

ABSTRACT OF THE Ph.D. SYNOPSIS ENTITLED

NGOs AND EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN: A CASE STUDY OF 'JNANA VIKAS YOJANA' OF SRI KSHETHRA DHARMASTHALA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (SKDRDP)

The study “NGO and empowerment of rural women” from a sociological perspective becomes worthwhile. The study of social background of respondents role of the NGO in- breaking the structural rigidities obstructing their participation in socio-economic activities; their social-cultural–political and economic empowerment are some important aspects of the study. The objectives of the study are: to assess the role of NGO in really empowering the rural women particularly those who are in lower socio-economic level; to observe the role of the NGO in breaking the structural rigidities which were obstructing the participation of rural women in social and cultural activities and to find out how far the NGO contributed to amelioration of conditions of rural women and making them economically empowered.

Sri Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP) is a Non-Governmental organization. ‘Jnana Vikas Yojana’ (JVY) is one of the developmental programmes at the community level is for empowerment of rural women. In ‘Jnana Vikas Kendras’ (JVks), with the help of field-level workers called SYKs, the women are encouraged to overcome their inhibitions and fears. The present study has been divided into five chapters.

The NGO had involved large number of young women (working age group). Therefore, the NGO can be set to have effectively channellized the energy of rural women. The rural women could develop contact with various people, officials, leaders etc. Moreover, they said that JVY had indirectly helped them to eradicate social evils and bad-habits in their families; it resulted in the improvement of their status. The NGO had given them confidence in meeting people and interacting with

the officials. This had helped them to solve many of their domestic and local problems as well as to avail the benefits of various Govt./NGO programs.

Although not without weaknesses and defects, JVY had made a considerable impact. There existed an effective and organized network of field functionaries who were able to communicate directly and more successfully with the rural women. Participation in the NGO had brought about all-round change and thus empowerment in the lives of the women. The NGO had promoted economic versatility by its 'thrift and credit' activity. The socio-economic status of rural women had considerably improved due to enhancement of economic activity through 'savings and credit',. Changes have occurred in housing, nutritional status, clothing, education, social and cultural activities. These changes i.e. the empowerment had brought about little political awareness also. The women, who were ignorant of their own virtues and capacities, before joining the NGO, were on the way to true empowerment. Increased association with the NGO had brought about considerable change in the thinking of the rural women about the position of women.

KEY WORDS: NGO; SKDRDP; JVY; Social empowerment: Economic Activity

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