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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH NGOS IN RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT

### Article Particulars

Received: 27.03.2018

Accepted: 11.04.2018

Published: 28.04.2018

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### Abstract

*“There is no chance for the welfare of the world  
unless the condition of women is improved.” - Swami Vivekananda*

*Our country is on the high roads of success, but still for a woman, her life is a battle for survival and dignity from her birth to her death. They are facing the problems such as Female foeticides, Neglect during childhood, Early marriage, Dowry, Atrocities on women: Domestic violence, Women and trafficking, Eve teasing, Sexual harassment: In every ten-rape case, six are of minor girls. Gender bias reflects in status of Widows, Divorcees, Equal pay for equal work, Property rights and Overwork. Despite the efforts of the Govt to develop their status in the society, no significant improvements have been achieved. Therefore many agencies including Bank and NGO come forward to develop the status of women. NGOs extend a lot of support in giving training and in capacity building of the members of SHGs. The researcher has taken Ramanathapuram district in the southern Tamil Nadu as the study area for the study. This study highlights the role of NGOs with regard to the economic development of women through SHGs in Ramanathapuram district in the Southern Tamilnadu.*

**Keywords:** *Women, NGO, SHG, Economic Development, Micro-finance, Mahalir thittam.*

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### Introduction

In our country women face many problems from her birth to death. In order to remove these problems and bring women into mainstream of the society, the Government of India has introduced many laws and schemes and implemented them such as Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (Amended in 1995), Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971, The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987, The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. To safeguard the interest of women and improve the status of women, Govt of Tamil nadu has also implemented many schemes such as

1. Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Ninaivu Marriage Assistance Scheme
2. Dr.Dharmambal Ammaiyar Ninaivu Poor Widow Remarriage Assistance Scheme
3. Annai Therasa Ninaivu Marriage Assistance Scheme for Orphan Girls

4. E.V.R Maniammaiyyar Ninaivu Marriage Assistance Scheme for Daughter of Poor Widows
5. Sathiya Vanimuthu Ammaiyyar Ninaivu Free Supply of Sewing Machine Scheme
6. Free Supply of Text Book and Note Book to the children of Poor Widow

In spite of these measures taken by the Government, the status of women still remains to be improved. To complement the efforts of Governments, in particular Mahalir thittam implemented by TNCDW, many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) work to improve the welfare of women in the society. A **Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)** is a legally constituted, voluntary association of individuals or groups that is neither a governmental agency nor an enterprise for-profit, although it may and often does receive both government and corporate funds. In this Paper we analyze role of NGOs, affiliated with Mahalir Thittam implemented by TNCDW, for development of women.

### Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study

- To highlight the NGOs affiliated and approved by TNCDW in the study area
- To reveal the No of beneficiaries and SHGs formed by NGOs in the selected area
- To appraise the role of NGOs in economic development of women
- To offer important findings on the services of NGOs.

### Period of Study

The TNCDW through the Project of Mahalir Thittam helped SHGs with the support of NGOs upto 2012-2013. After that the responsibility has been transferred from NGOs to PLFs with the new scheme of TNSRLM. The project 'Mahalir Thittam' has been replaced with TNSRLM by TNCDW from 2013-2014.

So the period selected for the study is 2007-2008 to 2012-2013 (6 years)

### Methodology

The present study is based on the survey method. The secondary data were collected from the reports of TNCDW – Mahalir thittam implementation unit - Ramanathapuram, Mathi NGOs' annual reports, books and journals relating to NGOs and SHGs.

The primary data were collected with the help of interview schedule from NGOs' staff and members of SHGs

### Sampling Design

In the study area, there are 55 Microfinance NGOs registered under the Society Act, the Trust Act and the Companies Act. Among them 10 NGOs have been registered and approved under Mahalir Thittam with 10015 SHGs and 157157 women members. These NGOs have been selected for the study as they have been approved

by TNCDW and having large no. of SHGs and women beneficiaries. For the purpose of analysis, two interview schedules have been developed-one for NGOs and another for SHGs' members. To generate the opinion of the NGOs, all the 10 Mahalir thittam NGOs have been taken into account, thus following census method.

### Mathi NGOs and SHGs with Members

In the study area 10 NGOs have been registered and approved under Mahalir Thittam. The following Table 1 shows the list of Mahalir Thittam (Mathi) NGOs under which SHGs are functioning in the study area.

**Table 1**

S.No	Name of NGO	No. of SHGs	No. of members
1	Sri Ayyanar NGO	702	10530
2	CERDE NGO (Centre for Rural Development and Education)	1445	21675
3	PEARL Trust	407	6512
4	PMD (People Movement for Development)	770	10780
5	Raise India Trust	763	12208
6	REVIEW Trust	750	11250
7	Seethakathi NGO	1088	16320
8	SKECH NGO	461	7837
9	TRRM NGO	1828	29248
10	SMSSS (Sivagangai Multipurpose Social Service Society)	1801	30617
<b>Total</b>		<b>10015</b>	<b>157157</b>

Source: Primary Data

### Classification of the Respondents – NGO Wise

In order to derive the accurate result in the survey the sample SHGs and respondents have been chosen covering all NGOs and all unions in the district. The following table indicates clearly the no. of SHGs and respondents selected as samples from each NGO.

**Table 2**

S. No.	NGO	Sample SHGs	No. of Respondents
1.	Ayyanar	18	36
2.	CERDE	36	72
3.	Pearl trust	10	20
4.	PMD	19	38
5.	Raise India Trust	19	38
6.	Review trust	19	38
7.	Seethakathi	27	54
8.	SKECH	11	22
9.	TRRM	46	92
10.	SMSSS	45	90
<b>Total</b>		<b>250</b>	<b>500</b>

Source: Primary Data

### Frame Work of Analysis

The study has been analysed with the help of the following statistical tools:

- Paired Samples F – Test and P values have been applied to find the various factors of the social and economical development.
- The formulated hypotheses have been tested with the help of ANOVA.
- To analyze the significance of the two categories of the development the average, median, first quartile (Q1), third quartile (Q3) and Standard Deviation have been calculated.

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been framed to test to economic development through various analyses in the survey.

- There is no significant difference in the relationship between residing area and Economic development
- There is no significant relationship between age and economic development of women.

### Economic Development

The economic independence of women is viewed as a major component of their development process. The following factors have been considered for deciding the changes in the economic position of the women beneficiaries through the NGOs in the survey.

- Change in value of assets
- Changes in level of income
- Changes in expenditure
- Changes in amount of Savings
- Changes in getting loan

### Value of Assets

The members consider that the assets serve as capital to earn income and improve their financial position. The distribution of sample respondents according to value of assets held by them is shown in Table 3

**Table 3 Value of Assets Hold by the Respondents**

S. No.	Value of Assets (in Rs)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Upto 200000	108	21.6
2	200000-500000	149	29.8
3	Above 500000	243	48.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Primary Data**

This table states that after joining SHG, various developmental activities of NGO have made the beneficiaries to have such assets with that value. So it indirectly shows that they are getting developed economically.

### Income Generation

The membership in Self Help Groups induces every member to save and invest in business activities. The investment in the productive assets earns income for the members. The details about the income of the members of the Self Help Groups after joining as members in the Self Help Groups are discussed here.

**Table 4 Income Generation of the Respondents**

S. No.	Income level /Year (in Rs)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Upto 25000	69	13.8
2	25000-50000	86	17.2
3	50000-75000	149	29.8
4	Above 75000	196	39.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Source: Primary Data

It is observed from the above table 4 that 13.8% of respondents (69) additionally earn upto Rs 25000 per year. 86 (17.2%) respondents earn the income in the level of Rs 25000-50000, 149 respondents are generating income level of Rs 50000-75000 and above Rs 70000 is earned by 196 respondents (39.2) through NGO's intervention. It may be because of various skill development training and financial assistance arranged by the NGOs with the support of Mahalir thittam officials

### Household Expenditure

The Angels' Law of Family Expenditure states that when income increases the amount of money spent on necessities like food and clothes decreases, but the amount spent on comforts and luxuries increases. The distribution of the respondents according to the expenditure level after becoming members of the Self Help Groups is listed down in table 5

**Table 5 Household Expenditure of the Respondents**

S. No.	Expenditure level (in Rs)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Upto 25000	74	24.8
2	25000-50000	154	30.8
3	Above 50000	272	54.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Source: Primary Data

Through this table we understand as their income level is increased the level of expenditure is also increased. It is one of the symptoms of economic development of women through the membership in SHGs.

### Annual Savings

Savings promote the spirit of self-reliance and economic independence. The savings of an individual respondent not only helps her to avail herself of a loan but also provides her the seed money for the lending operation of the Self Help Groups. The annual savings of the respondent is given in Table 6

**Table 6 Annual Savings of the Respondents**

Sl. No	Savings	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 25000	78	25.6%
2	25000-50000	189	37.8%
3	50000-75000	153	30.6%
4	75000-100000	54	10.8%
5	Above 100000	26	5.2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Source: Primary Data

We come to know from the table that level of savings has been increased after joining NGO. Savings is one of the major indicators of economic development. It is easily made by NGOs among women.

### Level of Getting Loan

The promotion of the Self Help Groups helped the members to expand their economic activities by depending upon credit from banks. Most of the respondents are getting loan from Bank with the support of NGOs for

- Agriculture,
- Animal husbandry,
- Trade and
- Family/emergency

**Table 7 Level of Getting Loan of the Respondents**

S. No.	Loan amount (in Rs)	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Less than 20000	36	7.2
2	20000-30000	126	25.2
3	30000-40000	220	44
4	Above 40000	118	23.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Source: Primary Data

Through this table we can understand that the respondents have the source for getting loan for their necessities. If anyone has the source of getting loan at right time, he can achieve many things. When they join the NGO in the name of member of SHG, automatically they get the source of getting loan.

## Factors Influencing the Change in Economic Development

The researcher has identified the various factors which are influencing the change in the economic development such as change in value of assets, level of income, level of expenditure, level of savings and level of getting loan.

To test the framed hypotheses relating to economic development, P value, F value and Critical value have been calculated after finding Mean and Standard deviation. If F value is greater than the Critical value it is considered as significant or it is not significant.

## Residential Area Vs Economic Development

In order to test whether the residing area influences the change in indicators of economic development, the following null hypothesis is framed. "There is no significant difference between the residential area and changes in the economic development." The descriptive statistics for change of economic indicators of women based on the residential area is shown in Table 8

**Table 8 Descriptive Statistics for changes of Economic Development Indicators – Residing Area Wise**

S. No.	Indicators	Area	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Value of Assets	Rural	4.87	2.27
		Urban	4.67	2.25
2	Level of Income	Rural	5.12	2.19
		Urban	4.83	2.2
3	Level of Expenditure	Rural	5.00	2.62
		Urban	4.69	2.36
4	Level of Savings	Rural	5.26	2.54
		Urban	5.54	2.91
5	Level of Getting Loan	Rural	5.52	5.26
		Urban	5.2	2.32

**Source: Primary Data**

## Result of ANOVA

To test the above stated hypothesis one way ANOVA is used. The result of the ANOVA test regarding the economic indicators is depicted in table 9

**Table 9**

S. No.	Indicators	P Value	F Value	Critical Value	Result
1	Value of Assets	0.535	0.384	3.86	Not significant
2	Level of Income	0.364	0.822	3.86	Not significant
3	Level of Expenditure	0.39	0.73	3.86	Not significant
4	Level of Savings	0.44	0.57	3.86	Not significant
5	Level of Getting loan	0.65	0.20	3.86	Not significant

**Source: Primary Data**

From the table we understand that P value for all indicators is less than 1. F value for all such indicators is also less than 1. Critical value for all economic development indicators is higher than 1 (3.86) and it is same for all indicators. Finally it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between the residing area and the economic development indicators such as Value of Assets, Level of Income, Level of Expenditure, Level of Savings, Level of Getting loan.

### Major Findings

The researcher has observed that the following are the major findings

- SHGs formed by NGOs and financed by banks are outnumbered than (72%) other promotional Institutions
- NGOs' supported SHGs are more successful in functioning and consistency
- NGOs' formed SHGs have more positive impact on total quality of life style.
- NGOs conduct more trainings for SHGs
- SHGs supported by NGOs are very prompt in repayment of loan (99%)
- Capacity planning is a key role played by NGOs
- NGOs supported and financed SHGs are only 7%
- The SHGs are turning out to be quality clients in view of better credit management mobilization of thrift, low transactions cost and full repayments because of NGOs involvement in this programme.
- The platform of NGOs provides different types of financial services to the SHGs.

### Conclusion

In this Paper, the researcher has studied the impact of the NGO through Self-Help Groups on the economic development of women. The factors like the value of assets, level of income, level of expenditure, level of savings, level of getting loan and the like have been considered to know the economic development of women beneficiaries through the intervention of NGOs. It can be concluded that to a great extent NGO has its positive impact on the economic development of women as value of assets, level of income, level of expenditure, level of savings, level of getting loan have increased.

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