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## A study on effectiveness of non-governmental organizations working on women empowerment in Chhattisgarh state

**Meenal Dubey, Dr. RS Sengar, Dr. ML Sharma and Chitra Das**

### Abstract

The study was an attempt to evaluate the role of non-governmental organizations in women empowerment of Chhattisgarh State. The present study was conducted in Chhattisgarh state in the year 2020-21. Three districts namely Bilaspur, Durg and Raipur were purposively selected for the study looking to the maximum number of NGOs working in these districts for women empowerment. For the study purpose, proportionately a total of 20 NGOs were selected. 240 women beneficiaries from these NGOs were randomly selected. The results revealed that the NGOs under study are effective in generating additional employment days, additional income and assets over a period of time as the women beneficiaries were undertaking the income generating activity successfully. There was a considerable difference in the beneficiaries' employment, income, and assets before and after joining the NGO activity. The government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can collaborate to improve the lives of women in distress in Chhattisgarh and other Indian states.

**Keywords:** NGO, women empowerment, effectiveness of NGO, income generating activity

### Introduction

According to the World Bank non-governmental organizations can be defined as "private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services or undertake community development". Since the United Nations needed to distinguish between participation rights for intergovernmental specialised agencies and those for international private groups in its Charter, the term "non-governmental organisation" or "NGO" came into common usage in 1945. (Peter Willets). NGOs have grown to play a crucial role in the institutional framework for addressing issues including gender equality, rural development, and poverty. The NGOs have greatly expanded their activities to encompass group formation, microcredit, official and informal education, training, social welfare, agricultural activities, health care, and other sectors in order to help the social and economic empowerment of the underprivileged. The organisation primarily employs the target-group technique, in which groups of the impoverished with comparable socioeconomic interests are formed to accomplish their goals. In India, the limited effectiveness of the government's previous development plans contributed to the rise of NGO's following independence, particularly after the 1970s. Even after 50 years of state-led development initiatives, India's society is still plagued by issues like the highest concentration of poor people, starvation, malnutrition, unemployment, gender equality, illiteracy, etc. (Hazarika, 2011) [4]. To improve situations in rural areas, a new organisation named the Council for Advancement of Rural Technologies (CART) was founded in 1983. To create the Council for the Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART), CART and People Action for Development in India (PADI) were merged in 1986. CAPART's main goals were to create jobs, generate revenue, build community assets, and provide basic needs including shelter and clean water.

Empowerment strategies gained popularity in the 1990s. The government acknowledges NGOs for their contributions in rural reconstruction. In the latter half of the 1980s, the government gave them explicit recognition. The Seventh Five Year Plan (1986–1990) placed a strong emphasis on the participation of non-profit organisations in various projects. The Eighth Plan also praised NGOs and urged them to take part in cutting-edge initiatives like the DPAP watershed development project and agro climatic regional planning (ACRP). Involving NGOs from the beginning of planning was envisioned for the Ninth Plan.

The SGSY scheme was introduced in 1999 and group lending is still the main focus. NGOs are heavily active in influencing the SHGs because they have pioneered the promotion of SHGs. The category of NGOs in India lacks coherence. Another peculiarity about them is that while some of them are secular in outlook and nature, others are not. Some of them even have communal, fundamentalist characteristics (very religious to the point of being exclusive). Others have strong ideological commitments to the right, centre, and left. Additionally, not all of them have the ability to empower the weak, especially women, or have an inclination in doing so. (Dabhi, 2009) [2].

The study conducted was an attempt to evaluate the role of non-governmental organizations in women empowerment of Chhattisgarh State. Non-Governmental Organizations are emerging as an important tool to achieve the state of empowerment of women by providing them vocational training, self-employment, involving them in self-help group, and many other helpful aids. It has been estimated that the total number of NGO's are 10 million all over the world (Source: standardizations.org). The total number of enrolled NGO's in India is 129456, whereas in Chhattisgarh it is 1778 (Source: ngo darpan.in). These NGO's receive fund both from other part of country and internationally. For receiving international fund, government has also made the FCRA (foreign contribution regulation act) mandatory, which is probably not maintained by most of the NGOs. However, one concern here is whether these NGOs are helping the women to get empowered. Whether in any manner these NGOs are helping the women in their decision-making, in accessing their resources, their economical, social and political rights.

### Research methodology

The present study was conducted in Chhattisgarh state in the year 2020-21. Out of all the total 28 districts (2020), three districts namely Bilaspur, Durg and Raipur were purposively selected for the study looking to the maximum number of NGOs working in these districts for women empowerment. A list of NGOs working in the area of women empowerment was prepared for the three districts Bilaspur, Durg and Raipur

with the help of Government NGO directory (ngodarpan.gov.in). For the study purpose, 20 per cent of NGOs from the final list was selected proportionately. In this way total 20 NGOs (3 from Durg district, 4 from Bilaspur district and 13 from Raipur district) were selected. 12 women beneficiaries from each NGO were randomly selected for the study constituting a sample of 240 respondents. Data was gathered through personal interviews with respondents using a semi-structured and pre-tested interview schedule.

Effectiveness for non-governmental organizations can be operationally defined as the degree to which the non-governmental organizations were successful in creating additional employment, income, and assets. The income generating activities selected to measure the additional employment, income, and assets were incense sticks making, bag making, beauty parlour, cleanliness worker (Swachhta didi), garment shop, handicraft, kirana shop, masonry work, masala making, mask making, mid-day meal cooking, mushroom production, food processing (pickle and papad making), plate making, ready to eat food making, sanitary pad making, soap making, tailoring and vegetable cultivation. A structured schedule was constructed to determine the number of man days of labour available prior to and after the start of the NGO activity. Each activity's average additional employment days were calculated. Similarly, a structured schedule was devised to determine each beneficiary's total annual income before and after participating in the non-governmental organization's activity. Each activity's average incremental income was computed. A structured schedule was created to calculate the value of each beneficiary's assets (Additional house/household assets, consumer durables, etc.) both before and after the NGO activity began. Furthermore, for each activity, the average value of new assets generated was computed. The Wilcoxon signed rank test was also used to determine whether the number of employment days, income, and assets of the women who received assistance from NGOs had changed significantly. This study used an ex-post-facto research design because the independent variable manifestations had already happened.

**Table 1:** Selection of districts, NGOs, staff members and women beneficiaries

Sl. No.	Districts	Selected NGOs in the districts	Name of the Selected NGOs	Selection of women Beneficiaries (n=240)
1.	Bilaspur	4	Chhattisgarh Prachar evam Vikas Samiti	12
			Shikar Yuva Manch	12
			Tapsya Samajik Sansthan	12
			Vikassheel Foundation	12
2.	Durg	3	Jan Sewak Samiti	12
			Sahyogi Mitra Mandal	12
			Upkar Samajik Sansthan	12
3.	Raipur	13	Janhit Chhattisgarh Vikas Samiti	12
			Adarshdeep Aksamta Vikas Kendra	12
			Adishree Sewa Samiti	12
			CARDS	12
			Chetna Child and Women Welfare Society	12
			Nav Chetan Jan Kalyan Avam Mahila Utthan Samiti	12
			Lalitha Foundation	12
			PATH	12
			Protsahan Samajik Sanstha	12
			Samarth Samridhdh Desh	12
Samarthan	12			
			Shramjeevi Vikas Manch	12
			Sparsh Samajik Sansthan	12

## Results and Discussion

The findings of the study are presented along with discussions and similar previous findings under the following headings and sub headings:

### Effectiveness of non-governmental organizations with respect to activities related to women empowerment Income generating activity performed by the women beneficiaries

The distribution of the women beneficiaries according to their involvement in income generating activity is depicted in Table 2. The data revealed that a larger percentage of women

beneficiaries (20.42%) were involved in food processing (Pickle, Papad making and selling), followed by tailoring (13.33%), ready to eat food making (10%), vegetable cultivation (7.08%). It can be observed from the table that few percentage of the respondents were also involved in soap making, incense sticks making, handicraft, mid-day meal cooking, masonry work and mushroom production. Very few of the them were also engaged in beauty parlour, garment shop, kirana shop, mask making, plate making, sanitary pad making, bag making, spices processing and marketing and only 1.67 per cent involved in municipal corporation as swachhta didi.

**Table 2:** Distribution of the women beneficiaries according to the their involvement in income generating activity

Sl. No.	Income Generating Activity	Frequency Percentage	
		(240)	
1.	Incense sticks making	11	4.58
2.	Bag making	5	2.08
3.	Beauty Parlour	7	2.92
4.	Cleanliness worker (Swachhta Didi)	4	1.67
5.	Garment Shop	7	2.92
6.	Handicraft	11	4.58
7.	Kirana Shop	7	2.92
8.	Masonry work	9	3.75
9.	Spices processing and marketing	5	2.08
10.	Mask making	6	2.50
11.	Mid-day meal cooking	11	4.58
12.	Mushroom production	9	3.75
13.	Food processing (Pickle, Papad making and selling)	49	20.42
14.	Plate making	6	2.50
15.	Ready to eat food making	24	10.00
16.	Sanitary Pad Making	6	2.50
17.	Soap making	14	5.83
18.	Tailoring	32	13.33
19.	Vegetable cultivation	17	7.08

### Additional employment generated

The Table 3 reveals the distribution of the women beneficiaries according to the additional employment generated in man days and as per the table no. 3 maximum number of additional employment was generated through Swachhta didi (274 man days), followed by Spices processing and marketing (234 man days), kirana shop (215 man days), beauty parlour (203 man days), garment shop (199 man days), vegetable cultivation (181 man days), handicraft (153 man days), masonry work (140 man days), soap making (122 man days), tailoring (122 man days), plate making (121 man days), food processing (Pickle, Papad making and selling) (117 man days), ready to eat food making (103 man days), incense sticks making (100 man days), bag making (99 man days), mid-day meal cooking (98 man days), sanitary pad making (85 man days), mushroom production (83 man days) and mask making (54 man days). Overall average addition in employment days was 128 man days. The NGOs were facilitating the women beneficiaries in mobilizing them in SHGs, the SHGs were getting benefitted under different

programme of Central and State government. Also the NGOs were providing them training on different income generating activities and organizing entrepreneurship and skill development programmes. All these factors helped them to increase their employment days. Bariya *et al.* (2020) <sup>[1]</sup> conducted a comparative study between the SHG and Non-SHG members of five talukas of Amreli district of Gujarat and revealed that highest percentage (65.56%) of the SHG members had medium level of change in self-sufficiency, whereas most of non-SHG (57.78%) were having low level of self-sufficiency.

The Table 3 also shows that average number of employment days before joining the NGO was 66 man days and after joining the NGO was 194 man days. Wilcoxon signed rank test was also applied to see whether there was any difference in employment days before and after joining the NGO and the results showed that there was significant difference between before and after employment days as the p value was < 0.00 with Wilcoxon Statistics value Z=13.34.

**Table 3:** Distribution of the women beneficiaries according to the additional employment generated in man days (n=240)

Sl. No.	Income Generating Activity	Additional employment generated in Man days	Additional Income Generated (₹/year)	Value of additional Assets generated (in ₹)
1.	Incense sticks making	100	₹ 5778	₹ 1669
2.	Bag making	99	₹ 3800	₹ 500
3.	Beauty Parlour	203	₹ 33266	₹ 9943
4.	Cleanliness worker (Swachhta Didi)	274	₹ 54000	₹ 21000
5.	Garment Shop	199	₹ 27914	₹ 8143
6.	Handicraft	153	₹ 21573	₹ 4668
7.	Kirana Shop	215	₹ 44857	₹ 10286
8.	Masonry work	140	₹ 33604	₹ 4669
9.	Spices processing and marketing	234	₹ 33580	₹ 9864
10.	Mask making	54	₹ 4437	₹ 3489
11.	Mid-day meal cooking	98	₹ 12000	₹ 3540
12.	Mushroom production	83	₹ 5933	₹ 2842
13.	Food processing (Pickle, Papad making and selling)	117	₹ 14810	₹ 3471
14.	Plate making	121	₹ 14525	₹ 3185
15.	Ready to eat food	103	₹ 16902	₹ 3977
16.	Sanitary Pad Making	85	₹ 18412	₹ 3618
17.	Soap making	122	₹ 16179	₹ 5363
18.	Tailoring	122	₹ 17860	₹ 4771
19.	Vegetable cultivation	181	₹ 31207	₹ 7392
	Overall average	128	₹ 19269	₹ 4965
	Average number of employment days/income/assets before joining the NGO	66	₹ 10399	₹ 2435
	Average number of employment days/income/assets after joining the NGO	194	₹ 29688	₹ 7400
	Wilcoxon Statistics Z	13.34	9.483	12.86
	p value	< 0.00	< 0.00	< 0.00

### Additional income generated

The Table no.3 also shows the additional income generated by the women beneficiaries according to their engagement in income generating activities. The data revealed that highest additional income was generated through swachhta didi (₹ 54000). The other highest additional income was earned through kirana shop (₹ 44857), masonry work (₹ 33604), spices processing and marketing (₹ 33580), beauty parlour (₹ 33266), vegetable cultivation (₹ 31207), garment shop (₹ 27914), handicraft (₹ 21573), sanitary pad making (₹ 18412), tailoring (₹ 17860), ready to eat food making (₹ 16902), soap making (₹ 16179), food processing (Pickle, Papad making and selling) (₹ 14810), plate making (₹ 14525), mid-day meal cooking (₹ 12000). The minimum additional income was earned through activities like mushroom production (₹ 5933), incense sticks making (₹ 5778), mask making (₹ 4437) and bag making (₹ 3800). The overall average additional income earned by the women beneficiaries annually was ₹ 19269. The NGOs were helping the women beneficiaries in market linkages, and linking them with financial institutions which helped them to earn additional income. The increased awareness of these women beneficiaries on various government schemes and programmes related to women empowerment also helped them to engage in such activities through NGO which lead to earn them additional income. Khare (2021) also mentioned that more than 70 per cent of women involved in Bihan (State rural livelihood mission) SHGs of Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh had income range in between Rs. 10000 to Rs. 20000.

The Table no.3 also shows that average income before joining the NGO was ₹ 10399 and after joining the NGO was ₹ 29688. Wilcoxon test results shows that there was significant difference in income of the women beneficiaries before and after joining the NGO as the p value was < 0.00. The value of Wilcoxon Statistics Z was. 9.483.

### Additional assets generated

The additional assets generated by women beneficiaries of NGOs are presented according to the activity in table no. 3. The results revealed similar pattern as additional income with highest value of additional assets were generated by swachhta didi (₹ 21000), followed by kirana shop (₹ 10286), beauty parlour (₹ 9943), spices processing and marketing (₹ 9864), garment shop (₹ 8143), vegetable cultivation (₹ 7392), soap making (₹ 5363), tailoring (₹ 4771), masonry work (₹ 4669), handicraft (₹ 4668). The lowest worth of additional assets was incurred by those women beneficiaries who were engaged in ready to eat food making (₹ 3977), sanitary pad making (₹ 3618), mid-day meal cooking (₹ 3540), mask making (₹ 3489), food processing (Pickle, Papad making and selling) (₹ 3471), plate making (₹ 3185), mushroom production (₹ 2842), incense sticks making (₹ 1669) and bag making (₹ 500). Overall average additional assets generated were of ₹ 4965. The increased additional income due to income generating activities promoted or facilitated by the NGOs had helped the beneficiaries to buy assets as per their need. Krishnan *et al.* (2017)<sup>[6]</sup> in their study on economic empowerment of women in Karnataka state observed that sewing machines increased by 866% (from 3 to 29), water pumps/motors increased by 1593% (from 15 sets to 254), and refrigerators in homes increased by 14400% (from 1 to 254). The above findings indicated that women were mostly buying assets of their household importance or machines which reduce their human labour.

It can be observed from the table no. 3 also that average value of assets generated before joining the NGO was ₹ 2435 and after joining the NGO was ₹ 7400. Wilcoxon test results convey that there was significant difference in assets generation of the women beneficiaries before and after joining the NGO as the p value is < 0.00 and the value of Wilcoxon Statistics Z is 12.86.

## Conclusion

The above study has revealed that the NGOs were effective in creating additional employment, income and assets as the changes were significant after the joining the NGOs. The increased income of women beneficiaries of NGOs can be seen as a sign of economic empowerment which will also increase their decision making and control over assets in their home over a period of time. It can be also interpreted that both agencies i.e NGO and government are responsible for the benefit of women since maximum women beneficiaries were having advantage from government schemes like Swachh Bharat Mission and State Rural Livelihood Mission. NGOs can be utilized as an important tool for the holistic development of women as they work at grass root level, has greater power in mobilizing the people and communities, fights against social evils etc.

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