



## The socio-economic impacts of women employment in Rajasthan: A study

Manvi Shekhawat<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Mahendra Singh Rathore<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Research Scholar, Department of Business Finance & Economics, Faculty of Commerce and Management, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India

<sup>2</sup> Dean and Professor, Department of Business Finance & Economics Faculty of Commerce and Management, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India

### Abstract

The Approaches to economic empowerment includes increasing skills and access to productive resources, improving the enabling and institutional environment, and assisting women in their ability to make and act upon decisions regarding economic growth and development. Economic empowerment increases women's access to economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property and other productive assets, skills development and market information. Social-economic empowerment is the process of liberating people and communities from cycles of poverty and assigned social roles and giving them the resources (employment, education, health services, etc.) to raise their and their communities' social and economic opportunities.

**Keywords:** Introduction, literature review, women activity, importance, skill and current report

### Introduction

The Rajasthan, a northern state in India is considered the largest state (by area) of the country. The name "Rajasthan" means the 'Land of Kings'. It is a state famous for its forts, palaces, temples, rich handicrafts, and extensive golden sand desert. The state is home to brave Rajput warriors. Due to its cultural diversity, the state is also known as the 'cultural hub of India'. Although the state is quite popular for its cultural diversity, women empowerment and entrepreneurship remain a hot-button issue for this state.

According to CMIE reports, the women's unemployment rate in Rajasthan was 73% compared to men's 16.9% in Sept-December 2020. In January-April 2021, the women's rate was 69.2% compared to men's 18.1%; in May-August 2021, the women's rate was 65.3% compared to men's 21.2%.<sup>04</sup>

India's economy has undergone a substantial transformation since the country's independence in 1947. Agriculture now accounts for only one-third of the gross domestic product (GDP), down from 59 percent in 1950, and a wide range of modern industries and support services now exist. In spite of these changes, agriculture continues to dominate employment, employing two-thirds of all workers. India faced economic problems in the late 1980s and early 1990s that were exacerbated by the Persian Gulf Crisis.

Starting in 1992, India began to implement trade liberalization measures. The economy has grown-the GDP growth rate ranged between 5 and 7 percent annually over the period and considerable progress has been made in loosening government regulations, particularly restrictions on private businesses. Different sectors of economy have different experiences about the impact of the reforms. In a country like India, productive employment is central to poverty reduction strategy and to bring about economic equality in the society. But the results of unfettered operation of market forces are not always equitable, especially in India, where some groups are likely to be

subjected to disadvantage as a result of globalization. Women constitute one such vulnerable group.

Since the times immemorial, worth of the work done or services rendered by women has not been recognized. India is a multifaceted society where no generalization could apply to the entire nation's various regional, religious, social, and economic groups. Nevertheless, certain broad circumstances in which Indian women live affect the ways they participate in the economy. Indian society is extremely hierarchical with virtually everyone ranked relative to others according to their caste (or caste-like group), class, wealth, and power. This ranking even exists in areas where it is not openly acknowledged, such as certain business settings. Though specific customs vary from region to region within the country, there are different standards of behavior for men and women that carry over into the work environment. Women are expected to be chaste and especially modest in all actions that may constrain their ability to perform in the workplace on an equal basis with men.

### Women's Employment in Rajasthan

The Rajasthan government has launched several initiatives aimed at promoting women's employment. The 'Mukhya Mantri Kaushal Anudaan Yojana' provides financial assistance to women to acquire skills and start their businesses. The 'Sakhi Mandals scheme provides training and support to women to start their enterprises.

As a result of these initiatives, the labor force participation rate among women in Rajasthan has increased from 19.3% in 2004-05 to 24.9% in 2017-18, according to the National Sample Survey.

The Rajasthan government has implemented several initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. These initiatives have had a significant impact on women's lives in the state, particularly in terms of education, healthcare, participation in decision-making processes, and employment. However, there is still a long

way to go in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in Rajasthan. The government needs to continue its efforts to address the various challenges that women face in the state, including gender-based violence, discrimination, and social norms that restrict women's freedom and agency. With sustained efforts, Rajasthan can become a shining example of women's empowerment and gender equality in India.

Women's empowerment is essential for promoting gender equality, economic development, and social development. Achieving women's empowerment demands a collaborative endeavor from the government, civil society, and private entities. Providing women with access to education, healthcare, and economic resources, and promoting their participation in decision-making processes are some of the ways in which women's empowerment can be achieved. Challenging cultural and social norms that discriminate against women is also crucial for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

### Literature Review

Singh and Gupta (1984) in their study on 'Potential Women Entrepreneurs – Their Profile, Vision and Motivation' found the reasons for becoming an entrepreneur amongst the respondents. 'Economic Gain' ranked as the reason of greatest importance followed by 'Keeping oneself busy'. 'Fulfillment of one's ambition' ranked third followed by 'Wanted to become independent' and a host of other reasons.

Rani (1986), in her study 'Potential Women Entrepreneurs' found that the desire to do something independently was the prime motivating factor to start business activity amongst the sample respondents. The women in her sample reiterated their capability to take independent decisions and told that the thought of entering into entrepreneurial areas was their own and not influenced by others. The author further found that factors such as educational and income background did not influence much in their decision to jump on to entrepreneurial bandwagon.

Gundry T.T., L.K., & Welsch, H.P. (2001) This paper designed to assess the present scenario of women entrepreneurs in India as globally women Micro level Business Startup have become an integral part of the quest for the sustained economic development and social progress and are also playing a vital role. Entrepreneurship among women is relatively recent phenomenon. Due to the growing industrialization, social legislation, urbanization, political and economic transformations, the emergence of women owned enterprises are fast increasing in the economies of almost all countries.

Krishnan (2003) has carried out a research on the subject: "Women Entrepreneurs in Kerala". The object of this study was to assess the effects of socioeconomic status of women entrepreneurship in the state, and the impact of the new economic policy on women entrepreneurs in various sectors. The objectives of the research were: (i) To assess the women entrepreneurship among women in Kerala, (ii) To study the status of women enterprises in the state, (iii) To examine the efficiency of institutional support system for entrepreneurship development among women in Kerala.

Ranjula Bali Swaina and Fan Yang Wallentin (September 2009) in their article 'Does micro?nance empower women? Evidence from self-help groups in Rajasthan' concluded that their study strongly indicate that SHG members are

empowered by participating in microfinance program in the sense that they have a greater propensity to resist existing gender norms and culture that restrict their ability to develop and make choices.

Goyal, Meenu and Jai Parkash (2011) The entrepreneurship development is a very noble concept. Such concept can also use to empower the women section of the society. The women in the rural areas are subject to lots of restrictions in Assam. They are not regarded as economic powerhouse; rather they are treated as dependent part of the society. Though they equally possesses the potentialities to become a successful entrepreneur but the problems they face which are not similar to the men's problems, creates hindrances in the growth of entrepreneurial activities.

Gaganpreet Kaur and Dr. Sukhdev Singh (2012)The emergence of entrepreneurs in agriculture and allied activities can propel our rural population into self-sustaining individuals, who in turn can catalyze the development of economy. The concepts of entrepreneur and entrepreneurship have been frequently applied to industrial sector. Agriculture, von the other hand, has largely been viewed as non- entrepreneurial traditional activity.

R.V.S.S Nagabhushana Rao and K. Madhavi *et al.* (2013) Women entrepreneurship is essential for every nation. If we want to compete with well developed nations, both men and women should participate in all activities on equal basis. Men performance is good, as an entrepreneur, women also should grow well as an entrepreneur. Government should introduce such schemes which facilitates to progress women as an entrepreneur.

A.M. Mahaboob Basha and K. Sai Pranav *et al.* (2013) Women plays prominent role for the development of the major challenges the researcher short listed were lack of easy finance, shortage of raw materials, historical and social restrictions. The researcher also observed that lack of economy. In India the situation is different certain superstitions, controls on women in kept in back. Women success is there in all areas like house wife, teacher, professor, lawyer, engineer, doctor, pilot, scientist, technocrats, economists, etc. in fact, women can manage the home efficiently, and why cannot she manage the business in an efficient manner.

### Socio Economic Determinants of Women Development

India is the first among countries to give women equal franchise and has a highly credible record with regard to the enactment of laws to protect and promote the interests of women, but women continue to be denied economic, social and legal rights and privileges. Though they are considered to be equal partners in progress, yet they remain subjected to repression, marginalisation and exploitation. It has been advocated by many researchers (Amartya Sen, 1990) that independent earning opportunities reduce the economic dependence of woman on men and increase her bargaining power in the family.

This bargaining power depends on the nature of work she is employed in. But the income earning activities increase the workload of a woman unless the man accepts an increased share in domestic work. Since globalization is introducing technological inputs, women are being marginalized in economic activities, men traditionally being offered new scopes of learning and training. Consequently, female workers are joining the informal sector or casual labor force more than ever before. For instance, while new rice

technology has given rise to higher use of female labor, the increased work-load for women is in operations that are unrecorded, and often unpaid, since these fall within the category of home production activities. The weaker sections, especially the women, are denied the physical care they deserve. There is, thus, hardly any ability for the majority of Indian women to do valuable functioning; the "capability" to choose from alternatives is conspicuous by absence.

Although most women in India work and contribute to the economy in one form or another, much of their work is not documented or accounted for in official statistics. Women plow fields and harvest crops while working on farms, women weave and make handicrafts while working in household industries, women sell food and gather wood while working in the informal sector. Additionally, women are traditionally responsible for the daily household chores (e.g., cooking, fetching water, and looking after children). Although the cultural restrictions women face are changing, women are still not as free as men to participate in the formal economy. In the past, cultural restrictions were the primary impediments to female employment now however; the shortage of jobs throughout the country contributes to low female employment as well.

The Indian census divides workers into two categories: "main" and "marginal" workers. Main workers include people who worked for 6 months or more during the year, while marginal workers include those who worked for a shorter period. Many of these workers are agricultural laborers. Unpaid farm and family enterprise workers are supposed to be included in either the main worker or marginal worker category, as appropriate. Women account for a small proportion of the formal Indian labor force, even though the number of female main workers has grown faster in recent years than that of their male counterparts.

Female workers tend to be younger than males. According to the 2001 census, the average age of all female workers was 33.6 compared with the male average of 36.5. These data are reported by local employment offices that register the number of people looking for work. The accuracy of, these data is questionable because many unemployed people may not register at these offices if there are no perceived benefits to registering. In addition, the offices operate more extensively in urban areas, thus likely undercounting unemployment in rural areas.

### **Importance of Women Employment**

Even if a woman is employed, she may not have control over the money she earns, though this money often plays an important role in the maintenance of the household. In Indian culture women are expected to devote virtually all of their time, energy, and earnings to their family. Men, on the other hand, are expected to spend time and at least some of their earnings on activities outside the household. Research has shown that women contribute a higher share of their earnings to the family and are less likely to spend it on themselves. Research has suggested that as the share of the family income contributed by woman increases, so does the likelihood that she will manage this income. However, the extent to which women retain control over their own income varies from household to household and region to region. Many women still sought their husbands' permission when they wanted to purchase something for themselves. In northern India, where more stringent cultural restrictions are

in place, it is likely that few women control family finances. Conditions of working women in India have improved considerably in the recent years. Ironically, despite the improvement in their status, they still find themselves dependent on men. It is because of the fact that man in patriarchal society has always wielded economic independence and power to take decision. Since the working woman earns an independent income in the same patriarchal set-up, where the basic infrastructure of society has hardly changed, though her own role within the same structure is passing through a transitional phase, it is but natural that she would remain vulnerable to exploitation even in her economically independent state. Society perhaps yet needs to accord due recognition to women to take the lead role and women, at the same time; need to be oriented vigorously towards assuming this role in the society.

Women's empowerment is essential for several reasons. Firstly, it promotes gender equality, which is a human fundamental right. Women should have equal opportunities, freedoms, and protections as men, and empowering women is a step towards achieving this goal. Secondly, women's empowerment is critical for economic development. When women got freedom for education, employment opportunities, and resources, they can contribute significantly to the growth of their communities and the country's economy. Thirdly, women's empowerment is essential for social development. Empowering women helps to promote social cohesion, reduce poverty, and improve health outcomes, among other benefits.

Rajasthan, a state in India, has made significant progress towards women's empowerment in recent years. The state government has implemented several programme aimed at educating gender equality and empowerment women's. In this blog, we will explore some of the initiatives undertaken by the Rajasthan government to empower women and the impact they have had.

### **Government initiatives to help Women Entrepreneurs**

Rajasthan government has been very dedicated to empowering women through its various programs. The government acknowledges the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in its state policies and laws.

Several laws have been implemented by the Indian government to help rural women entrepreneurs. Social policies like Prime Minister's Rojgar Yojana (PMRY), Working Women's Forum, Indira Mahila Yojana, Women's Development Corporation Scheme (WDCS), Mahila Samiti Yojana, etc have been a boon for aspiring entrepreneurs.

NOT long ago women faced tremendous barriers as they sought opportunities that would set them on an equal footing with men. Going back a mere quarter century, inequality between women and men was widely apparent—in university classrooms, in the workplace, and even in homes. Since then, the lives of women and girls around the world have improved dramatically in many respects. In most countries—rich and developing—they are going to school more, living longer, getting better jobs, and acquiring legal rights and protections.

But large gender gaps remain. Women and girls are more likely to die, relative to men and boys, in many low- and middle-income countries than their counterparts in rich countries. Women earn less and are less economically productive than men almost everywhere across the world.

And women have less opportunity to shape their lives and make decisions than do men.

According to the World Bank's 2012 World Development Report: Gender Equality and Development, closing these gender gaps matters for development and policymaking. Greater gender equality can enhance economic productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions and policies more representative.

Many gender disparities remain even as countries develop, which calls for sustained and focused public action. Corrective policies will yield substantial development payoffs if they focus on persistent gender inequalities that matter most for welfare. To be effective, these measures must target the root causes of inequality without ignoring the domestic political economy.

### **Skill Development in India for women**

Rural women have proved their strength in every aspect of life. Be it works related to handicrafts, agriculture, tailoring, or arts, the rural women in Rajasthan have dominated the fashion industry with their skills. With government programs and new technologies, these women entrepreneurs are progressing towards a better future

Women as an independent group constitute 48% of the country's total population as per the 2001 Census. The importance of women as a important human resource was recognised by the Constitution of India which not only accorded equality to women but also empowered the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in their favour. A number of Articles of the Constitution specially reiterated the commitment of the constitution towards the socio economic development of women and upholding their political right and participation in decision making. Women workers account for about 1/3 of all workers.

There are over 397 million workers in India, out of which 123 million are women workers. Only a small proportion, 18 million, are in the urban areas while 106 million are in rural areas. Not only do a higher percentage of women than men work in the informal economy, women are concentrated in the lower-income segments, working in survival activities or as casual wage workers or homeworkers. The link between working in the informal economy and being poor is stronger for women than for men. The annual household income of the female headed households was lower compared to male headed households.

Within the female headed households, a large proportion of households (44%) were poor, with incomes below the poverty line. The unorganized sector is large in India, accounting for 370 million workers in 1999-2000ii, constituting 93% of the total workforce and 83% of the non agricultural work force. Women account for 32% of the workforce in the informal economy, including agriculture and 20% of the non agricultural workforce. 118 million women workers are engaged in the unorganized sector in India, constituting 97% of the total women workers in India. The informal sector in the non agriculture segment alone engaged 27 million women workers in India.

### **Women Entrepreneur in Rajasthan**

- With limited resources and amenities, entrepreneurship for rural women is a mammoth task. These rural women are refused opportunities to earn and are treated as an undesirable part of the family.

- Due to this, they have to face lots of challenges related to business and maintaining a work-life balance. Living in a society with a patriarchal mindset, lack of activity and processing, business crisis, the need for infrastructure, etc have made their job very difficult.
- Rajasthan is a 'state of colors' and these rural women are the heart and soul of the handicraft industry. But, despite the rich texture and uniqueness of their products, they are on the losing end in the state economy.
- To judge their capabilities, women are moving towards entrepreneurship. More and more women are venturing into areas that are traditionally dominated by men. However, entrepreneurship development in Rajasthan remains a major issue for the government.

### **Major obstacles for women Entrepreneurs**

- Although there have been feminist movements around the world, it is still a farfetched dream to bring equality in every aspect and every field, especially in India. When a women entrepreneur starts her entrepreneurial venture, she has to face many obstacles as compared to men. For a long time, entrepreneurship has been dominated by men.
- Along with this, social barriers, traditional mindsets, exploitation by middlemen, and many other factors have served as major obstacles for women entrepreneurs.
- Some of the other barriers faced by the rural women entrepreneurs include lack of finance, safety and security issues, family restrictions, lack of self-confidence, lack of education, shortage of raw materials among others
- State government may have been advocating economic empowerment for women, but 73% of total women in the age group of 15-59 years are non-workers, says 2011 census data released by home minister Rajnath Singh on July 17.
- Of 1.90 crore women in this age group, only 52 lakh are employed in Rajasthan. The of male workforce, which comes to 67%, is also less impressive when compared to neighboring states.
- This figure also indicates that in the most productive age group of 20-39 years, only 30% of women are earning bread for their families. This group has 1.03 crore women with 30 lakh working as main workers, who are those working full time round the year and contributing to the family income.
- Another striking feature of the report says that 11 lakh women in the state are seeking jobs but either they are not finding jobs or societal patterns are not allowing them to work.

### **Report on Employment Situation in Rajasthan**

The report states that Rajasthan is the most unemployed state after Haryana in terms of overall unemployment. According to the report, the unemployment rate of Haryana is 35.7% while that of Rajasthan is 26.7%.

-Rajasthan and Haryana are the only states to cross the 20% mark in terms of unemployment.

-The report tells that 55.75% of the graduates and youths with higher education degrees are unemployed in Rajasthan. On the contrary, this figure stands at an average of 20.21% nationally.

-The state also has the highest unemployment rate for the uneducated when compared with the neighbouring states of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. A total of 28.06% of illiterate youths have no job.

Rajasthan has earned the dubious distinction of registering the highest number of rape cases in the country followed by Uttar Pradesh, National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 2020 data has revealed. Rajasthan recorded 5310 rape cases, Uttar Pradesh comes second with 2769, followed by Madhya Pradesh with 2339 and Maharashtra with 2061 cases.

Rajasthan govt launches work from home scheme for women, targets to employ 20,000 women in six months Rajasthan government has launched a work from home scheme for women in government and private firms. Under the scheme, the state government hopes to employ around 20,000 women in six months.

### Conclusion

The Women are less likely to have access to social protections like pensions, unemployment benefits, maternity protection, and equal pay. On average, women earn 60% to 75% of what men make, and closing the gender pay gap is crucial to leveling the playing field. Women's access to savings and credit gives them greater economic role in decision-making through their decisions regarding savings and credit. When women control decisions concerning credit and savings, they optimize their own and the household's welfare. Empowering women is to make them independent and not just in terms of finance, but in all aspects of social existence. There is a scope for the self help groups to turn into an effective participatory mechanism to promote socio-economic development. It is true that the self help groups are organized and are based on principles of self-help in order to develop conditions for to begin with providing savings and credit service to its members.

### Reference

1. Bardhan PK. "Labour Supply Functions in Poor Agrarian Economy" *American Economic Review*, 1979;69(1):73-83.
2. Ballara M. *Women and Literacy*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Zed Books, 1992.
3. Deva Ram, *Inclusive Growth in Education with special reference to Scheduled Castes & Tribes*, *Quest Journals, Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 2014;2:23-28.
4. Food and Agricultural Organisation. (1992). "Fact Sheet: Cameroon. Women, Agricultural and Rural Development".
5. J. Labor Force Participation and Unemployment: A Review of Recent Evidence, in R.A. Gordon and M.S. Gordon (eds), 1966.
6. Chatterji M. *Tertiary Education and Economic Growth*, *Regional Studies*, 1998;32(4):349-354.
7. Mor K, Kumar R. *Women Empowerment Policies in India—An Overview*. *Gender Empowerment and Development*, 2008, 291.
8. Mudaliar A, Mathur A. *Women empowerment through microfinance*. *International journal of Arts, humanities and management studies*, 2015;1(2):58-65.
9. Nomita PK. "Female work Participation in Uttar Pradesh: Trends and Determinants", *Socio-economic Voices*, 2013.

10. Puhazhendi V, Satyasai KTS. 'Microfinance for Rural people – An Impact Evolution', NABARD, Mumbai, 2000.
11. Singariya MR, Shekhawat heena. "Determinants of Female Work Participation in Rajasthan: A District Level Analysis", 35th REA Annual Conference Proceedings, 2015.
12. Smith S, Taylor B. *Curriculum Planning for Women and Agricultural Households: The Case of Cameroon*. In Gladwin, 1991.
13. Suguna B. *Empowerment of rural women through self help groups*. Discovery Publishing House, 2006.
14. Sengupta R, Aubuchon CP. *The microfinance revolution: An overview*. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review, 2008, 90.
15. Tripathi VK. *Micro finance in India-growth, and evolution in India*. *International Journal of Information, Business and Management*, 2015;7(3):291.
16. <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.indiatoday.in/amp/india/story/rajasthan-govt-launches-work-from-home-scheme-for-women-targets-to-employ-women-in-six-months-2001396-2022-09-17>
17. <https://www.transcontinentaltimes.com/the-effect-rajasthan/>
18. <https://www.jardcs.org/abstract.php?id=4130>.
19. <https://www.azadindia.org/social-issues/Women-Employment.html>
20. <https://m.timesofindia.com/city/jaipur/73-of-rajasthan-women-are-jobless-census/articleshow/39651387.cms>
21. <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.hindustantimes.com/cities/jaipur-news/rajasthan-ranks-3rd-in-women-unemployment-after-haryana-and-jk-101632670840753-amp.html>