

Empowering Rural Women and Their Children through RSETIs: A Sociological Study within the Framework of Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract

This study examines the empowerment of rural women and their children through Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) in Dharmapuri District, Tamil Nadu, inside the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Grounded in the goal of promoting gender equality and reducing poverty, the study explores how RSETIs develop women's financial independence their participation in the decision-making, and improvement of social status. A review of related literature highlights the transformative part of skill development in rural women's empowerment and the indirect benefits for their children's welfare. By a descriptive research design, this study employs simple random sampling and conducting six detailed case studies to suggest an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences. The study underscores RSETIs' important contribution to empowering women economically within family as well as within society, leading to improvements in their children's quality of life. The study concludes with suitable recommendations which lead to policy interventions to make stronger RSETIs' impact on sustainable rural development and child welfare.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Empowerment, Children

Introduction

India has a large population and many young people living the country. To become the third biggest economy by 2030, it is important for women to energetically participate in the workforce, as they build up more than 48 percent of the population. Women engage in recreation a key role in the development of families and country. At home, they frequently handle the majority of the family responsibilities and take care of children. Their health and well-being directly influence the overall health, education and future prediction of their children. On a larger scale, women are important to the economic growth, social strength and cultural stability of a nation. When women are empowered, it leads to enhanced outcomes for their families and communities, making societies stronger and more flexible. Empowering women is closely connected to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those focusing on gender equality,

poverty decrease, and quality education. One of the goals aims to get gender equality and empower all women. This goal highlights the need for equivalent opportunities and hold up for women's economic, social, and individual development. When women are empowered, they give more successfully to their families and communities. This leads to better health, education and economic strength, which helps in achieving broader goals of sustainable development.

Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) are important in empowering rural women. These institutes present skills development training, wealth and support to help women start and administer their own businesses. Through given that specific training programs, RSETIs help women get financial independence and improve their socio-economic status. This empowerment benefits not now the individual woman save for also her family and community. Women who do well in their businesses can enhance support their families, leading to improved living condition, good educational opportunities for their children and overall family development. While women are empowered, their families experience many optimistic changes. Empowered women are more likely to spend in their children's education, healthcare, good rapport and overall well-being. This results in improved outcomes for children, such as better academic performance and lifestyles. Furthermore, empowered women make a helpful environment for their families, improving the quality of living and potential opportunities for their children. Through focusing on empowering women from side to side initiatives like RSETIs, we can significantly improve family and child growth, aligning with the broader goals of sustainable development. In conclusion, empowering rural women during RSETIs supports their individual growth and has a deep contact on their families and communities. This empowerment aligns by the Sustainable Development Goals through promote gender equality and improving education and health for children.

Review of Literature

Mitra & Kumar (2024) explored that Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) give to promoting gender equality during skill improvement programs in rural and highlight that RSETIs help women grow economic independence through providing them with the essential skills to participate in different income-generating activities. This economic empowerment also ultimately benefits their children, as enhanced financial environment lead to improved access to education, healthcare, and overall welfare.

Sundaram & Gopalan (2023) mentioned that the important role of entrepreneurship training provided through RSETIs in empowering rural women in Tamil Nadu. During their study, they emphasize how these programs improve women's decision-making authority, both within their families and in the wider society. The training not only boosts women's financial independence other than also improves their societal position, which in turn completely affects the well-being of their children.

Patel and Nair (2023) focused on services lead to improved family wellbeing, mainly in terms of providing good educational opportunities for children and underscore the significance of such programs in removed rural poverty and promoting sustainable economic development in the area.

Sharma and Singh (2022) argued that to facilitate these programs not only empower women through growing their earning capacity other than also have a ripple effect on their children's living standards. The enhanced financial condition allows families to give better education and healthcare for their children.

Basu and Reddy (2022) emphasized that when women are prepared with financial awareness, they can deal with their family income more successfully, which has a direct impact on their family's overall well-being. This enhanced financial administration also enhances children's health outcomes by ensuring improved access to nutritious food and healthcare services.

World Food Programme (2021) emphasized the empowerment of rural women as significant to achieving SDGs related to food safety and gender equality. It points out that growing women's agricultural productivity and headship roles contributes to family and community-level development, including children's nutrition and education.

Rajendran and Lakshmi (2021) highlighted women's entrepreneurial success, gained during RSETI training, not only improves their economic independence other than also positively affects their children's future forecast, mainly in terms of education and health. The study shows that women who do well in small businesses are good able to invest in their children's education and overall quality of life.

Kaur and Mehta (2021) explained RSETIs help women break free from the cycle of poverty through given that them with skills that guide to economic development and emphasize the broader SDGs framework, which sees these efforts as important to achieving sustainable development and improved quality of life for both women and their children.

Singh et al. (2020) talked about overcoming barriers such as need of transport, childcare and societal limitations can lead to improved social status for women. Because women develop into more empowered, their children also benefit from better educational opportunities, health outcomes and contributing to the overall well-being of the family.

Gupta and Sinha (2020) illustrated the economic upliftment of women during these programs creates societal shifts that give to improved family welfare and show that empowered women invest additional in their children's education and health, leading to long-term improvements in their quality of life.

Menon et al. (2019) described women's newfound skills and financial growth creates optimistic ripple effects within their families, mostly in terms of their children's educational achievements. The review demonstrates that as rural women are empowered, the benefits enlarge beyond themselves to their families and community.

Research Gap

The existing literature highlights the important role that Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) engage in recreation in empowering rural women during skill development and entrepreneurship training. The studies mostly focus on the economic independence gained through women and its optimistic effects on family welfare, mainly concerning children's education, healthcare, and overall quality of life. Though, a research gap exists in exploring the durable sustainability of these programmes in addressing inherent gender inequality and the extent to which these programs convert the community status of women beyond economic parameters. Moreover, there is restricted investigation into the challenges rural women face in totally utilizing the skills gained during RSETI programs, such as structural barriers, social norms and access to income. Though the indirect benefits on children's welfare are recognized, further research is needed to appreciate how these programs impact the intergenerational transmission of poverty and social mobility. Furthermore, few studies investigate into the use of these programs in the broader Sustainable Development Goals framework, mainly in rural with varying socio-economic conditions. Addressing these gaps can offer a new holistic understanding of how RSETIs contribute to long-term rural development.

Research Methodology

Objectives

1. To study the role of RSETIs in empowering the rural women in Dharmapuri district.
2. To find the impact of RESETIs on women's role in the familial and societal decision making process.

3. To access the contributions of respondents towards their children's education, health and overall social well being

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design, aiming to provide a complete understanding of the role of Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) in empowering rural women and their children in the Dharmapuri District.

Sampling Method

The research employs purposive sampling to choose the participants.

Sample Size

The study will spotlight on six detailed case studies, on behalf of a selection of backgrounds and experiences with the women who have participated in RSETI programs. These six case studies will be cautiously selected to ensure diverse socio-economic contexts, special skill training programs and variations in outcomes linked to their empowerment and their children's well-being.

Case Study Approach

The case study method will be central to considerate the individual trajectories of the selected participants. Every case will be analyzed to emphasize how RSETI programs have influenced not only the economic empowerment of rural women other than also their roles within the family, community and the potential opportunities give to their children. The case studies will also reproduce on how these experiences align with the broader SDGs related to gender equality, poverty improvement and social inclusion.

Limitations of the study

The researcher has collected required data for the present study within a short period of time. Hence the collection of data is limited as the researcher was able to collected data only from 6 respondents.

Case Study

Case Study: 1

Suguna (Name Changed), a 35-year-old woman from Somenahalli village in Nallampalli Block, Dharmapuri District, has lived a life marked by economic hardships and every day struggles. Married to Karthick, a 38-year-old driver, they have three children: Kavin, Yazlini, and Yamini, who are studying in grades 6, 3, and 1, respectively. Through her husband uneven income as a driver, the family lived in by poverty, hardly managing to meet their daily needs. Their socioeconomic conditions are poor, and they often found it challenging to give for their children's education, health, and general welfare. Previous to joining the Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) program, Respondent's life was a steady battle for survival. Because a homemaker, she was completely dependent on her husband's meager income, which was unpredictable due to the nature of his work. The family monthly earnings were not satisfactory to meet the rising expenses of their children's schooling, family costs, basic needs, healthy food and medical needs. This economic instability caused huge stress and respondent often felt helpless. Though husband worked hard, the uneven nature of his income meant the family remained stuck in poverty, unable to break free from their economic struggles. Their home village lacked suitable infrastructure, and access to basic facilities was a challenge. Water shortages, poor healthcare, and the absence of local

job opportunities were ordinary issues. In such an environment, respondent realized the want to step up and support her family economically. The respondent's turning point came when she learned about the RSETIs program through a local self-help group. Intrigued by the possible to learn new skills and become economically independent, she enrolled in the program, where she conventional training in tailoring and small-scale entrepreneurship. This training provided her with crucial skills in managing a business, managing finances, and market strategies. Further importantly, the self-assurance she gained through the program was crucial in transforming her outlook on life. Through the support of RSETIs, respondent started a small tailoring business in her home. To start with, she took on small orders from neighbors and the local community, stitching dress for women and children. The business gave her the financial independence she had never expected. Respondent's success in her tailoring business has had a major impact on her family. Her further income has greatly enhanced their economic situation, allowing the family to guide a more protected life. They can now happily afford their children's education, ensuring that children get proper schooling. The family's quality of life has improved, with better contact to healthcare and the ability to meet their daily needs without constant worry. Furthermore, Respondent's newfound confidence has extensive beyond her family. She has become a role model in Somenahalli village, inspiring other women to follow economic independence during self-employment. Finally Respondent's narrative is one of spirit and empowerment, showcasing the transformative power of programs like RSETIs in helping rural women break free from the shackles of poverty. Now, she continues to develop her business, and her family enjoys a good standard of living. Her husband, who was initially the sole wage earner, now sees Respondent as a spouse in managing the household's economic responsibilities. Mutually, they are raising their children in a further secure environment, with hopes of as long as them with better opportunities for the future.

Case 2

Devi (Name Changed), a 40 age woman from Mallapuram village in Nallampalli block, Dharmapuri district, represents a significant story of empowerment through the Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs). Respondent comes from an economically challenged background, where her family struggled. She lives with her spouse Murugan, their two children, Prabu and Srimathi and her elderly mother-in-law Palaniyammal. Their house is simple sheet structure, reflecting their incomplete financial income prior to her participation in the RSETIs program. Before receiving training from RSETIs, Respondent's family faced significant financial hardships. Her husband worked as a farmer, other than due to limited land and erratic agricultural yields, his income was unsatisfactory to support the family. Her husband, being uneducated and took on daily wage labour, which provided only a small income. The family lived under the poverty line, struggling to gather their basic needs, particularly with two school-going children. Prabu, who was studying in Class 10 and Srimathi, in Class 8, were attending a local government school due to their financial. Their living conditions were self-effacing, with a simple sheet house that lacked basic facilities. Similar to many rural women, Respondent had minimum formal education, having completed only up to Class 10 and no stable income of her own. Respondent's change began when she became aware of the RSETIs by her Indian bank account. The bank, recognizing her request for economic stability, provided her with information about the training, which existing free training in a variety of self-employment opportunities. Respondent enrolled in training focused on embroidery and blouse stitching, a field she had always been involved in except lacked the skills to pursue professionally. The RSETIs offered her not only technological skills other than also training in economic literacy and entrepreneurial growth. She gained confidence, learned how to handle small-scale business and started taking small orders from her community. Over time, Respondent's

hard work and purpose paid off and she recognized herself as a skilled self-employed entrepreneur in her village. Now, she runs a successful household business, specializing in customized blouses and complicated embroidery work and source of income significantly enhanced her family's financial condition. With the further income from her embroidery business, she was able to change her children from government schools to a private schools as long as them with better education. The children now get quality education, which more enhances the family's prediction for a better future. Her spouse also benefited from the change among financial force easing, her spouse left his daily wage labor job and with Respondent's support, opened a small provisional shop in the village. From being an economically disadvantaged homemaker, Respondent has emerged as a successful entrepreneur, improving not only her own life but also the lives of her family members.

Case 3

Rani (Name Changed), 33, from Indore village in Dharmapuri district, is a prime example of how targeted skill development programs can change lives. Rani and her 37-year-old husband Durai come from a modest family. Husband completed his primary education and earlier worked as a mechanic, a job that did not bring a steady income. The couple lived with mother-in-law, husband younger brother, and his wife in a simple concrete house with their two children. The family's economic situation was challenging before her started training at the Rural Self-Employed Training Institutes (RSETIs). They live in a joint family structure, which increases the economic pressure due to the sharing of resources and responsibilities. Respondent husband income as a mechanic was not enough to support his entire family. Respondent involvement in the RSETI programme, where she received training in aari (traditional embroidery) and knitting, was a significant turning point for her family. The RSETIs provided her with important skills that not only enhanced her employability but also empowered her as an independent entrepreneur. Through training, her learned intricate aari embroidery and stitching techniques, this enabled her to start her own business at home. This business has significantly improved the financial situation of the family. Respondent was also able to access subsidized loans, which she invested in her business to further develop her skills and raise funds. The success of respondent training and subsequent business growth had a positive impact on the family's standard of living. His income has led to a much better living situation. The families now enjoy better healthy food; better living conditions and can afford quality education for their children. Her children Kalaiyarasi and Muthulakshmi are currently studying in private schools. The economic boost provided by the Queen's business allowed the family to invest in jewelery and post office projects, securing their financial future. Respondent also has a bank account that she uses to manage her savings and investments effectively. Her growing awareness and participation in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) contributed to her personal and professional development, providing her with extra support and resources. Respondent main focus is her children's future, and the success of her business helps ensure their comfort and education. The development in their standard of living reflects his dedication to providing healthier opportunities for them. Through prioritizing their education and investing in their prospect, Respondent is contributing to the sustainable development of her family. Her journey illustrates the transformative power of the skills development programmes existing by RSETIs. Among commitment and the right support, respondent not only uplifted her family economically other than also created a more protected and promising future for her children, social development and sustainable development.

Case 4

Radhika (Name Changed), a 27 year old woman from Nallanoor village, Nallampally block, Dharmapuri district, have been badly affected by the RSETIs scheme. Married to 32-year-old

Siva, Respondent family faced serious financial challenges. The couple has two young children, Iniya studying in UKG and Akhilan studying in second standard. The family lives in a modest house shared with respondent mother-in-law and father-in-law. Before their engagement with the RSETIs group, Radhika and Siva's family was economically challenged. Siva works in a private job but finds it difficult to support his family due to their low educational qualifications. Respondent, a tenth grader, faces difficulties in accessing better job opportunities due to their economic status and lack of highly qualified skills. Their home, a simple structure, reflects their financial situation. Their families' living conditions are basic, and their economic constraints affect their access to quality food, education and other essential services. Despite these challenges, Respondent focus remains firmly on her children's future and improving their overall quality of life. Respondent trained with the RSETIs project was transformative. Under this programme, she received training including beautician and beauty services for women. This training not only gives him important skills but also developed him to start his own business as an entrepreneur. With her new skills, respondent was able to set up a small beauty services business, which greatly improved the family's financial condition. RSETI training has led to significant improvements in household financial stability. Respondent business allows them to raise their income and improve their standard of living. Now the family lives in a better neighborhood than ever before, with more nutritious food and access to better educational resources for their children. Respondent children, benefited from the improved economic conditions. They now attend private schools, which positively impacts their academic development. The ability of families to provide quality education and better living conditions for their children reflects the significant impact of RSETIs programs on their lives. Respondent awareness of RSETIs program was further enhanced by joining a Self-Help Group (SHG). This group was instrumental in informing her about available opportunities and supporting her throughout the training process. SHGs gave respondent a platform to connect with other women in similar situations, fostering a supportive community that contributed to her success. Respondent primary focus has always been on the future of her children. Their improved economic status and living conditions make it possible to provide them with a better quality of life. Her commitment to ensuring that her children receive a good education and live in a safe and healthy environment is a testament to her commitment and the positive outcomes of the RSETIs program. Respondent case illustrates the potential of RSETIs programs to transform the lives of individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Through developing the skills and training of entrepreneurs, respondent is not only improving the economic status of her family but also creating a better future for her children. SHG support and opportunities provided during RSETIs programs have played a key role in achieving these positive changes, importance the effectiveness of these programs in promoting sustainable growth and improving living standards.

Case 5

Kanniyammal (Name Changed), a 42-year-old woman from Dasambatti village, is a prominent example of how the Rural Self-Employed Training Institute (RSETIs) program can change lives. His family, which was once economically disadvantaged, has seen a significant positive change due to his participation in the Animal Husbandry Training Program offered by RSETIs. Kaniyammal's husband Venkatesan has an agricultural background. Despite his experience, his family's economic situation was poor due to the challenges of rural life. They live with Venkatesan's elderly mother in a simple house in Dasambatti village. The family's economic hardship was severe, affecting their standard of living and the educational opportunities available to their children. Respondent educational background includes completing 10th standard. Her awareness of RSETIs programs rose through her involvement with Self-Help Groups (SHGs), which provided useful information about

training programmes. Through the RSETIs Animal Husbandry Training Programme, Respondent developed considerable skills and became self-employed. He got 12 cows and successfully incorporated animal husbandry into his livelihood. This new job has significantly improved the family's financial situation. Milk from his cows is supplied to the Aavin centre, which provides a steady income. The training program not only improved respondent's skills but also contributed to a sustainable improvement in the family's economic situation. His involvement in animal husbandry has resulted in improved food security, better living conditions and the ability to afford quality education for his children. Respondent focus has always been to improve the lives of his children. His eldest son, Murthy, had completed his university degree, a remarkable achievement considering their earlier economic hardships. His younger children Tamilarasan and Murali are currently in Class 11 and Class 9. The better economic situation allows them to get a better education and live in a supportive environment. The improved financial stability of their families has had a positive impact on their food security and overall living conditions. The additional income from Respondent livestock business has allowed them to provide nutritious food that contributes to the health and well-being of their children. Respondent success story highlights the importance of sustainable development through skill development and self-reliance. His passion for animal husbandry not only supports his family but also contributes to the local economy. By supplying milk to the centre, Aavin is playing a role in the country's dairy industry, demonstrating how rural expertise can lead to economic and social progress. The RSETIs programme, which has empowered respondent to transform her family's economic status, demonstrates how targeted training programs can lead to sustainable development. Her success shows the potential of rural women to make a difference in their communities through self-reliance and skill acquisition. Respondent journey from economic hardship to self-reliance illustrates the profound impact of RSETIs programme. His success in animal husbandry not only improved the economic situation of his family but also ensured better educational opportunities and quality of life for his children. Respondent story is a testament to the power of skill development programs in fostering sustainable development and improving the quality of life in rural areas.

Case 6

Parvathi (Name Changed), a 39 year's old woman lives in Pilyanur village of pennagram block, Dharmapuri district. Her husband Mariappan was forty-seven years old and had worked in agriculture and as a daily wage labourer. The family struggled economically for years due to Mariappan's lack of education and erratic sources of income. The couple has three children: Anitha (fifteen) and Vasant (thirteen), who are currently studying. Respondent and her family live in a modest house made of sheets, common to many families in their village. Despite their easy life, Respondent's commitment to improving her family's situation is unwavering. Respondent's husband unstable job and lack of formal education seriously threatened his family's financial stability. Respondent's involvement in the RSETI program that trained her in aari (a form of traditional embroidery), transformed her family. The program not only gave her valuable skills but also helped her start her own embroidery business. Through her training, respondent has become a successful self-employed entrepreneur. She now teaches jobs from to new students, which boosts her income and allows her to contribute to society by sharing her skills. The benefits of the RSETIs program are evident in the improved household economic situation. Respondent's income from her embroidery has significantly improved their standard of living. The children now attend a private school, which has given them better educational opportunities. Family living conditions have also improved with better access to food and utilities. Respondent came to know about the RSETIs program through the Self-Help Group (SHG) in her village. Her work with self-help

groups provided her with important information about training programs and potential benefits. The awareness and support of these groups was instrumental in her decision to join the RSETI program. The economic uplift due to respondent involvement with the RSETIs had a ripple effect on her family's life. Her focus on providing for her children has been the driving force behind her dedication to her work. Respondent's business success not only improved their financial situation but also ensured that her children got good education and nutrition. The family now enjoys a more stable and comfortable living environment compared to their previous situation. Respondent contribution to teaching aari's work to others in her community has reinforced her role as a key player in local economic development. Through sharing her knowledge and skills, she helps other women in her village achieve financial development and self-reliance, so promoting sustainable development in her community. Respondent's story is a testament to the positive impact of the RSETIs program on rural families. From a difficult economic background and limited educational opportunities, Respondent has transformed her and her family's lives through skill development and entrepreneurship. With the support of RSETI and SHGs, its commitment to improving the lives of children has resulted in a significant improvement in their living conditions and educational opportunities. This case study illustrates the power of targeted training programs in empowering individuals and fostering sustainable development in rural areas.

Conclusion

The six full case studies from the study on the empowerment of rural women through the Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) in Dharmapuri District offer rich insights into the transformative impact of skill development on the lives of the women and their family. These cases explain how targeted interventions like RSETIs empower women and their children economically, socially, and personally, leading to major improvements in their family standard of living, educational opportunities for their children and overall quality of life. The ordinary thread across all six case studies is that the RSETIs give women with useful skills and the confidence to start their own businesses, which had wave effects on their family's economic safety and social standing. These case studies imitate the multidimensional nature of empowerment. The women not only achieve financial independence other than also became pivotal figures in their family, contributing to executive processes and ornamental their children's prospects for the future. In a number of cases, the women's businesses enabled them to move their children from government to private schools, ensuring good education and better living conditions. The kind environment created by the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and RSETIs was important in helping these women achieve success. The success stories of women like Suguna, Devi, Rani, Radhika, Kanniyammal, and Parvathi show the significant role that RSETIs play in encouragement sustainable development in rural areas. Through empowering women, these institutes ultimately contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to gender equality, poverty alleviation, and quality education for their children. The women's journeys demonstrate that skill development initiatives can have a deep impact on rural family, civilizing not only their economic conditions but also their overall happiness.

Findings

1. **Economic Empowerment:** RSETI training has enabled women to start their own businesses and improve their household income. It reduces poverty and makes them financially independent. Women's new income also eased financial pressure on their husbands.
2. **Improved Decision-Making:** With financial independence, women began to play a greater role in family decisions. They can now influence choices regarding their children's education and their needs at home. This change gives them power in their families.

3. **Improved Education of Children:** Increased income of women enables them to send their children to better schools. Many shifted their children from public to private schools. This improves their children's education and future.
4. **Better Living Standards:** The extra income from women's businesses helps improve the living conditions of their families. Families can afford food, housing and better health. This resulted in a healthy and happy life for their children.
5. **Increased Social Status:** Women's business success enhances their status in society. They are role models for other women, showing that financial independence is possible. Their social status improves as they gain respect and recognition.
6. **Challenges:** Despite women's success, they face challenges such as limited market access and social norms. Some struggle with a lack of formal education or business experience. They need ongoing support to be fully successful.

Recommendations

1. Ongoing Support After Training: RSETIs should continue to guide women after training by providing them with mentoring, microfinance and business assistance. This support will help them manage their expenses, grow their businesses and access markets.
2. Easy Access to Financial Assistance: Some women find it difficult to get loans to start or expand their businesses. RSETIs should work with banks and institutions to provide affordable financial assistance to women entrepreneurs.
3. Better Market Relations: Women face challenges in selling their products. RSETIs should help them access a wider market through online platforms, cooperatives and partnerships with government schemes.
4. Enhanced Training Modules: RSETIs should include courses on financial literacy, business management and marketing for women to better run their businesses and ensure long-term success.
5. Raise Social Awareness: RSETIs should work with local governments to challenge social norms that limit women's opportunities. Awareness programs should highlight the economic role and decision-making values of women.
6. Wider Reach of RSETIs: More training centers should be established in remote communities and awareness campaigns should be launched to inform more women about the opportunities offered by RSETIs.

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