACT

Women in India are one of the most deprived groups in society. Viewed against almost all the indicators of development, they continue to lag behind men. The growing inequality in society makes women vulnerable. India has seen an explosive amount of growth during past few years. Despite all the technological progress, economic growth and social development, the status of women is still a matter of concern. India is facing a major challenge concerning women's empowerment.

Although women are major contributors to the survival of the family and are vital and productive workers in India's national economy, their contribution remains largely unrecognized. Most of them lack in independent choices and options.

Strategies and programs for women empowerment must be devised, implemented and targeted at promoting empowerment on the individual level so as to create appropriate environment for women at the community level. Women empowerment is a multi-layered process. It needs multi-pronged strategies. Strategic and thematic empowerment training can be considered as an approach towards building women's capacities so that they can raise their voices against the discrimination and atrocities they face. If they are capable and strengthened, they would make their own life and the lives of their families better.

The present study is based on the women artisans of desert areas of Rajasthan. Desert region has a high population of women engaged in embroidery activities for income generation. They are skilled in many handicrafts, they spin cotton and wool, they sew artistically, and they embroider beautifully. An assessment of the scenario of women artisans shows that this group of women work and earn; still their individual and social status in the society is very low. In reality, they do not hold the right to spend their own earnings the way they want. They have no role in decision making, no major participation in community, cannot negotiate for their own rights, and do not have the opportunity to access the information which can lead them to betterment on personal front. While going through the reviews of literature, it was observed that not many studies were carried out on the empowerment of women artisans through capacity building training, especially in the Thar Desert of western Rajasthan.

This study explores the idea of (a) inducing more power into a system by means of empowering a women group through imparting individual capacity building training, (b) and, by imparting power in a system, a more rational and constructive system development is possible. It aims at exploring how women empowerment could be reconfigured in our social

system to create opportunities among them. This way, the study explores the dimensions of women empowerment and through it the truer and fuller dimensions of gender empowerment, leading up the verticals to the system empowerment. The study examines and analyses the role of capacity building training in empowering women artisans. Further, the study suggests and recommends the strategies to develop the comprehensive model for capacity building of women associated with embroidery works.

The present study was undertaken with the specific objectives to assess the existing levels of awareness regarding leadership, decision-making, negotiation, community participation, and access to resources and information (empowerment indicators) among respondents, to design and develop an interactive and effective training module for capacity building of women artisans, to implement training package for capacity building of women artisans, and to assess the effect of capacity building training and knowledge gain among the group of women artisans.

This study began with a critical evaluation of the status of women globally and nationally, followed by the concept of empowerment and traced the relationship of capacity building of women and their empowerment.

The conceptual framework for this research study includes the Feministic Approach, Theory of Empowerment by Deepa Narayan, Linda Mayoux's additive approach to Women's Empowerment, Naila Kabeer's Empowerment Framework, and the Capabilities Approach of Amartya Sen & Martha Nussbaum.

An empirical research approach was used for the study. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were adopted to fulfil the objectives of the study. The study was carried out in the selected villages of Bikaner district of Rajasthan state of the Thar Desert of India. This region was purposively selected for the study because these women artisans, who are traditionally skilled in a special kind of hand embroidery, are located only in this region.

The present study had two phases to select the sample separately. Phase one was the need assessment phase. Phase two was the capacity training implementation phase. For assessing the needs of capacity building trainings for empowerment of the women artisans, the total number of 303 respondents was selected. Phase two was to implement the need based capacity building training package. 105 respondents were selected for this phase.

An interview schedule was carefully designed to assess and identify the needs of the women artisans. A detailed survey was done using a structured interview schedule evolved for this study, to gather relevant information from the respondents. Data was analyzed and then

prioritized to get their capacity building needs on empowerment issues. Five day detailed training module and schedule was prepared on the basis of the findings of need assessment.

Before starting the training, pre-test data from the respondents was collected. Then all the respondents were given complete five days residential training on various empowerment issues to build their capacities. On the completion of the training programme, the post-test was conducted on the respondents who participated in the training. Pre-test and post-test data was collected with the help of specially designed proforma. Pre and Post training data evaluation was carried out, to identify the difference between before and after implementation of training, which determined the knowledge gain in the respondents about empowerment issues like leadership, rights and entitlements, decision making, participation, access to information and communication. Both English and Hindi versions of questionnaire were framed and Hindi version was used to collect data and information. The acquired data was analyzed using statistical techniques.

The study finds that women's capacity building training programs provide a platform to women to realize their own calibre, potential and dimensions. It opens up various possibilities for women, especially to those who are deprived of opportunities and space, to learn different skills for betterment of their lives.

The study concludes that the capacity enhancement through empowerment training can make a person deliver with motivation, conviction and high degree of confidence, thus leading towards empowerment, with a decisive, considerable and visible change in the thought, quality and approach for improving own and the lives of families, community and the state. A singular effort for betterment in this way, directly and critically accelerates a series of change among the primary and expansive stakeholders.

This study emphasizes that women, especially poor rural working women (women artisans in this case), need to be empowered and it will require elaborate strategies and specific programs which will have to be implemented properly. Capacity-building training programs would help women artisans to combat the exploitation they face at home, work, and in community, to reduce disparities, improving social conditions and gender sensitivity. It will help in creating a society based on equality, equity, and freedom.

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